

## **Being Proactive about Abuse**

**By Bright Tomorrows Staff**

It seems that a day doesn't go by that there isn't something in our media about a child being sexually abused or someone being charged with a sexual crime against a child. It has been months since the Penn State sex abuse scandal broke, but the effects to the victims, their families and their community has continued to last even after the media attention has died down. The statistics remain true; 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The Penn State situation arose in part from silence, inaction and misguided principals. There has been much talk nationally about changing mandatory reporting laws; Idaho is actually one of the few states that require all citizens to report suspicions of child abuse.

While this shows Idaho's progressiveness, we do not believe people fail to report because they are not mandated, rather they fail to report because they do not know the signs of abuse, they are uncertain about reporting procedures and/or they are afraid of the consequences.

In an effort to better educate the adults in our community we, and our partners, are offering trainings to community agencies or groups:

What to do if I suspect? – This training will provide your group with the information on the process of reporting suspicions of child abuse. (45 min to 1 hour training).

Stewards of Children workshop- A prevention training program that teaches adults how to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. The program is designed for organizations that serve youth and for individuals concerned about the safety of children. (2 ½ to 3 hour training)

Let's be proactive as a community. In reality, child sexual abuse happens and how we, as a community, protect our children really defines who we are as individuals and a as a community. Are our children valuable enough to invest time in training to better protect them?

If you would like to schedule a training, please call 234-2646. For more information about Bright Tomorrows visit [www.brightcac.org](http://www.brightcac.org).