

Please respond
using the chat
feature

While we are waiting to begin....

- Think about the characteristics of someone who you really like to be around.
- Share those characteristics in the chat





Are there two participants who would be willing to allow us to use their names and ask for feedback in an exercise?





Fostering Healthy Relationships and Preventing Abuse

September 19, 2024

Molly Dellinger-Wray

Taylor Thomas Harris

Nicole Rada

VCU Partnership for People with Disabilities



WELCOME!



Molly Dellinger-
Wray

Nicole Rada



Taylor Thomas-Harris



@nextmoverprogram

THANK YOU!





Poll #1



Goals for Today

- *Quick*: Types of Abuse
- *Quick*: The scope of the problem
- *Quick*: Some reasons why children and adults with disabilities experience such high rates of abuse
- Dynamics of abuse
- Preventing Abuse
- Responding to Abuse
- Quiz/Certificate for those who are interested

Everyone's Perspective is different...



Bethany's story



**What to do if you suspect someone is being
abused/neglected:**

Contact your Local Department of Social Services

OR...

**Virginia Family Violence
And Sexual Assault Hotline:**

1-800-838-8238

TEXT: 804-793-9999



What is abuse?

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
 - bullying, exclusion, institutionalization
- Controlling access to family, friends, escape
- Engaging in sexual acts without consent
- Financial abuse
- Neglect

This does not include all of the other ways that people are marginalized by lack of choice and opportunity.



Abuse of People with Disabilities...

- Typically, the person's specific disability is used as part of the abuse
- Care provider takes advantage of person's disability to withhold necessities like personal care, food, medication, communication
 - Physical disabilities
 - Intellectual disabilities
 - Behavioral control

Abuse of People with Disabilities...

- Withholding or disabling assistive devices
- Hiding medications
- Neglecting personal care
- Refusing to transfer
- Keeping the person from using accessible transportation
- Disabling communication devices



The SCOPE of the PROBLEM

Epidemic of Abuse and Sexual Assault for people with IDD



90% women 86% of men

Experience abuse
in their lifetime



83%

32%

83% of women and 32%
of men are victims of
sexual assault at some
point in their lifetime.
(Johnson & Sigler, 2000)



49%

49% of people
who are victims of
sexual violence will
experience **10 or
more incidents**
(Valenti-Heim & Schwartz,
1995)

Bureau of Justice Statistics (2021)

- ❖ A higher percentage of violence against people with disabilities was committed by persons the victim knew well or who were casual acquaintances than for victims without disabilities.
- ❖ People with cognitive disabilities had highest victimization rate among the disability types measured for total violent crime.

For people with disabilities, abuse occurs:

- Children with disabilities are **at least three times more likely** to be abused or neglected than their peers without disabilities (Jones et al., 2012), and they are more likely to be **seriously injured or harmed** by maltreatment (Sedlak et al., 2010).
- **Four times as likely** to be victims of crime (Van Cleve & Davis, 2006)
- Children with **behavioral health conditions** who were maltreated before age 3 were **10 times more likely** to be maltreated again (Jaudes & Mackey-Bilaver, 2008)

Please respond
using the chat
feature



**are
PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES
ABUSED
at such
EPEDEMIC
RATES?**

Skewed Boundaries



Isolation





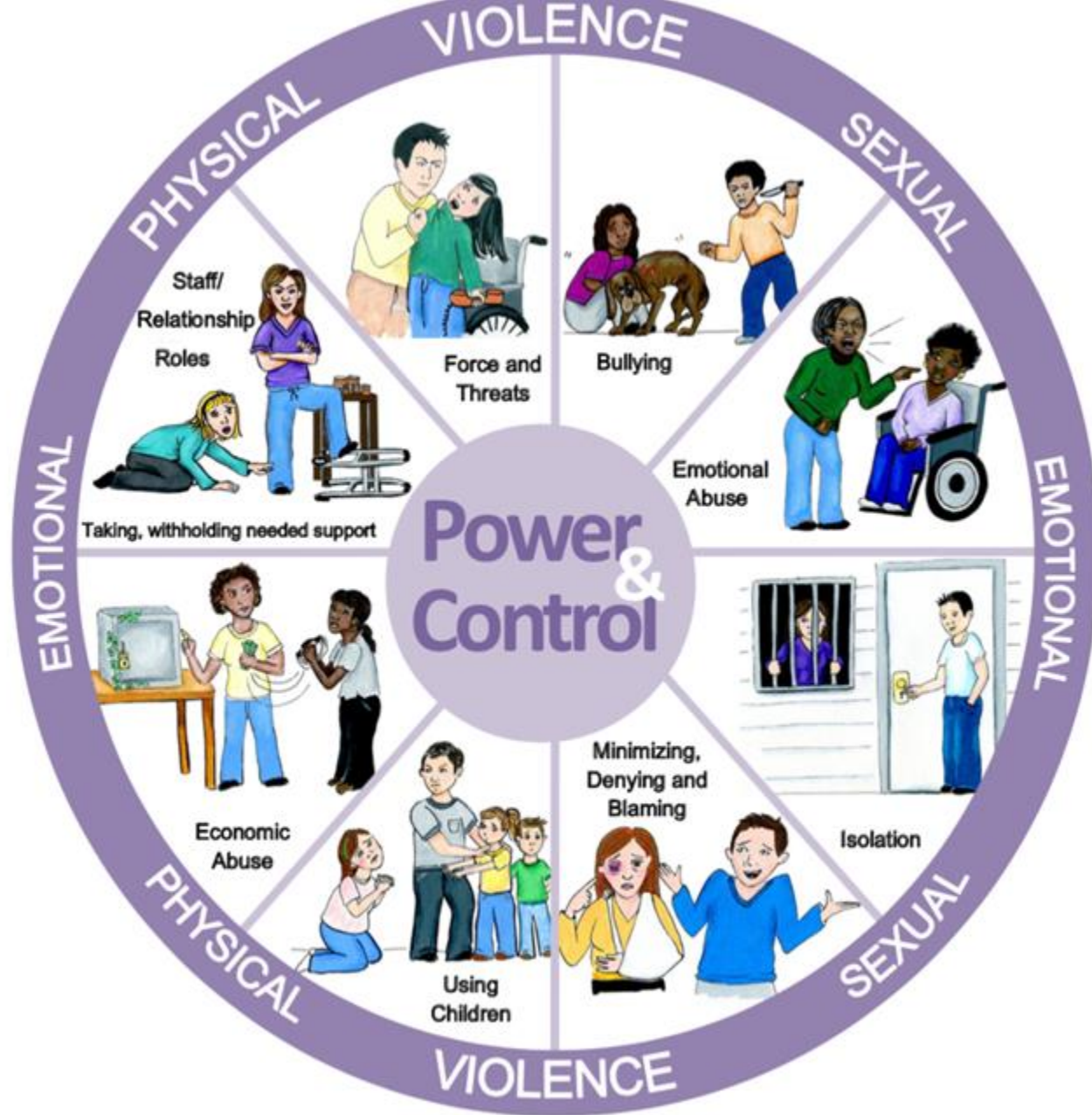


Trained compliance

(Tharinger, Horton, & Millea, 1990)

“When you have a disability, people are always telling you, ‘Do as this person says! Do as this person says’ and all this other stuff.”

Thomas Mangrum – Washington, DC



Power and Control Issues



Abusers *are* able to control their behavior, they do it all the time!

- Abusers pick and choose who they abuse
- Abusers carefully choose where and when to abuse
- Abusers are able to stop their behaviors when it benefits them
- Violent abusers usually target their blows in a place where they won't show

• Melinda Smith, M.A., and Jeanne Segal, Ph.D. Last updated: April 2012 •



Signs of External Authority

- Access to paper, pens, computer
 - Jewelry, stylish appearance
 - Body language
 - Initiating greeting/touch
- (B.Franz, 2014)



Cultural Myths and Attitudes

- Wild promiscuous
- Innocent/asexual
- Incompetent, stupid
- Doesn't understand/feel
- Without opinions on boundaries
- Pitied / put on pedestal
- Punished by God
- Contagious



Use the chat feature to respond

Supporting People with disabilities



Abuse prevention strategies



**# I'M A
PERSON
NOT A
DISABILITY**

Professionals use TWO
languages




Body Parts: They have names





**ASK
THE HUNK
BEFORE YOU
TOUCH THE
JUNK**



**ASK
THE CUTIE
BEFORE YOU
TOUCH THE
BOOTY**

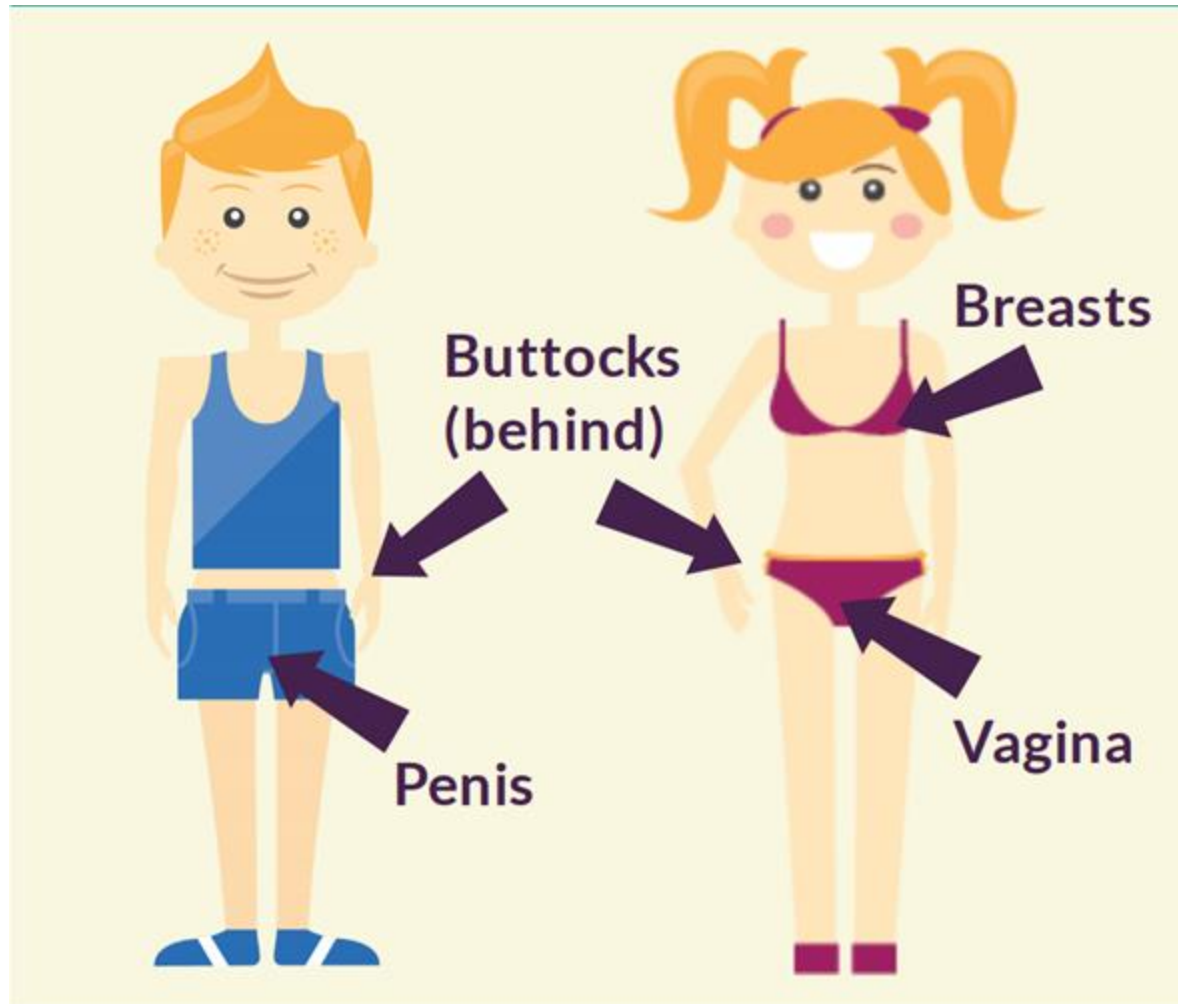


Rules for Healthy Touch

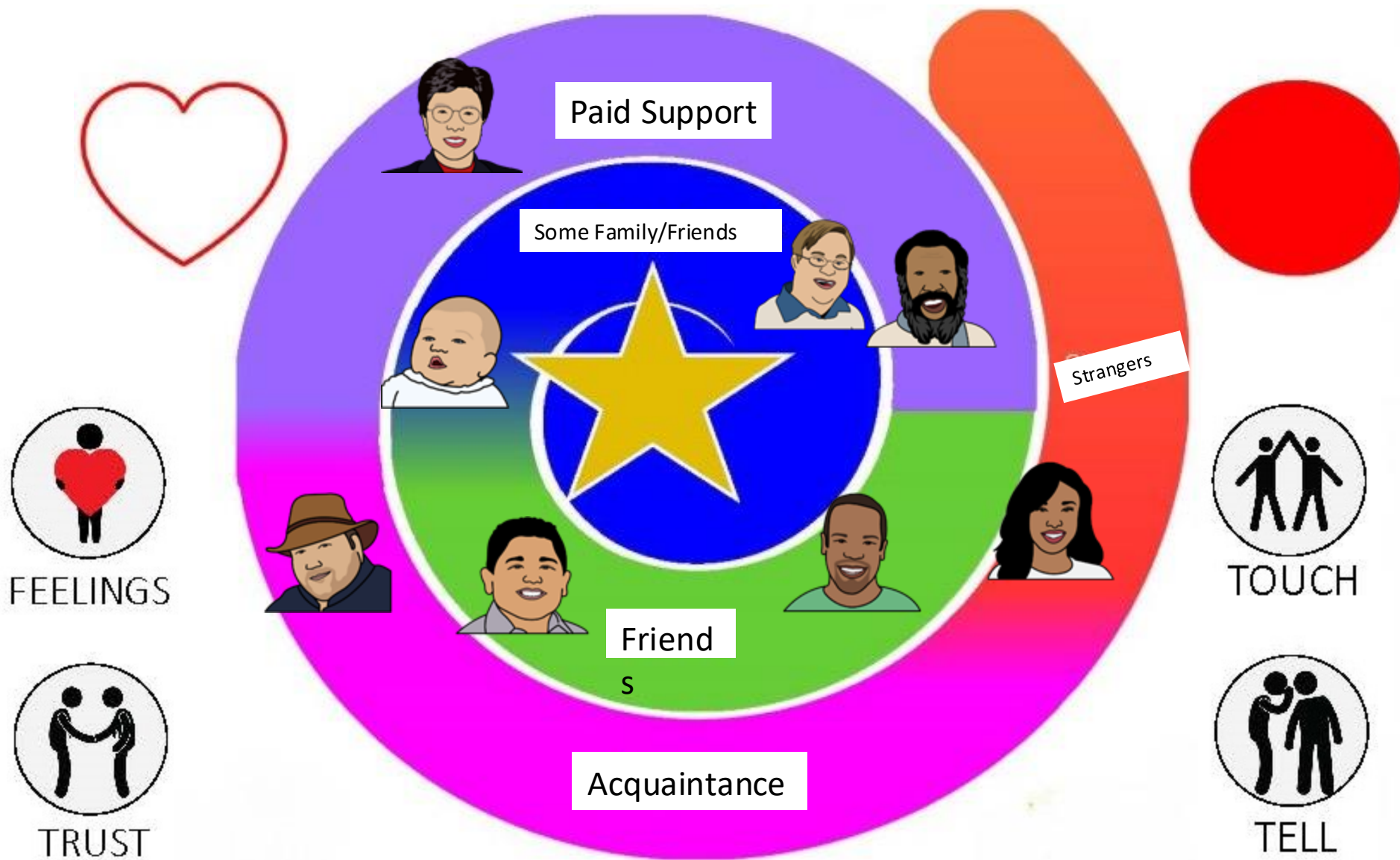
- YOU decide who touches you
- YOU can change your mind
- Intimate touch of private body areas are okay as long as both people agree and it takes place in a private place



The Bathing Suit Rule



LEAP: Map of People in Your World





Poll Question # 2

Paid Supporters

- Help you problem solve: Listen
- Celebrate your successes
- Provide you with necessary assistance
- Advocate with you for a better quality of life

- **Receive Payment**

Friends

- Help you problem solve: Listen
- Celebrate your successes
- Provide you with necessary assistance
- Advocate with you for a better quality of life



A blue speech bubble with a white border and a tail pointing towards the top-left corner. Inside the bubble, the text "Use the chat feature to respond" is written in white, sans-serif font, rotated approximately 30 degrees clockwise.

Use the chat
feature to respond

“Do you love me? Are you still my friend?”

- “I am not your friend but I love working with you”
- “You don’t know me well enough yet to hug me.”
- “I’m not your boyfriend/girlfriend, but let’s talk about how you can find one.”
- “I have so much fun with you I can’t believe I’m getting paid to do this!”
- “I love everyone in the world and you are part of that world.”

Types of Relationships

**Healthy
Relationship**



**Confusing
Relationship**



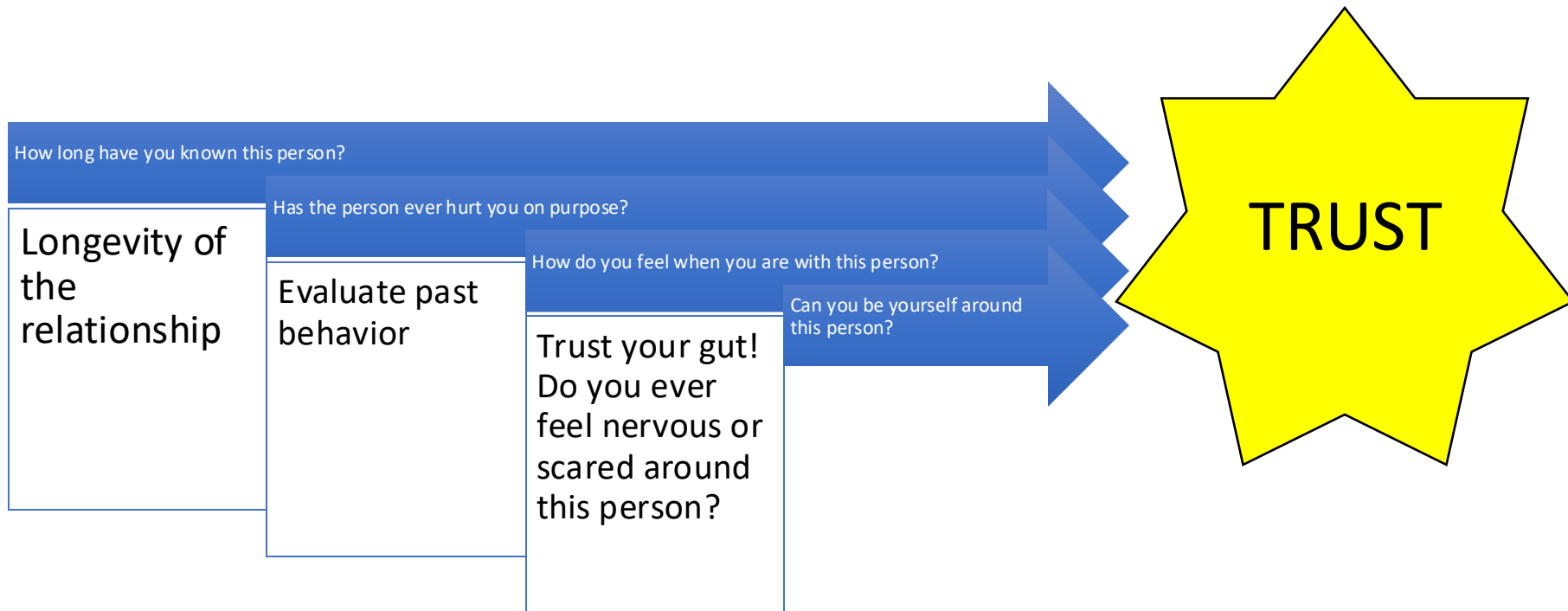
**Unhealthy
Relationship**



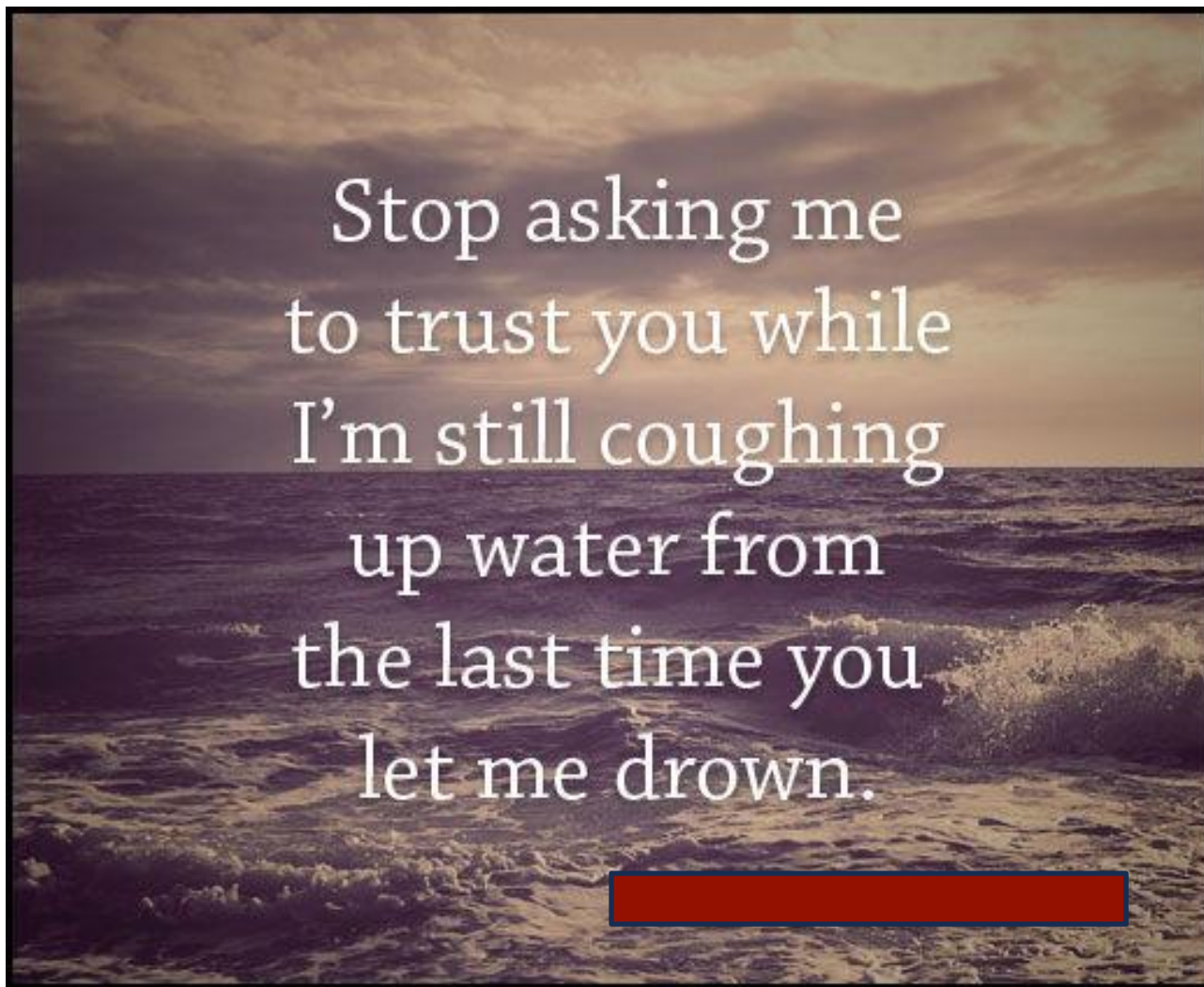
How do you feel when you are around someone?



Teaching whom to trust



Identifying ONE person who can be trusted





Poll #3

What strategies were you taught to stay safe?



Don't use FEAR and PUNISHMENT to prevent abuse

DO SAY....

- Is there anything that made you uncomfortable?
- What would you like to change for next time?
- Some secrets were not meant to be secrets
- It's my job to keep you safe and happy and if you ever feel unsafe, please let me know
- Discuss a safety plan

DON'T SAY...

- ~~Don't let anyone touch you~~
- ~~Don't get in a car with anyone~~
- Remember that "the bathing suit rule" doesn't apply to everything....

Disclosing Abuse





Do I have to go there with you?

Disclosing Abuse



Validate without minimizing

- "I believe you."
- "It's not your fault, you didn't do anything wrong."
- "You seem really upset about that."
- "Tell me about why you are sad/mad/upset/angry?"
- "It doesn't seem fair: what else could you do?"
- "It's okay to be sad/mad/upset/angry"
 - Shenandoah Chefalo, Garbage Bag Suitcase

Too many questions!



Responding: It's time to call an expert!





We're not done yet, but take poll # 4!



RESPONDING

- Mandated Reporters
- Adult Protective Services
- Forensic Interviewing



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TEXT: 804-793-9999





High Five! Any questions?



To contact us:

- ncrada@vcu.edu
- mdwray@vcu.edu
- taylorth91@gmail.com

- LINK TO QUIZ in chat

Quiz/Certificates

- Quiz will end at the close of business tomorrow!
- Enter your name **EXACTLY** as you would like it to appear on your certificate. NO TYPOS.
- Pay attention to the question, especially the third one which asks which one is NOT an example
- Read all of the choices and pick the best one
- Certificates will go out automatically

- Link to quiz: <https://forms.gle/yp1aJmkZjfhyc9Cv8>

Optional Quiz!



5:00

Quiz Review

People with disabilities experience higher rates of abuse than non disabled people. One reason for this is:

There are power and control issues with people in authority like paid staff members



Quiz Review

Person centered practices are one of the best ways to prevent abuse. An example of being person centered is:

Use everyday language when we describe people who use support services



Quiz Review

Which one of these is NOT one of the rules for healthy touch?

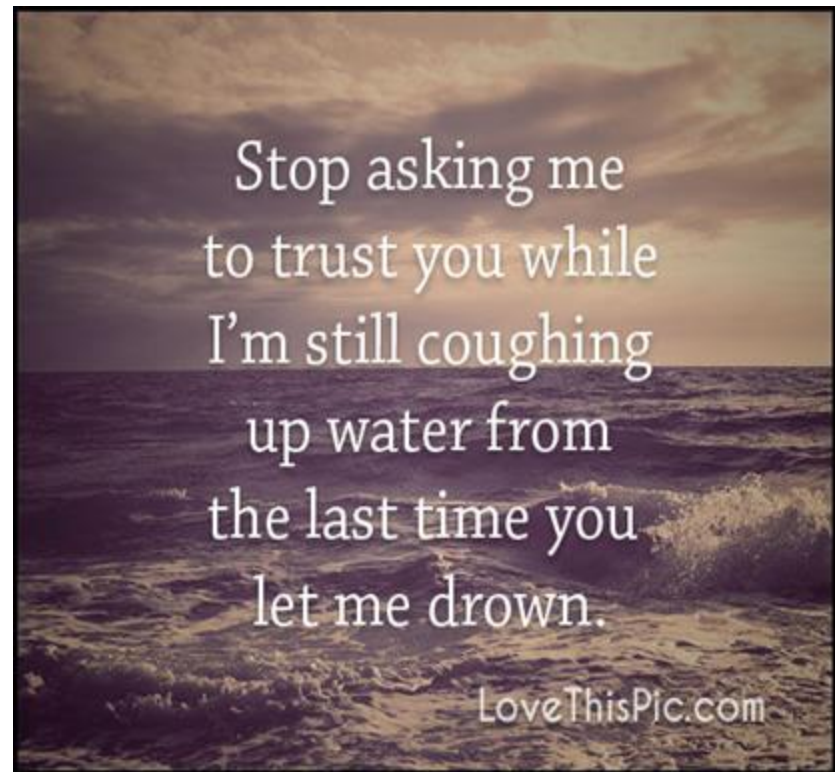
- You decide who touches you
- ~~Once you have given permission for someone to touch you, they don't have to ask again~~
- Sexual touch is okay but it should happen in a private place between two people who both agree
- You should ask permission before you touch someone



Quiz Review

When teaching someone about being safe

Help them find a trusted person who they feel like they can have a conversation with if they are in an unhealthy relationship



Quiz Review

If someone discloses abuse to you:

Tell them
that it's not
their fault.

