

PREVENTING THE PERPETRATION OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Joan Tabachnick




Our Personal Journeys Into This Topic



Learning Objectives

- Define Prevention
- Describe “Flipping the Focus”
- Describe Your Role in Prevention
- Explore the Strategies to Prevent Perpetration
- Identify at least 1 Prevention Actions You Can Take



Activity



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Before the 1990's



Perpetration Prevention

"All of the signs were there and no one... no one in my family, not one of my friends, and no one at work ever bothered to ask me about them"

~Sex Offender in Prison



1990-2000's

Jacob Wetterling Act



Adam Walsh Act



Megan's Law



1990-2000's

Increased Visibility

- Television shows
- News reports
- Movies



1990-2000's

Better Research





Shifting public perception

- ☐ Emerging information about prevalence of perpetration...



Implications Of This Shift



Question

- When did you enter this work?





© 2014 Laurie Guldry

Sex Offender



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Sex Offender



Shifting public perception

☐ Not all are monsters...





Public Health Approach

Successful Public Health Campaigns



- Recycling
- No Smoking
- Car Seats
- Stop Drinking and Driving

WHAT

“Public health is what we, as a society, **do collectively to assure the conditions** in which people can be healthy”

~Institute of Medicine

Imagine a Disease

- “Imagine a childhood disease that affects one in five girls and one in seven boys before they reach 18: a disease that can cause...”
- “Imagine what we, as a society, would do if such a disease existed...”
- Such a disease does exist—it is called child sexual abuse



(Mercy, 1999)

Primary Prevention

- Approaches that take place *before* sexual violence has *occurred* to prevent initial perpetration and victimization



Secondary and Tertiary Prevention

- Secondary:** Immediate responses *after* sexual violence has occurred to deal with the short-term consequences of violence
- Tertiary:** Long-term responses *after* sexual violence has occurred to deal with the lasting consequences of violence and sex offender treatment interventions



Why Primary Prevention?

If we focus on...

- Better resources for victims
- Harm already done
- Increased reporting
- Harm already done
- Better prosecution
- Harm already done
- Stopping re-offense
- Harm already done
- ALL** of this is needed, **AND** a focus on primary prevention



(Cohen et al., 2007)

Perpetration Prevention

IF we want to stop sexual abuse at its source (for first time perpetration) we need to understand...

- Root causes
- Risk factors
- Protective factors



Perpetration Prevention

"No epidemic has ever been resolved by paying attention to the treatment of the affected individual"

~George W Albee, PhD

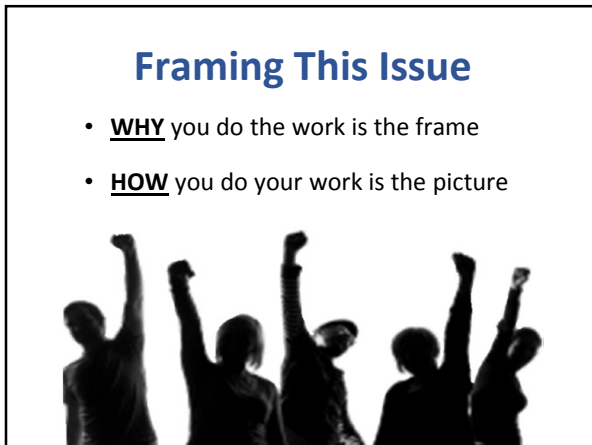


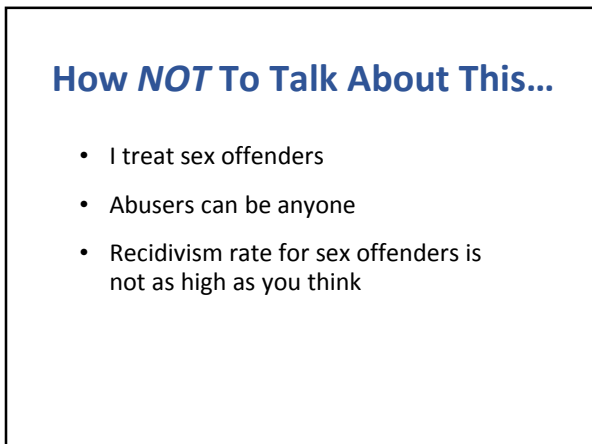
Media Portrayal

Sex offender assaults toddler at Chuck E Cheese's









What Do You Do?

Framed Answer:

- ✓ I work every day to prevent sexual violence. I care deeply about community safety and keeping potential victims safe.

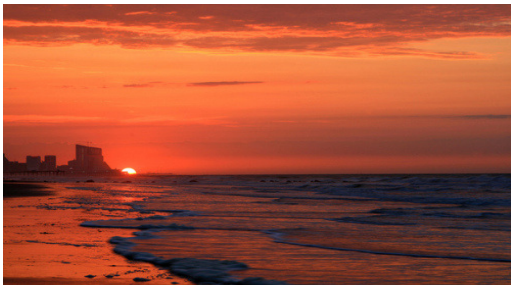


What Do You Do?

- I work to prevent the perpetration of sexual violence
- I work with... [name population] who have sexually abused in the past. I work to ensure that no one is sexually abused again. It is difficult work, incredibly rewarding, and my successes mean a safer community.



Activity



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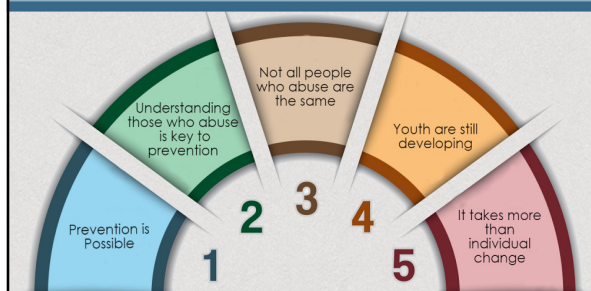
How do we use what we know about the diversity of those who sexually offend to consider what would help with preventing first time perpetration?



NEW FROM ATSA!




5 THINGS TO KNOW



1. PREVENTION IS POSSIBLE

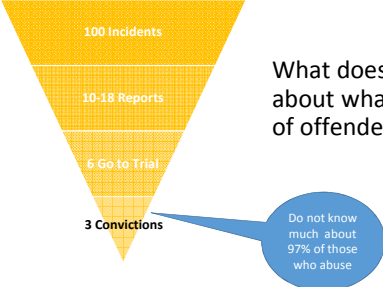
**Sexual abuse is not inevitable.
To prevent the initial harm, we need to
prevent first time perpetration.**

2. WHY UNDERSTAND THOSE WHO ABUSE?



To truly prevent sexual abuse BEFORE anyone is harmed we need to know more about the adults, adolescents and children who sexually abuse others.

When Most Do Not Report



What does that say about what we know of offenders?

Looking At Those Causing Harm

Of 14-21 year olds studied, **9%** reported some type of sexually abusive behaviors



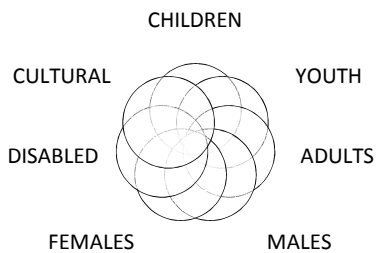
(Ybarra, 2013)

3. NOT ALL PEOPLE WHO ABUSE ARE THE SAME

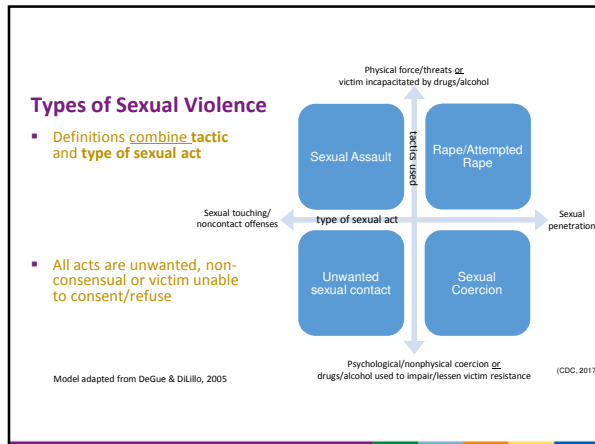


"Sex Offender" does not begin to describe the complexity of those who abuse. We need to delve deeper, to understand the differences between adults as well as the adolescents and children who sexually abuse.

Many Different People Sexually Abuse Or Are At Risk To Abuse



(Guidry, 2015)




4. CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS ARE DEVELOPING

Where do we invest our resources? By getting help to children and youth at risk of developing problematic sexual behaviors, we can change their developmental trajectory. With our help, these children and teens can grow into healthy productive adults.

New ATSA Infographic

5. CHANGE THE ENVIRONMENT



Prevention is more than education and individual change! Our work must also consider our institutional responses, the public policies, and the social attitudes that encourage or discourage sexual abuse.

"It is unreasonable to expect that people will change their behavior easily when so many forces in the social, cultural, and physical environment conspire against such change."

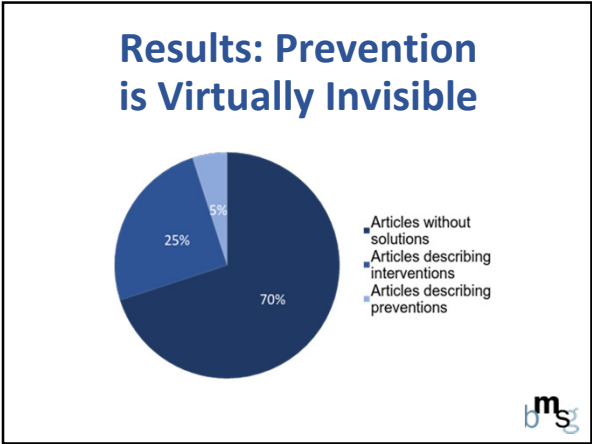
-- Institute of Medicine health promotion study, 2006

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Key Developments:
Media



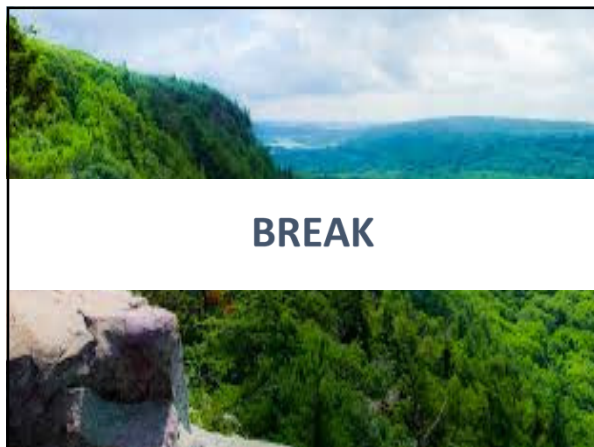




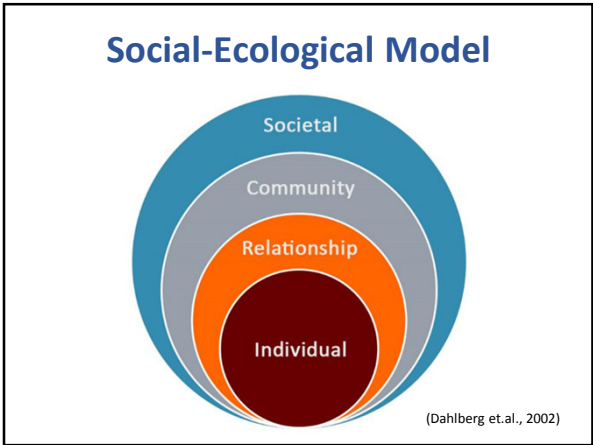












Prevention Matrix

	INDIVIDUAL/RELATIONSHIP	COMMUNITY/SOCIETY
BEFORE		
AFTER		

(Tabachnick et. al., 2016)

Prevention Matrix

	INDIVIDUAL/RELATIONSHIP	COMMUNITY/SOCIETY
BEFORE	Programs focusing on preventing first time perpetration Bystander Intervention	Situational Prevention New protocols and standards for colleges and youth serving organizations
AFTER	Treatment and management of sex offender	Policies directed towards sex offenders

(Tabachnick et. al., 2016)

Shining Examples

Reaching out to those at-risk to sexually abuse



How Do You Respond?

Green Light

✓ Increase Adult Invo

Yellow Light

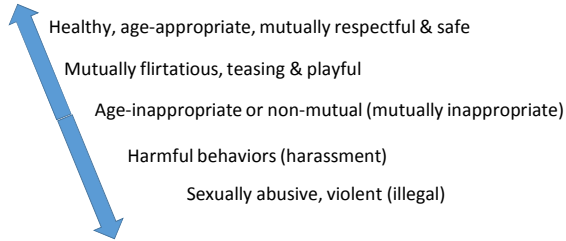
✓ Family Responds

Red Light

✓ System Interventio



Continuum of Behaviors



(Anderson, 2002)

Stop It Now!

- Family Safety Plans
- Tip sheets when worried about adult or youths behavior
- Circles of Safety (Campus and Child Care)



Dunkelfeld



(Beier, 2009)

Help Wanted



**THIS
AMERICAN
LIFE**

John's Hopkins, Moore Center

Thorn Deterrence Program



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Blue Rock Institute

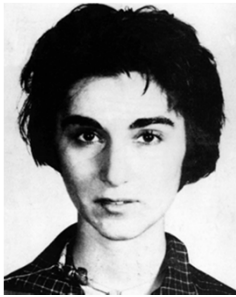


Shining Example

Bystander Programs



Kitty Genovese



Bystander Research

Series of Decisions a Bystander Must Make...

- Notice the event
- Consider whether the situation demands action
- Decide if she/he has responsibility to act
- Choose form of assistance she/he should use
- Understand how to implement choice

(Latane & Darley, 1969)

Bystander Video



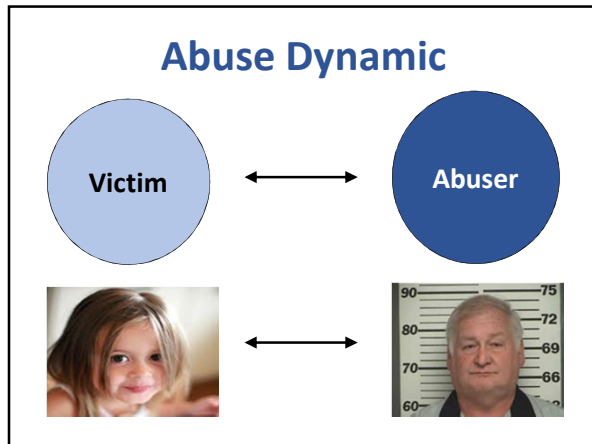
Bystander Research

Higher Engagement → Increased Number of Reported Interventions

- Repeated exposure
- Multiple channels
- Multiple approaches
- Community ownership

ATSA Focus on Prevention





Need Multiple Stories

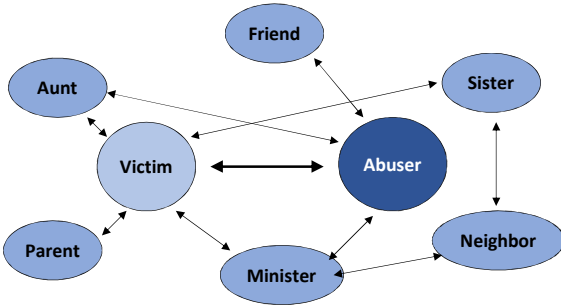
- Individual stories set-up a false dichotomy
 - ✓ **Victim:** Why didn't you say or do something?
 - ✓ **Perpetrator:** How many victims did you harm?
- When we speak together can we move the focus towards prevention

Need Multiple Stories

Add the Family Member:

- Why didn't you say or do something?
- What does it feel like to see so many victims harmed?

Paradigm Shift for Prevention

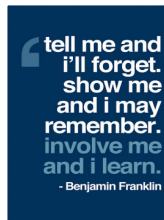


Bystander Programs



It's Just This Easy To Foster Prevention...

A Brief Interactive Bystander Intervention Exercise



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Scenario

Samantha, the mother of an 8 year old boy, is concerned about her son's friend (the same age). Recently the morning after a sleepover, while the boys were eating breakfast, Samantha found a handwritten story in her son's room that contained sexual words that an 8 year old child should not know. The story was written in the handwriting of Samantha's son's friend. The boy's mother is expected to pick her son up in two hours.

If you were Samantha, what would you do?

Prevention Matrix

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(Tabachnick et. al., 2016)

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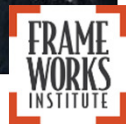
~Institute of Medicine

Change the Frame



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Environment Matters in Public Health

When a public health problem is a social issue,
it becomes **imperative that social leaders and
public health advocates** become involved to
help create a protective environment

(Perrin et al., 2008)



“Do we want to help
people beat the odds or
do we want to change the
odds?”

~Larry Wallack

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Shining Example



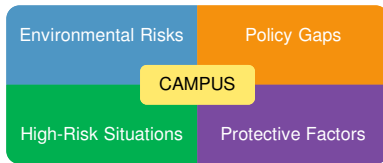
**Situational
Prevention**

Situational Prevention Research

Research indicating that the use of **structural, environmental**, and/or **policy strategies** in organizations and communities may reduce sexual violence perpetration

Criminological approach examining situations that increase or decrease risk for crime to be committed

Situational Prevention

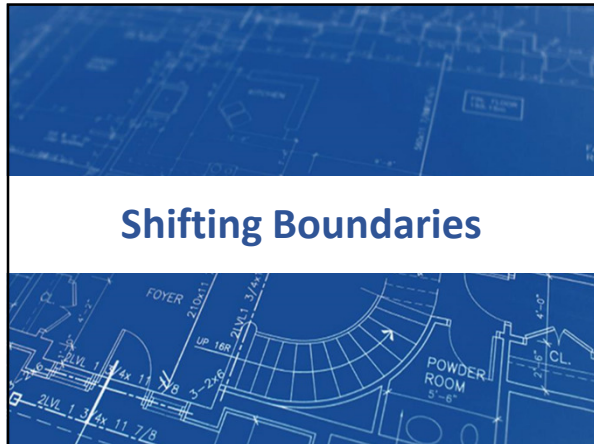


SMART Office Grantees

Campus Sexual Assault


- Center for Sex Offender Management (Dr. Kurt Bumby)
- Portland State University (Dr. Keith Kaufman)





Shifting Boundaries

- ☐ Education Intervention
 - ☐ 6 session curriculum
- ☐ Building Based Intervention
 - ☐ Hot spot mapping



Youth Serving Organizations



Boys and Girls Club of America

4 Key Steps

1. Brainstorming (input from all)
1. Identify problems and workable solutions
1. Prioritize
1. Identify top 5 risks/solutions



Video

- Steve Brown and Klingberg example

Policy

"If there's one thing we've learned about catalyzing changes that prevent illness in the first place, it's that **passage of a single policy can be like lighting a match—illuminating** the way towards strategies with greater impact and igniting the energy of leaders."

~Larry Cohen & Juliet Sims



How Policies Change Norms



Policy Gulliver Strategy





The National Coalition to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation

Six Pillars for Prevention

There are four main pillars of our nation's response that we work together to look at what's going on in our country and what's going on in the world and how we can prevent it. These pillars are: **Prevention, Response, Prosecution, and Policy.** These pillars are the foundation of our work and they are the pillars that we work on every day.

INTRODUCTION
When most people think about child sexual abuse and the sexual exploitation of children they tend to think of it as a crime that is committed by a single person. In reality, it is a complex issue that involves many different people and organizations. The National Coalition to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (NCPSAE) is a national organization that works to prevent child sexual abuse and exploitation. We work on six pillars: **Prevention, Response, Prosecution, Policy, Research, and Advocacy.** These pillars are the foundation of our work and they are the pillars that we work on every day.

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Six Pillars for Prevention

1. Youth Serving Organizations
2. Healthy Development
3. Healthy Relationships & Sexuality Education
4. End Demand
5. Sustainable Funds
6. Prevent Initial Perpetration



Getting Involved



Seek out New Partners

- Sexual Assault Coalition
- Child Advocacy Centers
- Department of Public Health
- Rape Crisis Centers
- Schools
- Youth Serving Groups
- Others?



Shared Values Of Both Disciplines

- End sexual violence
- Prevent victimization
- Increase safety for victims & community
- Healing for victims
- Management of S.O.



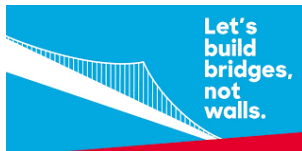
Potential Differences

- Language
- Framework
- Emotional
- Philosophical/Political
- Practical
- Culture and community
- Resources



Talk with/Listen to Them!

- What are they doing?
- What do they need?
- What can you offer?
- Other



Identify YOUR Unique Contribution

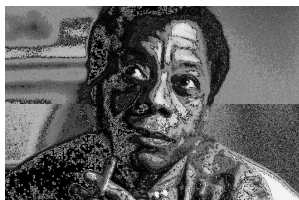
- Map out what exists
- What resources are available to you?
- What do you bring to the table?
- Do they need what you have?

Collaborate to Action

- How can you collaborate?
- How can you enhance what exists?
- What can you sustain?

"The most radical step
you can take is your
next step"

~James Baldwin



What can you do?

- What is one thing you are doing?
- What is one thing you would like to do?



Do Not Get Stuck Without a Prevention Story



Key Message

Hope

"Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced"

~James Baldwin



Contact Information

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Question

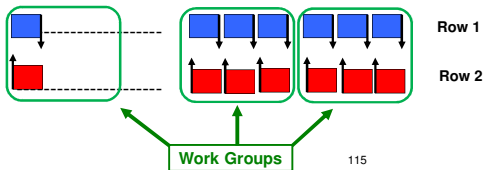
Where would you put these behaviors on a continuum of behaviors?

- In the office, the CEO regularly comments on the good looks and appearance of the new staff
- At school, a boy pushes a girl against the lockers and feels her breasts
- In a suburban neighborhood, a man undresses each night with his shades open and lights on

Bystander Intervention Exercise

("Speed Dating Format")

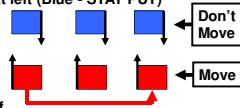
- **Goal:** To brainstorm active bystander intervention strategies in a format that allows considerable practice in a brief time period.
- **Preparation:**
 - Work in groups of 6 in adjoining rows



Bystander Intervention Exercise

("Speed Dating Format")

- Steps:**
- (1) Very brief introduction (with partner your facing)
 - (2) Blue row reads their scenario to red row partners
 - (3) Red row folks spend 2 minutes responding
 - a) What strategy would they use to keep the person safe?
 - b) Which other bystander could they involve?
 - c) What policy or resource would support this in the future?
 - (4) Blue row folks give 1 minute constructive feedback
 - (5) Red row folks shift one seat left (Blue - STAY PUT)
 - (6) Repeat process 3x
 - (7) Reverse roles with red reading & blue responding
 - (8) Wrap up with group debrief
 - (9) Keith & Joan keep time



Bystander Exercise Debrief



Key Message

Consider the impact on everyone...
victim, offender, families, and community



Key Message

You have a unique role to play



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Key Message

and critical information to offer



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Key Message

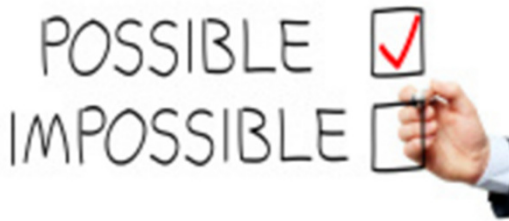
Flip the perspective!



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Key Message

Make it Possible!



Key Message



Work in Collaboration

"When will our consciences grow so tender that we will
act to prevent human misery rather than avenge it?"

~Eleanor Roosevelt