



**Enhancing children's  
knowledge on  
preventing sexual  
abuse to support  
children's rights**



# Historic overview

2000	33000	2007	28465
2001	32955	2008	27190
2002	33882	2009	25502
2003	33015	2010	25411
2004	32735	2011	26621
2005	30982	2012	26619
2006	28736	2013	To be released



# Absolute frequency (0-under 14 years)

	Whole	girls	boys
full	25468	20274	5194
trial	1151	854	297
Summed up	26619	21128	5491



# Relationship between victim and offender

Within household	Out of household	different	No relationship	unknown
603 (male)	244 (male)	1743 (male)	2178 (male)	723 (male)
2206 (female)	413 (female)	5468 (female)	10855 (female)	2186 (female)



# Prevention efforts in Germany

- Ca. 90% of offences not reported to the police (Beier 2014)
- 70 % of prevention efforts focussing on children (and their empowerment) most of them being short-term courses (1-2 days)
- Many of them not scientifically evaluated (Helming 2014)



# Prevention models I

- Caplan's model: primary (seeks to decrease the number of new cases), secondary (seeks to lower the rate of established cases), tertiary prevention (seeks to decrease the amount of disability associated with sexual abuse) (Caplan 1964)
- In Germany still widely used for prevention programmes



# Prevention models II

- **Mrazek & Haggerty (1994):**
- **Universal Preventive Interventions** for the general public or a whole population group that has not been identified on the basis of individual risk; the intervention is desirable for everyone
- **Selective Preventive Interventions** for individuals or a subgroup of the population whose risk is significantly higher than average; the risk may be imminent or it may be a lifetime risk
- **Indicated Preventive Interventions** for high risk individuals



# Empowerment prevention - Overview

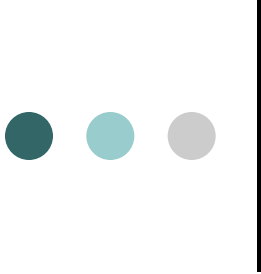
- Mostly child-centered
- Most common items: say no, run away, tell about inappropriate touches, get help, differentiate between good and bad secrets, My body is mine!





# Empowerment prevention: General Critiques

- Although mostly well designed in didactic, the content items lack:
  - age-appropriateness (same content for all age groups)
  - Many items not applicable to abuse situations
  - Almost no consideration of sexuality
  - Almost no consideration of children's rights (apart from my body is mine)



# Limitations I: Age-appropriateness

- Distinguishing between good and bad secrets not feasible for younger children
- Not every *good secret* is „Non-sexual“
- Not every *bad secret* is „sexual“
- Evaluation based on feelings (What makes you feel good?)
- „one size fits all“?



## Limitations II: Non-applicable items

- Say No (but not to me): valid not only for care givers, but for offenders, too
- Children oft lured into abuse thus saying no is rather useless
- Run away - but where to run to? (if intra-familial abuse)
- Distinguishing touches: not all good touches = non-sexual, not all funny touches = sexual (funny = euphemism for sexual touches or touches in a sexual manner) → rather confusing



## Limitations III: Non-sexual prevention programmes

- No consideration of children's sexual development or adults'...)
- No consideration of sexual behaviour not even that of offenders)
- No consideration of children's sexual desires or fantasies
- No consideration of children's sexual rights (although clearly sexual beings)



## Limitations IV: children's rights

- Right to defend themselves
- Right to prevent their own abuse
- No sexual rights
- No rights of cultural differences (one size fits all)
- No rights of different values
- No rights of different family backgrounds



# Reduced efficacy and efficiency of PPP

- All Programmes = group-based curriculum, thus neglecting children's individual risks
- Only western values considered (e.g. self-esteem): children from different cultures and/or migration background neglected
- Heteronormativity



# Primary prevention in preschool settings

- Unknown number of PPP running in preschool settings
- If any, carried out by external agencies
- No evaluation research
- No PPP for educators, care givers, parents



# Primary prevention in school settings

- Every school can decide on their own about implementing a PPP
- Mostly carried out by external agencies
- Rough estimate: 500 child-centered programmes running in Germany
- Almost no evaluation research
- Almost no prevention programmes for teachers and/or parents





# Empowerment prevention: Selected Projects in Germany

- Trau Dich! (Dare!)  
(<mailto:stefanie.amann@bzga.de>)
- Mein Körper gehört mir! (My body is mine!) (<http://www.theaterpaedwerkstatt.de/?page=koerper.html&rank=8&urank=9>)
- Echt stark! (really powerful!)(<http://www.strohhalmev.de/echt-stark!/kinder/92/>)



# Victim's rights

- No sufficient number of therapeutical interventions for child victims
- Unknown extent of victim's support
- Unknown extent of victims families' support
- Lack of funding for interventions
- Lack of research funding to improve the wellbeing of victims
- Lack of research funding to improve PPP



# Thank you

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