# *iLook Out for Child Abuse*: An Online Intervention for Childcare Providers

*Building a Brighter Future for Children*

PENNSTATE HERSHEY
Center for the Protection of Children
1855

Penn State Children's Hospital

*Center for the Protection of Children*

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B Mathews JD PhD, C Mincemoyer PhD

# THE PROBLEM OF CHILD ABUSE

- In every community, social class, race, culture

- Epidemic proportions

  >680,000 confirmed cases /year in U.S.

- Young children (0-5 years-old)

  - Are more vulnerable

  - Account for >75% of deaths

# THE PROBLEM OF CHILD ABUSE

- Childcare providers (CCPs)
  - Care for 8-12 million children
  - Are in a unique position
  - Are mandated reporters
    …*but*

*Make <0.5%*
*Of all reports*

– or just 2,500 of 680,000

# CHALLENGES

- Child abuse can be difficult to detect

- CCPs receive little training re. abuse

- Huge variability amongst CCPs

- Need to avoid both *under-* & *over-*reporting

- Parents are also "customers"

# CHALLENGES

- Most training is linear, flat, …un-engaging
- Principles of effective adult education
  - Learners appreciate WHY it's important
  - Experiential learning process
  - Learning as problem-solving
  - Material has immediate value
  - Considers learner's prior knowledge

# INIITAL GOAL / RESEARCH QUESTION

- Create
  - An engaging, effective online learning module

- Evaluate
  - Effect on CCPs' knowledge and attitudes regarding suspected child abuse and its reporting

# iLOOK OUT FOR CHILD ABUSE

- The power of STORIES

- Principles of "GAMIFICATION"
  - Engage the learner
  - Challenge w/ tasks that involve uncertainty, hidden information, & multiple goals
  - Motivate learning through problem-solving
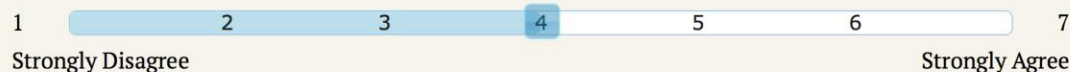  - Create safe environment to practice (and to fail)

# ENGAGING LEARNERS

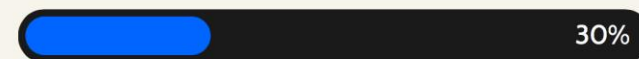Do you remember a time when YOU felt hurt and scared?

# Registration & Pre-Test:

**Resources**

## iLook Out for Child Abuse

9) I am concerned that I could be held legally liable for reporting child abuse/neglect that turns out to be unfounded.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree                                          Strongly Agree

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**Pre-Assessment Progress**

30%

17) Forcefully slaps a child under one year of age

| Yes | No | Unsure |
|-----|-----|--------|

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iLook Out for Child Abuse

Resources

# Interactive storyline:

- Learner is teacher in 4 y/o "Beach Room"
- Encounter co-workers, children, parents (actors)
- Events transpire

### iLook Out for Child Abuse

**The Beach Room**

In this video, you will receive a brief report from Kelly about the children in your room.

The Beach Room

0:10 / 0:36

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# iLook Out for Child Abuse

Resources

# Must make decisions

## iLook Out for Child Abuse

### Red Flags for Abuse

Later that day while the kids are taking a nap, you flip through a newsletter, and an article catches your attention.



Red Flags for Abuse or Neglect

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# iLook Out for Child Abuse

Resources

# Didactic questions

## iLook Out for Child Abuse

### Reflection #3

Which of the following should make you think carefully about possible abuse?

✓ A significant change in a child's behavior

> True. Children who start behaving differently (such as becoming suddenly withdrawn, or angry, or aggressive) and do so for a long time without a good explanation could be reacting to being abused/neglected. When you observe such a change, talk with your co-workers and look more closely to figure out why. Always be sure to document your observations so that concerning patterns of behavior can be identified.

✓ Bruises on a child

✓ Significant family stress

✓ Frequent illnesses

✓ Poor growth

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# iLook Out for Child Abuse

Resources

# Judgment questions

## iLook Out for Child Abuse
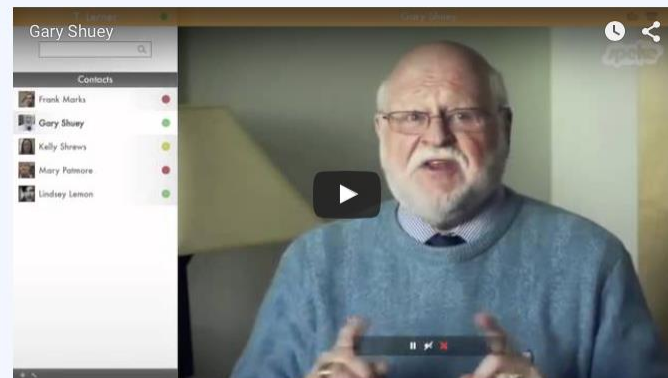
### Decision Point: The Next Day

After this discussion with Rosita and Frank, what do you decide to do?

Submit a report of suspected abuse.

✓ Talk to a child advocate through video chat, who can help you think through the risks of reporting versus not reporting.

You decide to chat with a child advocate.



Download the SSABER document referenced in the video.

If you want more information from child advocates in your county click on the Victim Services map from Pennsylvania Office of the Victim Advocates.

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# iLook Out for Child Abuse

# Take P<small>LEDGE</small>

## iLook Out for Child Abuse

### If You Don't Protect Me, Who Will?



Take the Pledge:

Yes! I will look out for child abuse.

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# iLook Out for Child Abuse

# Post-Test

## Post-Assessment Progress

96%

You scored 21 out of 23 questions correctly, but to obtain a mandated reporter training certificate you must answer ALL of the knowledge questions correctly.

Please re-attempt the following questions: 35, 38

35) Under Pennsylvania law, are you required to report suspected child abuse/neglect if a child was put at significant risk for being injured, even when no injury or harm actually occurred? (*check one*)

abused/neglected

Only if I think it is more likely than not that a child has been abused/neglected

I am unsure

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# iLook Out for Child Abuse

# How to report

## iLook Out for Child Abuse

### Important Reminder



You may feel the need to talk with others before deciding that reasonable suspicion exists.

But once you have reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect, **the law requires that you call ChildLine *immediately*** or file online at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis.

The law does not require that you speak with anyone prior to reporting. But after you report, you are required to notify the person in charge at your facility, or their designee.

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# Evaluation

**iLook Out for Child Abuse**

**Resources**

## iLook Out for Child Abuse

### Course Evaluation

This is the last step before you receive your training certificate. Click and drag the sliders to reflect your assessment of each statement and type your suggestions in the text boxes.

1) How long did it take you to complete this training? Enter # Hours:# Minutes (e.g., 2:30 or 3:15).

```
1:55
```

2) This program was easy to use.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | 7 |
Strongly Disagree                                          Strongly Agree

3) This program kept my interest and attention.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | 7 |
Strongly Disagree                                          Strongly Agree

4) This program provided information that I found useful for my role as a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse/neglect.

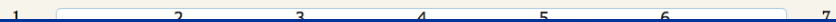| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | 7 |
Strongly Disagree                                          Strongly Agree

5) The information was provided in a way that helped me learn.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | 7 |
Strongly Disagree                                          Strongly Agree

6) The program's interactive storyline was a helpful way to learn about my responsibilities as a mandated reporter for suspected abuse/neglect.
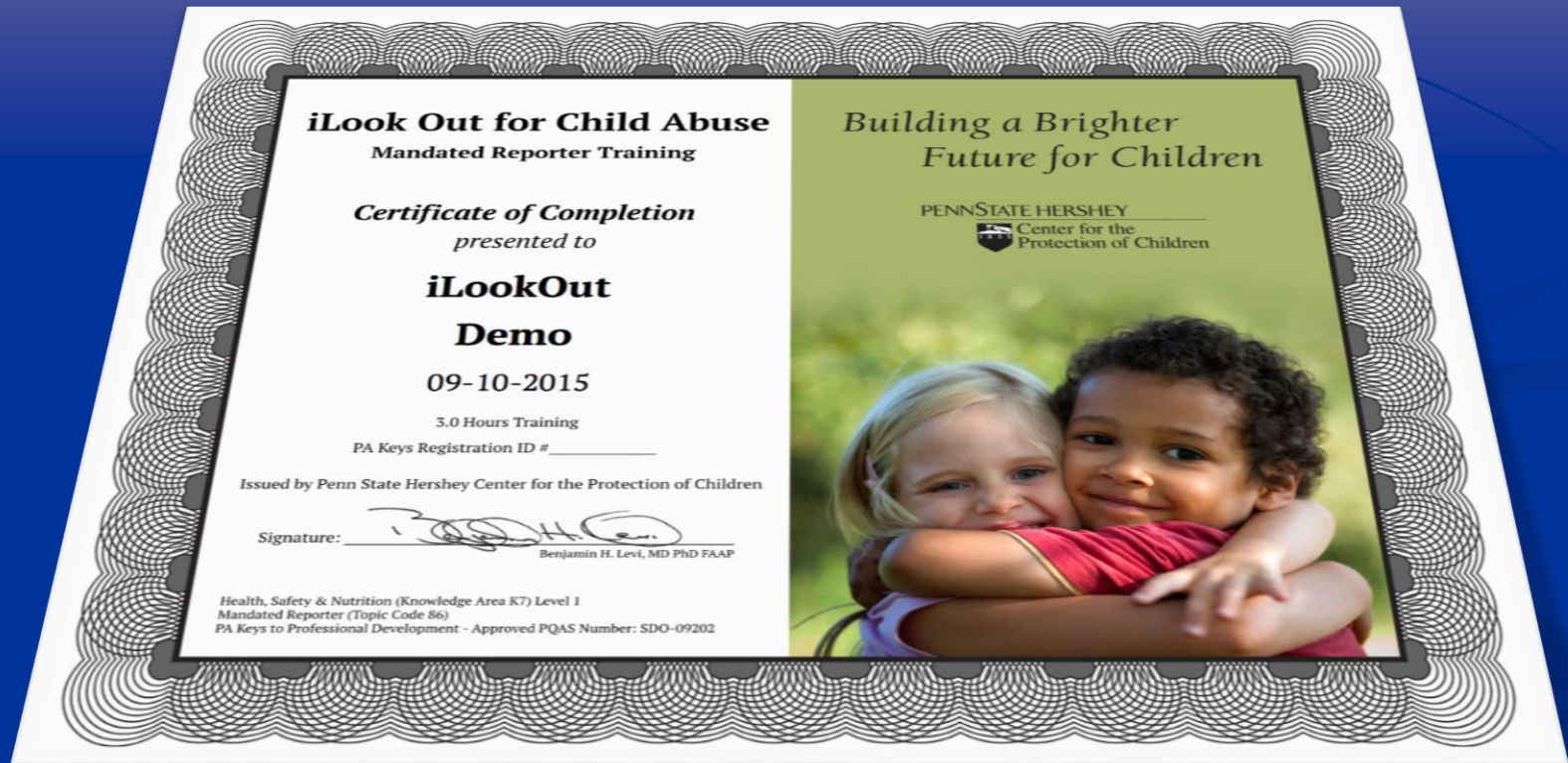
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | 7 |
Strongly Disagree                                          Strongly Agree

7) I would recommend this program to other early childhood practitioners.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | 7 |

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# iLook Out for Child Abuse

# Certificate

# RANDOMIZED CONTROL TRIAL

Single-blind

Test / Re-test design (baseline vs. post-intervention)

Attitudes (13-items, adapted from previously validated)

Knowledge (21-items, validated by expert review)

Recruitment (state-wide mailing to Directors)

Randomization (of individual CCPs)

Age, Parental status, Education, Years as CCP, Size of facility, Rurality

# RANDOMIZED CONTROL TRIAL

735 CCPs –enrolled over 3 weeks

Intervention vs. Control (no signif. baseline differences)

Setting:

Rural (28%); Suburban (50%); Urban (22%)

Hx Report:

Never (69%); Once (13%)

2-5x (13%); ≥6x (5%)

# DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender:     98% Female

Age:        18-29 (40%);  30-44 (29%);   $\geq$45 (30%)

Position:   Teacher (72%); Director (10%);
            Support Staff (18%)

Highest:    H.S. (26%);  B.A. (31%);  Masters (9%)
Degree

No significant differences between groups

# Demographics

Setting:       Non-commercial (56%);  Commercial (15%);
Religious (14%);  Head Start (8%);
Home (3%)

# Children:   <10 (6%);   10-25 (33%);   >25 (60%)

Setting:       Rural (28%);  Suburban (50%);  Urban (22%)

PA counties:  35 of 67

Hx Report:  Never (69%);  Once (13%)
2-5x (13%);     >6x (5%)

No significant differences between groups

# KNOWLEDGE

## (SCALE = 0-21)

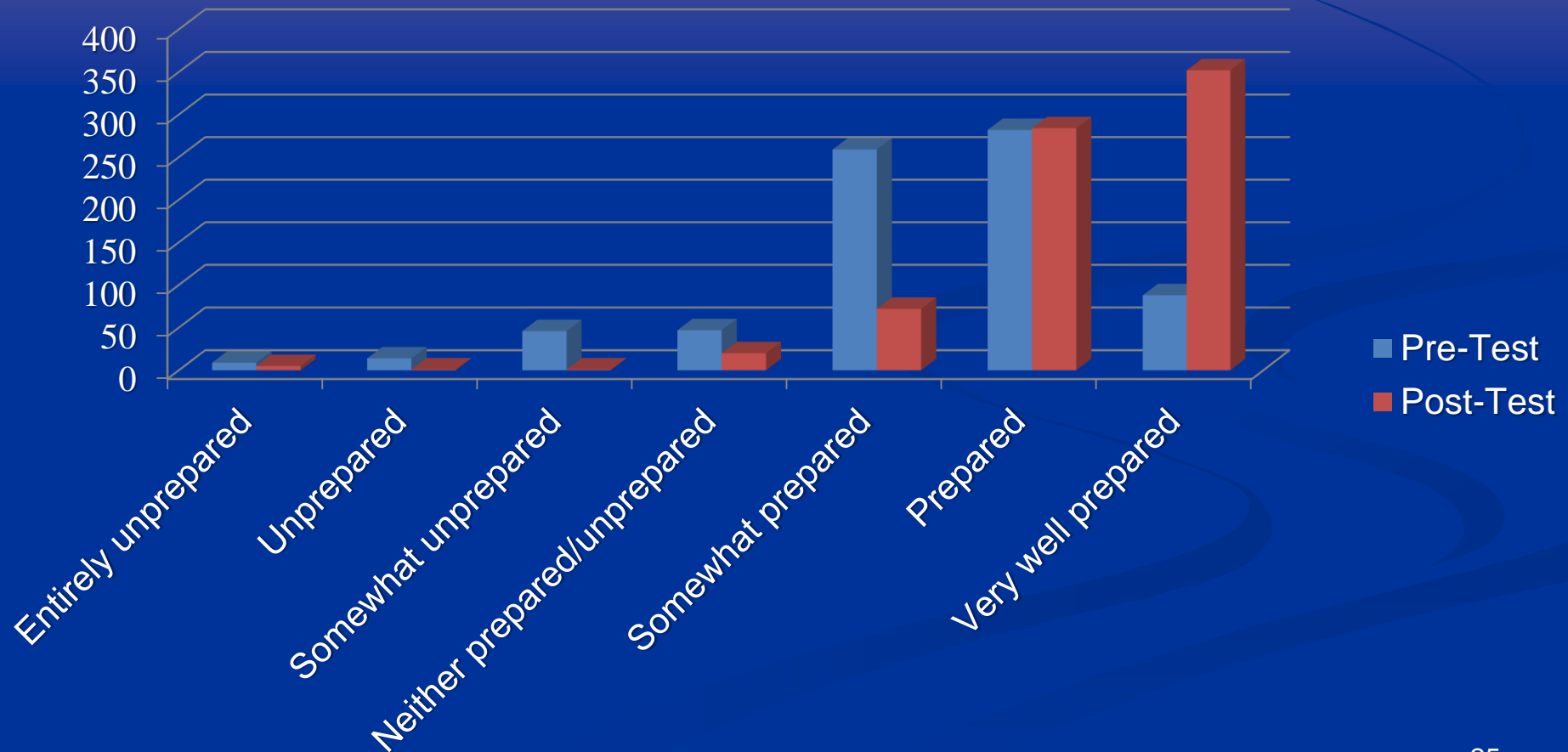| KNOWLEDGE | Pre | Post | Follow-up | p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Control | 13.53 | 13.59 | | 0.58 |
| Intervention | 13.54 | 16.19 | 15.1 | <.001 |

# ATTITUDES

## (SCALE = 1-7 LIKERT, 0.5 UNIT, p<.001)

- Greater confidence: Reporting → positive difference

- Less concern over legal liability for reporting

- Greater conviction that reporting suspected abuse:

  - Improves a child's safety

  - Promotes a child's long-term interests

  - Results in helpful services

# PREPAREDNESS (p<.001)

How prepared do you feel to report child abuse/neglect?

# SATISFACTION

– Overall satisfaction: 8.7 (1=low; 10=high)

– Kept their interest: 6.1 (7-point scale; 7=high)

– Provided useful information: 6.4 (7-point scale)

– Interactive storyline was effective: 6.4 (7-point scale)

# Representative Comments

"As a child care  provider this opened up my eyes a lot!  This was an awesome child abuse training!"

"I found it extremely helpful to have the discussion and behind the scene evaluations – seeing the thought process unfolded."

"I really liked having the resource library at your fingertips to refer to."

# PHASE 2 RESULTS

OPEN ENROLLMENT ACROSS PA (JAN. 2015 –)

>8,000 childcare providers *…and counting*

Demographics

Pre-/Post- Knowledge & Attitudes

Satisfaction

RESULTS ARE ALMOST IDENTICAL TO
PHASE 1 DATA

# NEXT: IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

RCT TO EVALUATE IMPACT ON :

REPORTING RATES of suspected child abuse

SUBSTANTIATION RATES

SOCIAL SERVICES resulting from reports

# IMPLEMENTATION GOAL & RESEARCH QUESTION

- Develop
  - An <u>enhanced</u>, sustainable, online learning module
  - A methodology for reinforcing learning

- Evaluate
  - Effect on CCPs' actual reporting behaviors
  - Impact on the quality and cost of CCP reports of suspected child abuse

# "QUALITY" OF REPORTS
## (OF SUSPECTED ABUSE)

SCREENED-OUT REPORTS    =    LOW YIELD

SCREENED-IN REPORTS:    DEPENDS ON OUTCOME

# "QUALITY" OF (INVESTIGATED) REPORTS

## SOCIAL SERVICES RECOMMENDED

|  | No | Yes |
|---|---|---|
| **UNSUBSTANTIATED** | Low Yield | High Yield |
| **CONFIRMED**<br>–Substantiated<br>–Indicated | High Yield | High Yield |

# IMPACT ON COST OF REPORTS
## (OF SUSPECTED ABUSE)

What proportion of state costs associated with "intake" & investigation of CCP reports of suspected abuse are spent on "Low Yield" reports?

SCREENED OUT

| | SOCIAL SERVICES RECOMMENDED | |
|---|---|---|
| | NO | YES |
| **Low Yield** | | |

| | NO | YES |
|---|---|---|
| UNSUBSTANTIATED | LOW YIELD | HIGH YIELD |
| CONFIRMED | HIGH YIELD | HIGH YIELD |

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# STUDY METHODOLOGY (1)

- Randomized controlled trial

- 3 Arms
  - *iLookOut*
  - Standard (Maine's current online training)
  - Control

- Will examine
  - Reports by CCPs

# STUDY METHODOLOGY (2)

- Stepped Wedge Design:
  - Yr 1:  Set up infrastructure
  - Yr 2:  Three distinct arms
  - Yr 3:  Standard arm converts to *iLookOut*
  - Yr 4:  Control arm also converts to *iLookOut*
  - Yr 5:  State-wide dissemination

# STUDY METHODOLOGY (3)

- Recruitment:

  - All licensed childcare facilities
    - Home-based, Centers, Head Start, etc.

  - Catchment area:  Southern Maine

  - Randomized by "unit"
    - Based on facility characteristics (size, type, etc.)

# STUDY METHODOLOGY (4)

- Data Collection: *Individual*

  ෬ Pre-/Post-tests
  - ෬ Knowledge, Attitudes, Satisfaction
  - ෬ Captured by online learning programs

  ෬ Ping-ing  (*iLookOut* only)
  - ෬ Goal = reinforce learning, awareness, engagement

# STUDY METHODOLOGY (5)

- Data Collection: *Intake*
  - Screening questions
    - will "flag" CCP reports
    - be entered into MACWIS

# STUDY METHODOLOGY (6)

- Data Collection: *Outcomes*
  - CCP report outcomes will be tracked via
    - New MACWIS data fields
    - Cross-referencing registration lists from both *iLookOut* and Standard online training

# WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

POTENTIAL TO:

- Improve prevention / early identification

- Avoid wasting scarce resources

- Set a NATIONAL standard for best practices

# Partnership w/ Maine

- Reimbursement for:
  - Revisions to MACWIS to include new data fields
  - Project supervision
    - Qualitative review
    - Data retrieval/reporting
- State-wide dissemination of *iLookOut*
- Data on how best to improve CCP reporting of suspected child abuse

# iLook Out for Child Abuse

## An Online Learning Module and Research Study