2012

Ending Silence: Youth Speaking Up about Sexual Abuse in Custody - Sheila’s Dilemma

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END SILENCE
YOUTH SPEAKING UP ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE IN CUSTODY

SHEILA'S DILEMMA

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This graphic novel was prepared under a grant funded by a private non-profit donor. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the authors and do not represent the view of any other entity. All characters appearing in this work are fictitious. Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

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END SILENCE: Youth Speaking Up About Sexual Abuse in Custody
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RESOURCES FOR YOUTH

Space intended for agencies to add resources reflective of their specific location and type of agency

Examples include:
- Your 1-800 reporting hotline (if you have one)
- Information and procedure for reporting abuse
- Address and phone number of grievance officer or outside reporting mechanism such as an ombudsman
- Phone number and address for a rape crisis center in the area
- Medical health information
- Guidance on telling parents

FOREWORD

Since 1999, The Project on Addressing Prison Rape (Project) at American University, Washington College of Law has provided training to key correctional decision makers, agencies, associations, and individuals looking to improve their practices on addressing sexual abuse of individuals in custodial settings. In 2009, the Project began to do intensive work within a number of state departments of juvenile justice and to work on issues of LGBTI youth in custody.

The END SILENCE series is the product of that work and work by many organizations and individuals concerned about preventing and addressing sexual abuse of youth in custody. The series includes four other graphic novels targeted to: (1) boys ages 10-14; (2) girls ages 10-14; (3) girls ages 14-18; and (4) LGBT youth.

We would like to thank them for their insightful and honest commentary about the situations that youth face and how sexual abuse affects them.

END SILENCE is a first step in reaching out to youth in juvenile justice settings in order to help them identify, address, and respond to incidents of sexual abuse by staff or other youth. We hope the publication will deepen the dialogue about strategies to eliminate sexual abuse of youth in custody.
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**INTRODUCTION**

*Sheila’s Dilemma* is a graphic novel for female youth, aged 14-18, that focuses on an incident of sexual abuse between a youth and a male staff probation officer.

At the end of the graphic novel you will find: blank panels for youth to fill in an appropriate continuation for the story; a glossary of terms; discussion questions; resources for youth; and a note page. While we understand different states house youth in different settings or classifications, this is meant to address sexual abuse of youth in custody nation-wide. To that end we have generalized some content and details of this novel.

This graphic novel is intended to be "stand alone" material to orient and educate youth about the issue of sexual abuse in custodial settings, we hope it provokes discussions with and between youth.

Please contact us with comments about these stories, the usefulness of graphic novels as a tool for training youth, and suggestions for other needed resources.

The Project on Addressing Prison Rape can be reached at: 202-274-4385 or endsilence@wcl.american.edu

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

(Feel free to ask other additional questions)

- Do you think Sheila should have told someone about Mr. Charles?
- Do you think Frank did the right thing talking to his mom and Mr. Lucas?
- Do you think it took courage for Sheila to talk about what happened to her?
- How do you think Mr. Lucas handled the situation?
- What would you do if this happened to you? Who would you report it to?
- Do you think this situation would be different if Sheila was in a detention setting instead of on probation? If so, how?
GLOSSARY CONTINUED

Sexual Acts:
carnal knowledge, oral sex, anal sex, rape, sexual assault with an
object, sexual fondling

Sexual Assault with an Object:
The use of any hand, finger, object, or other instrument to penetrate,
however slightly, the genital or anal opening of the body of another
person.

Sexual Fondling:
The touching of the private body parts of another person, including
the penis, vagina, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks, for the
purpose of sexual gratification

Sodomy:
Anal sex with a member of the same or opposite sex

Staff Sexual Harassment:
Repeated verbal statements or comments of a sexual nature to
a person in custody by an employee, volunteer, official visitor, or
agency representative, including: demeaning references to gender
or derogatory comments about body or clothing; or profane or obscene
language or gestures.

Staff Sexual Misconduct:
Any behavior or act of a sexual nature directed toward a person in
custody by an employee, volunteer, official visitor, or agency
representative.
Abusive Sexual Contact:
Contact with any person without his or her consent; contact with a person who is unable to consent or refuse; and intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the penis, vagina, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks of any person.

Custody:
When a person is under the power and control of an entity — the police, the juvenile justice system, the prison system — or person and is not free to leave.

Carnal Knowledge:
Contact between the penis and the vagina or the penis and the anus including penetration of any sort.

Non-Consensual Sexual Acts:
Contact with any person without his or her consent, or with a person who is unable to consent or refuse; contact between the penis and the vagina or the penis and the anus including penetration, however slight; contact between the mouth and the penis, vagina, or anus; or penetration of the anal or genital opening of another person by a hand, finger, or other object.

Oral Sex:
Contact between the mouth and the penis, the mouth and the vagina or the mouth and the anus.

Rape:
Includes all of the following actions: oral sodomy, sexual assault with an object, or sexual fondling of a person forcibly or against that person’s will; forcibly or against that person’s will where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of youth, temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity; achieved through exploitation of the fear or threat of physical violence or bodily injury.
FINISH THE STORY...

LATER...

SHEILA, ARE YOU READY TO GO?

HEY MICHELLE, YUP, ALL READY.

YOU'RE DRUNK, LET'S CALL MY BROTHER TO COME GET US.

NO, I'M FINE, I JUST HAD A FEW BEERS.

CRASH!

LATER...

ALTHOUGH YOU HAVE SHOWN REMORSE YOU ARE STILL RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENED.

SHEILA, I AM SENTENCING YOU TO 18 MONTHS OF CLOSE PROBATION AND THE LOSS OF YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE UNTIL YOU ARE 21.

DURING PROBATION YOU WILL NEED TO MEET THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS: NO DRINKING OR DRUGS, URINE TESTS, DRUNK DRIVING SCHOOL, A CURFEW AND REGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE. PLEASE REPORT TO YOUR PROBATION OFFICER, MR. CHARLES, TWICE A MONTH BEGINNING THIS WEEK.

YES SIR, I UNDERSTAND.
LATER...
MR. CHARLES? MY NAME IS SHEILA AND THIS IS MY MOM. I AM HERE FOR MY FIRST PROBATION APPOINTMENT.

COME IN PLEASE, LET'S GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER, SHEILA. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ON PROBATION BEFORE?

OKAY, WELL THEN LET'S TALK ABOUT HOW PROBATION WORKS. YOU NEED TO MEET ALL THE TERMS OF PROBATION AS THE JUDGE LAID THEM OUT.

YOU HAVE TO COMPLY WITH YOUR PROBATION CONDITIONS OR I CAN REVOKE YOU AND YOU WILL BE DETAINED. UNDERSTAND?

NO.

SIX MONTHS LATER...
YOU DIDN'T TEXT ME LAST NIGHT SHEILA, YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO TEXT ME EVERY NIGHT.

I'M SORRY MR. CHARLES, I FORGOT AFTER SWIM PRACTICE.

SHEILA, YOU KNOW YOU NEED TO DO WHAT I TELL YOU, RIGHT?

YES SIR, I WON'T LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN.

A FEW MONTHS LATER...
HEY SHEILA, WANT TO HANG OUT AFTER SCHOOL?

I HAVE TO MEET WITH MY COUNSELOR BUT MAYBE WE CAN GRAB A PIZZA LATER?

THANKS FRANK.

FOR WHAT?

FOR TALKING TO MR. LUCAS.

I DIDN'T...

I KNOW IT WAS YOU. IT'S OKAY. I WAS JUST REALLY SCARED.

WELL HOW ARE THINGS GOING?

IT GETS BETTER EVERY DAY. THE PROBATION DEPARTMENT ARRANGED FOR ME TO HAVE COUNSELING FOR AS LONG AS I NEED IT AND MY NEW PROBATION OFFICER IS REALLY GREAT.

I AM STILL NERVOUS THAT I WILL RUN INTO MR. CHARLES, BUT APARENTLY HE'S DONE THIS BEFORE.

WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL HAPPEN TO HIM?

I'M NOT SURE, I KNOW HE WAS FIRED, AND MRS. DANBURY SAID THEY ARE GOING TO TRY TO PROSECUTE HIM.
GLADYS, PLEASE CALL THE RAPE CRISIS CENTER AND HAVE THEM SEND OVER A COUNSELOR WHO SPECIALIZES IN CHILD SEXUAL ASSAULT. ALSO, CALL SHEILA’S MOM AND HAVE HER COME DOWN.

MRS. DANBURY, CAN YOU CALL LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SOCIAL SERVICES? WE NEED TO KNOW HOW WE SHOULD PROCEED ON THIS.

YOUR MOM AND A COUNSELOR FROM THE RAPE CRISIS CENTER ARE BOTH ON THE WAY OVER. I WANT YOU TO UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE NOT IN TROUBLE. NOTHING MR. CHARLES DID WAS ACCEPTABLE. I AM GOING TO REASSIGN YOUR PROBATION CASE TO MRS. DANBURY FOR NOW.

Okay, Mr. Charles going to know I told on him?

SHEILA, WE ARE GOING TO DO AN INVESTIGATION INTO THIS MATTER. YOU WILL HAVE TO ANSWER SOME DIFFICULT QUESTIONS BUT WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO KEEP YOU SAFE AND YOUR LIFE AS UNINTERRUPTED AS POSSIBLE.

Later that morning...

You wanted to see me?

Mr. Charles, we have received some allegations regarding your behavior with one of your probationers.

Hey Sheila, want to hang out after school?

Sorry, I can’t. I am going home to meet my probation officer.

At your house? I thought your mom was working the late shift this week.

She is, Mr. Charles says it’s better to meet when my mom isn’t around.

That doesn’t sound right.

I have to do what he says or I am going to jail. He said so. I gotta go. Mr. Charles gets mad if I’m late.

Later...

Hey mom, can I ask you something?

Sure. What’s bothering you?

Today at school Sheila told me her probation officer comes to her house when her mom isn’t there. And he texts her all the time.

That does not sound right at all. Has Sheila been acting strange lately?

I guess. She is really distant and never wants to hang out. She is always rushing home.

Okay, I will look into it.
MEANWHILE...

HELLO MR. CHARLES.

YOU'RE LATE SHEILA.

I HAD TO TAKE THE BUS.

I AM AFRAID TO TALK ABOUT IT.

SHEILA, THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT; WE NEED TO KNOW WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING.

MR. CHARLES TEXTS ME ALL THE TIME, AND NOT JUST TO CHECK IF I AM MAKING CURFEW. HE COMES OVER WHEN NO ONE IS HOME...

...AND HE MADE ME TAKE NAKED PHOTOS OF MYSELF AND SEND THEM TO HIM, AND HE TOOK PHOTOS OF ME TOO.

SHEILA, THINK VERY CAREFULLY, DO YOU HAVE THE TEXT MESSAGES FROM MR. CHARLES?

YES, IN MY PHONE.

MAY I SEE THEM?

SURE.

SHEILA, WHAT I AM SEEING HERE IS NOT ONLY AGAINST OUR POLICY, IT'S AGAINST THE LAW. THESE TEXTS AND PHOTOS ARE CONSIDERED CHILD EXPLOITATION AND WE DO NOT TAKE THESE THINGS LIGHTLY. DOES YOUR MOM KNOW ABOUT WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON?

NO, NO ONE KNOWS. I WAS TOO AFRAID TO TELL.

NOW THAT WE KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, DO YOU WANT US TO CALL YOUR MOM?

YES, PLEASE.

OKAY SHEILA, YOU WAIT HERE FOR US. WE WILL BE RIGHT BACK.

WHAT KIND OF PICTURES?

YOU KNOW THE KIND... DON'T WORRY, THEY ARE FOR MY EYES ONLY. YOU DON'T WANT TO GO TO JAIL FOR NOT TAKING SOME PICTURES, DO YOU?
DOES MR. CHARLES BRING ANYONE WITH HIM WHEN HE DOES HIS HOME VISITS? IS ANYONE HOME WITH YOU DURING HIS VISITS?

NO, WE ARE ALONE TOGETHER.

HELLO, MY NAME IS MS. RICHARDS. I NEED TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE REGARDING YOUR POLICY ON HOME VISITS.

THIS IS MR. LUCAS. I AM THE CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER, AND I WOULD BE HAPPY TO TALK WITH YOU. MAY I ASK WHY YOU ARE CALLING ABOUT THIS?

SHEILA, I NEED YOU TO BE VERY HONEST WITH US. HAS MR. CHARLES ACTED INAPPROPRIATELY?

HAS HE SENT TEXT MESSAGES TO YOU, CALLED YOU, WRITTEN LETTERS, TOUCHED YOU, ANYTHING LIKE THAT?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

MY SON IS FRIENDS WITH A YOUNG WOMAN BEING SUPERVISED BY YOUR DEPARTMENT. HE SAID HIS FRIEND’S PROBATION OFFICER TEXTS HER ALL THE TIME AND ONLY DOES HOME VISITS IF NO ONE IS HOME.

MS. RICHARDS, I ASSURE YOU NEITHER OF THOSE THINGS ARE ACCEPTABLE UNDER OUR DEPARTMENT POLICY. DO YOU KNOW ANY OTHER DETAILS?

I DON’T WANT TO GO TO JAIL.

WHY DO YOU THINK YOU WILL GO TO JAIL?

MR. CHARLES SAID IF I DID NOT DO EVERYTHING HE SAID I WOULD GO TO JAIL.

I DON’T KNOW MUCH MORE. I TOLD MY SON I WOULD CHECK INTO IT.

WILL YOUR SON BE WILLING TO SPEAK WITH ME FURTHER?

IF IT MEANS HELPING HIS FRIEND, THEN YES. I THINK HE WOULD. I WILL BRING HIM BY LATER TODAY.

HE TOLD ME IF I TOLD PEOPLE THEY WOULD NOT BELIEVE ME AND I WOULD BE SENT TO JAIL.

IT’S OKAY SHEILA, WE ARE HERE TO TALK, THAT’S ALL.

THAT SOUNDS GOOD, I’LL SEE YOU THEN.

GLADYS, CAN YOU GET ME THE MANDATORY REPORTING AND CRITICAL INCIDENT PAPERWORK. I THINK I AM GOING TO NEED IT.
GOOD AFTERNOON MS. RICHARDS. GOOD AFTERNOON MR. LUCAS. THIS IS MY SON FRANK. HI FRANK, YOUR MOM TELLS ME YOU HAVE SOME CONCERNS ABOUT A FRIEND OF YOURS.

I DON'T WANT TO GET HER INTO TROUBLE, SHE SAID SHE WOULD GO TO JAIL.

I ASSURE YOU, NOTHING YOU TELL ME HERE TODAY WILL CAUSE YOUR FRIEND TO BE IN TROUBLE. LET'S START AT THE BEGINNING.

HELLO SHEILA. THIS IS MR. LUCAS, I AM THE CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER AND I WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH YOU REGARDING YOUR PROBATION.

AM I IN TROUBLE? I HAVE DONE EVERYTHING MR. CHARLES TOLD ME TO DO.

NOT AT ALL SHEILA, WHEN CAN YOU STOP BY?

I CAN COME IN BEFORE SCHOOL TOMORROW.

PERFECT WE WILL SEE YOU THEN. COME DIRECTLY TO MY OFFICE AND LET GLADYS, MY ASSISTANT, KNOW YOU ARE HERE.

THE NEXT DAY...

SHEILA, THANK YOU FOR COMING IN TODAY. I AM MR. LUCAS, WE SPOKE YESTERDAY ON THE PHONE. THIS IS MRS. DANBURY, SHE IS A PROBATION OFFICER AS WELL AS AN INVESTIGATOR FOR OUR DEPARTMENT.

FRANK, I NEED TO TALK WITH SHEILA. WHAT YOU ARE TELLING ME IS AGAINST THE LAW AND OUR DEPARTMENT POLICY. I AM CONCERNED FOR SHEILA'S SAFETY. I DO NOT NEED TO MENTION YOUR NAME, BUT I DO NEED TO TALK TO HER.

OKAY.

NO, BUT WE DO WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT MR. CHARLES. IT HAS COME TO OUR ATTENTION THAT HE IS MEETING WITH YOU AT HOME, IS THAT CORRECT?

YEAH.