**Summary of Presentation on the Enough Abuse Campaign**

**By Jetta Bernier, Executive Director, MassKids**

*[As a result of the Campaign]… Massachusetts is one of the first states in the nation*

*to lead a trailblazing effort to prevent child sexual abuse by building a movement*

*of concerned citizens, community by community.”*

 Rodney Hammond, Director, Division of Violence Prevention

 **U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention**, 2005

In January 2002, Massachusetts became the epicenter what was to become an international focus on the problem of child sexual abuse when the **Boston Globe** exposed the clergy sex abuse scandal and the Archdiocese of Boston’s long-standing practice of reassigning sexually abusing priests to unsuspecting parishes. That July, the CDC issued its first ever Request for Proposals challenging applicants to address the need to *“build adult and community responsibility”* to address the problem. Two meeting were held subsequently with a small group of Massachusetts public and private groups to explore the option of responding to CDC’s call. MassKids drafted a proposal for the group’s approval and in September that proposal was submitted and selected as one of only three applicants to receive what became a 5 year, $200,000 per year grant. MassKids agreed to serve as lead agency for the effort.

The statewide Massachusetts Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Partnership was subsequently organized and included public and private organizations representing experts in public health, child protection, mental health, child abuse prevention and treatment, sexual assault prevention, and juvenile and adult offender treatment and management.

In 2003, the Enough Abuse Campaign was launched as the Partnership’s community mobilization and citizen education initiative. Three social change models were adopted to guide the Campaign’s work – the Socio-ecological model promoted by CDC; the Spectrum of Prevention framework promoted by the Prevention Institute; and the Framework for Collaborative Public Health Action in Communities developed by the National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine. The Campaign sought to engage in a variety of prevention actions including: state and local coalition building, education of parents and other citizens, training of a range of child and youth serving professionals, organizational policy development, and legislative advocacy.

The Campaign adopted the dual mission of preventing adult perpetration against children and preventing child-on-child sexual abuse. It selected out of a pool of 20 communities, three that would serve as pilot sites to test the various Campaign strategies. These included the 7-town North Quabbin Area, an economically disadvantaged area with the highest per capita residency of Level 3 sex offenders in the state; the city of Newton labeled “the safest city in America;” and Gloucester, a middle class working community on the North Shore. Currently the Campaign is operating in several communities and areas of the state and has been adopted in New Jersey, Maryland, New York, Nevada, California’s 10-county Greater Bay area and the 15-county Sacramento/Sierra region.

Two scientific surveys conducted by the Campaign assessed the public’s knowledge about child sexual abuse and helped determine the Partnership’s first priority. Since 48 % of survey participants indicated a willingness to participate in local trainings to learn more about child sexual abuse and how to prevent it, the group set out to develop a comprehensive set of training curricula that would incorporate the latest knowledge in the field.

Currently, the Campaign’s training resources include six curricula that it developed specifically to educate parents and concerned individuals, early education and child care providers, schools, and youth serving organizations. Once local Partnerships are established, Campaign staff assist communities to identify and vet a cadre of volunteers who then participate in the Campaign’s intensive 2-day Training of Trainers. Once certified, they offer free trainings in their communities. Oversight and evaluation of these trainers by their local Partnership and feedback from workshop participants document consistently high levels of satisfaction; on a scale of excellence of 5, trainings typically receive 4.7 or higher ratings. Evaluations of the first 5,000 persons trained indicated:

* 95% said the training helped them identify problem behaviors in adults
* 94% learned to assess and respond to unhealthy sexual behaviors in children
* 95% learned where to go and who to talk to if they suspect sexual abuse
* 98% would recommend the trainings to others

Feedback solicited from over 1,000 individuals who completed the Campaign’s online *“10 Conversations”* series, showed significant knowledge gains and a variety of prevention actions taken post-training, e.g. 70% - spoke to spouse/partner about the issue and what they learned, 56% spoke to their children, 55% spoke to friends, 51% spoke to work colleagues, etc.

CDC identifies “community and systems change” a**s** a marker of effective child sexual abuse prevention efforts. They define this as “*any program, policy or practice that resulted in institutionalized changes in the community and its systems from those efforts.”*  CDC’s evaluation of the Campaign documented impressive community and systems changes during the 5-year grant period.

Another evaluation of the Campaign is currently underway by researchers at Penn State and Prevent Child Abuse America that is expected to further document the Campaign as an evidence-based child sexual abuse prevention model.

To address its goal of promoting organizational policy development to prevent child sexual abuse, the Campaign issued the 20-page *“Massachusetts Safe-Child Standards”* in April 2015*.* It identifies six key standards schools and youth organizations can work to achieve and provides specific action steps to help them reach each standard.

MassKids provided the key private agency support that resulted in civil and criminal reform of Massachusetts’ Statute of Limitations in child sexual abuse cases. Currently, it has spearheaded a set of bills in the 2015 Legislative Session that include: the Comprehensive Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Education bill for schools and youth organizations; the Stop Educator Sexual Abuse, Misconduct, and Exploitation (S.E.S.A.M.E.) bill; and the Age of Consent - Not a Defense bills.

We ask the Commission to formally support these prevention bills and, furthermore, we invite its member agencies to partner with MassKids to help meet our goal that “by 2018 every Massachusetts city and town will be actively engaged in preventing child sexual abuse in their homes and communities.”

*“[The Campaign]…breaks the mold on child sexual abuse in many ways. It goes beyond*

*a limited set of trainings to foster the building of real and lasting relationships among diverse stakeholders. Its emphasis on community collaboration truly sets it apart from previous efforts.”*

 Ms. Foundation for Women, 2010