



WORKSHOP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Protecting Our Youth

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About Kognito

Kognito is a leading provider of practice-based digital learning experiences that present strategies to improve mental health and well-being across schools, campuses, and communities. Built on an interactive platform, our products integrate several evidence-based models and techniques, game mechanics, and learning principles, allowing users to learn by engaging in role-play conversations with emotionally responsive humans. Through practice and personalized feedback, users learn and assess their competency to lead similar real-life conversations.

Kognito has been instrumental in providing training to over 1 million educators, administrators, students, and their communities. This innovative approach is changing lives by increasing user confidence and awareness on critical topics that impact critical thinking and decision-making.

The Kognito Model

The Kognito model combines evidence-based SEL skills, learning science, and simulated conversation practice with virtual humans to create a learning experience that leads to improved confidence and behavior change. Learners immerse in simulated real-life scenarios, engaging in virtual human conversations and receiving feedback from a virtual coach. This model ensures a reflective and transformational experience.

At Kognito we believe that:

- **Adults learn best when they do.** Kognito’s simulations provide key knowledge on conversation and adult SEL skills, followed by practice opportunities. The active experimentation involved in the simulations turns abstract learning concrete.
- **Adult learners need opportunities for critical reflection.** The conversations provide coaching and other opportunities for learners to reflect on how they are doing and what steps they can take to improve. These critical reflection points allow for more transformative-learning moments and deeper understanding of the communication strategies taught.
- **Adult learning that evokes an emotional response creates a powerful learning experience that is not easily forgotten.** The scenarios are designed to provide these types of “aha” moments by revealing the cause-and-effect relationship between the learners’ communication strategies and the responses they elicit. The learner is then able to relate their experience in the simulation to past experiences and impart new meaning on previous interactions.

How to Use this Guide

To help you facilitate a successful training, we've developed a comprehensive facilitator guide so that you can quickly and efficiently train educators, staff, and athletic personnel. Crafted by instructional design and learning experts, the guide features a road map for facilitating this session and offers a wealth of content and learning activities such as facilitator strategies, learning objectives, group activity and discussion ideas.

- The content found in this guide is intended to supplement, guide, or lead your experience with the Kognito product.
- This guide can be a resource to train workshop leaders discussion leaders.
- This guide can be used for professional development days, in-service days, individual meetings, or group meetings.



Live Facilitation

The following tips offer instructions for leading a live facilitation session using the training module.

Preparation Time: 1-2 hours

Facilitation Runtime: 2-3 hours

Preparation

Determine how to best implement the training at your school:

Decision 1: Will staff complete the online programs prior to the workshop?

- We recommend staff complete online programs on their own and then meet for a face-to-face workshop.
- Alternatively, staff can take the online programs as part of the workshop (on separate computers). Then they rejoin the group for discussion. This would be a half-day training.

Decision 2: Will the workshop be face-to-face or online?

Tips for online workshops:

- Possible software: Zoom, Google Hangouts, WebEx, or Skype.
- The “breakout rooms” in Zoom allow participants to partner for role plays and discussion.
- Share your screen to show PowerPoint slides.
- Assign a co-host to help you manage the workshop.
- Complete a recording of the online workshop and make it available for those who cannot attend.

- ✔ **Review *Protecting Our Youth* and the full professional development Discussion Guide and corresponding PowerPoint.** Customize the PowerPoint to include your school or district's logo and any mission- or vision-specific details. If you schedule less than 3 hours for your workshop, customize it to suit your time constraints.

Discuss your school's referral process with the school leader, counselor, and/or mental-health team. Customize Slide 25 (local resources) and be ready to present this information to the group. *Be sure to include both the traditional at-school referral process as well as the process for referral and connection if students are learning from home. If you will provide mental health services via telehealth, explain that process.*

Cue up the corresponding PowerPoint presentation and make sure you have adequate means to present it to your participants. If needed, you can adjust the length of time of your workshop by adding/removing discussion items or activities.

- ✔ **Print or email the workshop handouts.**

Protecting Our Youth for Educators

- Note-Taking Guide (if participants will use the online program during the workshop)
- One-page summary
- Role-play Scenarios
- Local resources page from the simulation

- ✔ **Sample Planning Timeline.**

- **60 Days Prior:** Confirm training date and location
- **45 Days Prior:** Ensure account access for district/school staff
- **30 Days Prior** (If staff will take simulation prior to workshop): Confirm registration and that attendees have created their accounts
- **5 Days Prior:** Send reminder to staff

Workshop Flow

Welcome & Hook Activity 10 minutes

Slide 1: Welcome

- Welcome attendees and thank them for coming.

Slide 2: Your role

[customize]

- Introduce yourself and (if necessary) your role within the school or district.
- Share contact information. Encourage attendees to reach out to you with questions or follow up after the training.

Slide 3: Workshop overview

[customize this slide if participants will not take the program during the workshop]

- Discuss what participants will learn in the workshop.

Slide 4: Group norms

[customize as necessary]

- Sample norms: actively participate, be respectful, do not share names or identifying information of students or staff, seek help if you would like to discuss personal mental health issues, take a break if any of the material is triggering, reach out to the presenter at the end if you are concerned about a student.

Slides 5-6: Self-Assessment Activity (5 min)

[customize as necessary]

- Ask attendees to use a scrap piece of paper and record their answers on your self-assessment questions.

Self-Assessment Questions:

Rate yourself on a scale of 1-10, 1 being 'needs improvement' and 10 being 'excellent', for the following questions:

- Q. How confident do you feel connecting with your students?
- Q. How would you describe your effectiveness when checking-in with a student?
- Q. How would you describe the level of receptiveness from your students when you check in with them?
- Q. How would you describe your comfort level identifying the warning signs of abuse and neglect in your students?
- Q. How would you describe your confidence when supporting students who are experiencing abuse or neglect?
- Q. What are some professional goals you have related to your relationship with students?
- Q. What things would you like to do differently to strengthen your relationship with students?

- Ensure there is at least one minute for attendees to write their responses and reflect
- Ask participants to share their goals with a neighbor.
- Ask participants to share a few reflections with the whole group.
- Quick Debrief:
 - Keep self-assessment reflections in mind as you complete this training. Be open to learning, expanding your skill set and confidence in being a supportive, secure adult in children's life.

Note: If staff have taken the Kognito simulation prior to the workshop (recommended), then skip to section 5 (PPT slide 11).

Preparing for Simulation

Up to 10 minutes

Slides 7-9: Brief overview of Kognito and the simulations they are about to take

- Kognito’s simulations are evidence-based.
- Encourage staff to choose the conversation pathway that best reflects what they would actually say in a real-life conversation.
- Let staff know we are not asking them to become counselors... but to capitalize on the limited time they have with students to provide the most effective support.

Slide 10: Simulation Overview

Protecting Our Youth allows you to talk with two types of children who are experiencing some form of abuse or neglect at home. This is an opportunity to practice difficult, trauma-informed conversations in a safe place to fail.

Slide 11: Learning Objectives

- Learning Goal:
 - Learners will gain awareness, knowledge, skill, and self-confidence to identify abuse and neglect, and have a trauma informed disclosure conversation with a student.
- Learning Objectives:
 - Assess the situation to effectively have a trauma-informed conversation with a child who discloses abuse, letting them know that you have listened and validating their sharing.
 - Examine for warning signs that assist in identifying abuse and neglect.
 - Examine when to report concerns and offer students potential referral options.
 - Identify legal responsibilities related to reporting abuse and neglect.
 - Define different types of child abuse and maltreatment, including physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse.

Practice

45 minutes

Slide 12: Take the Simulation

- Ensure participants can login to their account.
- Provide headphones to all participants.
- Distribute the ***note-taking guide*** to all participants.
- Proctor the room to allow anyone needing assistance to communicate with you.
- Participants who finish early can begin their break. Write on the board what time the workshop will reconvene for discussion.

Break

15 minutes

Discussion

30-40 minutes

Slide 13-14: Conversations Overview

- Remind participants about the conversations in the simulation (include more detail if the participants took the program prior to the workshop).
- Ask a few questions to get the discussion going.
- Sample questions:
 - How similar did these feel to conversations you've had in real life?
 - Did you try new things in these conversations that you haven't tried in real life?
 - Have you met students like Brandon or Marisol?

Slide 15-16: Warning Signs

- Distribute/Share the Simulation Summary
- Looking at the list of Warning Signs, are there any that you hadn't considered in the wider context of abuse or neglect?

- Why is it important for teachers to notice, reach out to the student, and possibly refer them for support? (Possible answers: creates an opportunity for earlier intervention to assist student; build an environment of trust and resiliency for the student by being another adult they know cares; educators are in a front line position to notice and connect students with the resources designed to help them; the earlier a child gets the help they need, the better their overall education and development outcomes might be; students receiving needed support may have an improved classroom experience, better able to focus and engage)
- This is an ideal time for the presenter to demonstrate one or more of these techniques (neutral observable statements, open ended questions, and reflections), modeling them for participants.

Slides 17-18: Checking In with Students

- Have you ever been concerned about a student, but you weren't sure how to ask them about what was going on? If so, can you share what you would do differently today?
- If you have had concerns about one or more of your students in the past and have initiated conversations like this, what worked well for you? How did you decide to approach that student? What happened?

Slide 19: Conversation Techniques

- “Now we'll talk about four techniques to use when you approach a student to check-in with them.”
- The techniques used in the conversation with Brandon and Marisol were:
 - Make neutral observations
 - Reflect what the student is saying
 - Ask open-ended questions
 - Make a warm hand-off when making a referral

Slide 20: Neutral Observable Statements:

- Review this technique with participants.
- Possible questions:
 - What's an example of a neutral observable statement you might use in a check-in conversation?

- How do neutral observable statements help build trust and a supportive relationship with the student? (*Possible answers: They encourage students to clarify your understanding of what they're going through, they help students feel heard and listened to, they can help build trust with students*)

Slide 21: Open-Ended Questions:

- Review this technique with participants. Asking questions can help a student open up and feel comfortable sharing with you.
- Possible discussion questions:
 - What's an example of an open-ended question you might use in a conversation like this?
 - How do open-ended questions help you assess a student's level of distress? (*Possible answers: They encourage students to talk more, sharing how they feel, rather than just answering "yes" or "no"*)

Slide 22: Reflections:

- Review this technique with participants. Remember that whatever you reflect, the student is likely to expand on.
- Possible discussion questions:
 - What's an example of a reflection you might use in a conversation like this? (*Examples should focus only on the facts and be delivered with a neutral tone of voice and neutral words.*)
 - How do reflections encourage the other person to keep opening up? (*Possible answers: They show you're listening and interested; if you get it wrong, the student will correct you; if you get it right, the student will feel heard*)
 - How can you use a combination of neutral observable statements, open ended questions, and reflections together in a conversation? (*Possible answer: Students will elaborate when you make neutral observable statements, answer your open-ended questions, then you can reflect the most important parts of what you're hearing. "I" statements make it clear that any interpretations you're making are only your thoughts/feelings/ideas and may not be accurate. This reduces the other person's defensiveness.*)

Slide 23: Referring Students

- Review this technique with participants. Students want to feel supported and know that you're there with them every step of the way. This can increase their motivation to go.
- Possible discussion questions:
 - Why is it important to use techniques like these, instead of just telling the student they should see the counselor? *(Possible answer: the student is less likely to push back against the idea if you use a soft approach; if you can increase the students' ownership of seeing the counselor, they are more likely to follow through with it)*
 - What do you do if the student says "no"? *(Possible answer: If you think the student is a danger to themselves or others, make a referral per your school's policies; you may still wish to discuss the student's situation with the counselor or other support personnel; if you have reasonable belief that the child is being abused or neglected you are obligated to report)*
- How comfortable do you feel suggesting a student speak with a counselor?

Slide 24: Continuing a Supportive Relationship with Students

- Possible discussion questions:
 - How is a check-in conversation about potential abuse or neglect different from other conversation you may have with your students, for example: a disciplinary conversation? *(Possible answers: When you check-in with a student, you are approaching as a supportive adult, your goal is to get the student talking, you are listening more than talking)*
 - What words/tones do we often use when we're approaching a student as an authority figure? *(Possible answers: giving unsolicited advice, disciplining, presuming we already know the reason the student is behaving the way they are)*
 - How do these conversation techniques help us assume the role of a supportive adult, instead of approaching as an authority figure? *(Possible answers: not acting like we already know the reasons for the behavior, bringing up concerns in a way that doesn't blame or criticize the student and is less likely to provoke defensiveness, encouraging the student to open up)*

At this point in the discussion, please distribute the Discussion Guide Handout (included at the end of the Discussion Guide) and have the group fill in your school's abuse and neglect referral and reporting policies and procedures together. You may also want to refer the group to the set of "Resources" you've printed out from within the simulation.

Role Play 1

30 min

Slide 25: Roleplay #1 Talk with Adrian

Prepare for the role play (5 min)

- Ask participants to break into groups of two for a set of role plays. Online-meeting systems like Zoom offer randomized break-out rooms for set periods of time and set group sizes.
- Tell participants they will role play two conversations between a teacher and a student.
- Ask them to decide who will play the teacher first.

Role Play (10 min)

- Pass out the role-play handout to all participants. Ask them to read Scenario A on the handout and read ONLY about their character (the concerned teacher or the student). Together, they can decide a target age/grade for Adrian, based on the age of their real-life students. Begin their first role play.
- Optional: Keep up Slide 15 (conversation role-play techniques).
- Give participants a one-minute reminder before the end of the role play.

Role-Play Scenario A

Concerned Teacher:

In class today, your student Adrian was picking his skin and seemed distracted during your lesson. You checked in with Adrian immediately after class and have talked to them more about their anxiety and coping skills.

Adrian:

Your uncle has been taking more care of you and your siblings since your parents are now working extra, late-night hours. Your uncle is a strong authoritarian when it comes to completing schoolwork and only allowing “earned free time”. When he checks over homework with you, he caresses your body in progressively sexual ways. Even when you ask him to stop, he ignores your requests and continues talking about the schoolwork. With final exams approaching, you are unable to focus during class with the fear and anticipation of doing homework and being abused by your uncle.

Role play discussion (15 min)

- If you played the role of the teacher, what did you learn about the context of Adrian’s actions and their emotional state?
- If you played the role of the student, what did your teacher do in this conversation to help you feel comfortable and respected?
- How were the techniques (using neutral observable statements, asking open-ended questions, making reflections, and making a warm hand off to support staff) used to approach Adrian more as a supportive adult than as a disciplinarian? Alternatively, how could they have been used to make the conversation even better?
- What kind of advance planning, if any, is necessary for conducting a conversation like this? (Possible answers: checking your emotions to put aside any unhelpful thoughts or presumptions you may have about the student or parent; considering how you might bring up the things you’ve noticed and what kind of language you will use)
- How did Adrian react to a warm hand-off with support staff?
- How else might you better support Adrian at school?

Role Play 2

25 min

Slide 26: Roleplay #2 Talk with Cleo

Role Play (10) min

- Pass out the role-play handout to all participants. Ask them to read Scenario A on the handout and read ONLY about their character (the concerned teacher or the student). Together, they can decide a target age/grade for Cleo, based on the age of their real-life students. Begin their first role play.
- Optional: Keep up Slide 15 (conversation role-play techniques).
- Give participants a one-minute reminder before the end of the role play.

Role-Play Scenario B

Concerned Teacher:

For the past few weeks, you've noticed your student Cleo has had big shifts in their friend group. Cleo has withdrawn from social groups and disappears during lunch. When you notice Cleo arrive at school with some strange bruises and a black eye, you decide to invite Cleo to eat lunch in your classroom.

Cleo:

Your stepmom has been drinking more since your dad lost his job last year. Even though your dad is employed again, things are still stressful. Typically, dinnertime is when the most fights happen, it starts with unprovoked arguments and has recently escalated to physical fights. Your stepmom will slap, pull/push, and throw things at you during these fights. She's stopped making you lunches, picking you up from swim practice, and has said she doesn't care if you come home ever again. You feel too embarrassed to socialize with your friends and you spend lunch in the locker room watching videos on your phone to get through the day.

Role Play Discussion (15 min)

- If you played the role of the teacher, how successful was this conversation? What were some critical moments?
 - If you played the role of the student, what kind of warning signs did you talk about? How did this conversation feel to you?
 - How were the techniques (using neutral observable statements, asking open-ended questions, making reflections, and making a warm hand off to support staff) used to approach Cleo more as a supportive adult than as a disciplinarian? Alternatively, how could they have been used to make the conversation even better?
 - What kind of advance planning, if any, is necessary for conducting a conversation like this? (Possible answers: checking your emotions to put aside any unhelpful thoughts or presumptions you may have about the student or parent; considering how you might bring up the things you've noticed and what kind of language you will use)
 - What did a warm hand off look like with Cleo?
 - How else might you better support Cleo at school?
-

Our School's Processes

10 min

Slide 27: Local Resources

- Pass out copies of the “Local Resources” page from the simulation. These are resources that will have been provided by the agency sponsoring your access to the simulation.
-

Conclusion Activities

20 min

Slide 28: 3, 2, 1 Activity

- On a new piece of paper, write down 3 things you learned today, 2 questions you have, and 1 way you're going to change your practice.
- Allow participants to share their answers.

Slide 29: Bridging the Gap Activity

- “Let's do some action planning, to think about your students, and commit to some takeaways. Visualize where you are, where you'd like to be, and what it takes to get there.”

1. Where you are: First, list some of your observations.
 2. Where You'd Like To Be: Second, list some of the qualities of your ideal version of yourself as a supportive, secure adult.
 3. What It Takes: Finally, list some ideas that might bridge the gap between where you are and where you'd like to be. What support systems do you have in your life to help you achieve your goals with student-supportive-relationships?
- Allow participants to share their ideas.

Slide 30: Conclusion

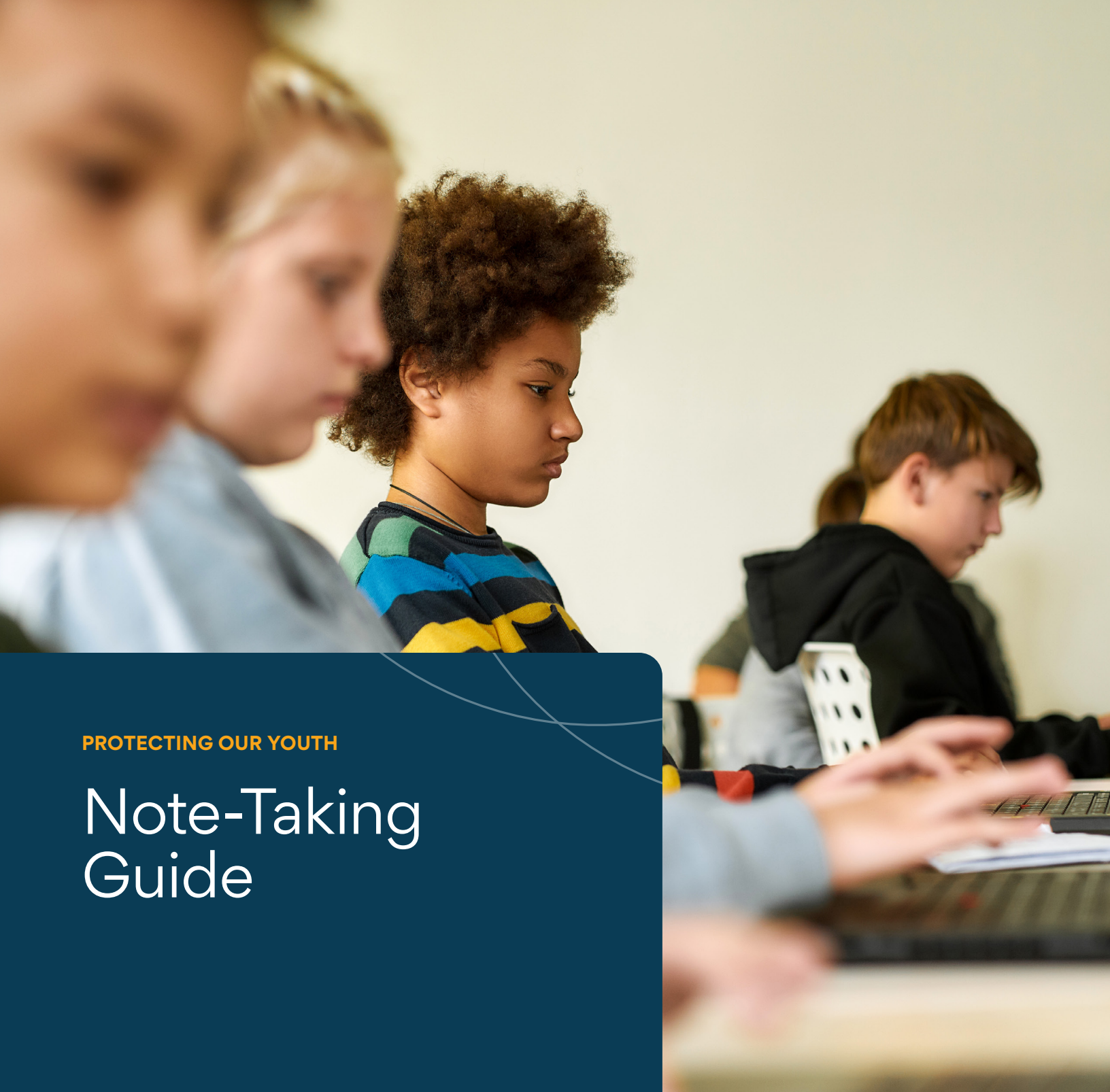
- Faculty and staff don't necessarily have to become well-versed in the most current psychological studies or to feel completely comfortable and knowledgeable about abuse and neglect in order to make school safer and more inclusive for students. To make a difference, it is only necessary for them to:
 - Commit to fostering supportive and secure relationships with their students by conducting check ins and identifying potential warning signs.
 - Have trauma-informed conversations with their students, and colleagues, using effective conversation techniques.

Slide 31: Final questions:

- How confident do you feel in your abilities to address child abuse and neglect and check in with students, and why?
- If you had to state one thing you took away from this experience, what would it be? How does it relate to your role as a faculty or staff member?

Slide 32: Thank you

- Thank participants for their time and remind them of why this topic is important.
- Allow for questions.



PROTECTING OUR YOUTH

Note-Taking Guide

Note-Taking Guide

By the end of this program, you will be able to:

- **Assess situations** to effectively have a trauma-informed conversation with a child who discloses abuse, letting them know that you have listened and validated their sharing.
- **Examine for warning signs** that assist in identifying abuse and neglect.
- **Examine when to report concerns** and offer students potential referral options.
- **Identify legal responsibilities** related to reporting abuse and neglect.
- **Define different types of child abuse and maltreatment**, including physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse.

Notes

Note-Taking Guide

Notes

Note-Taking Guide

Adrian Conversation

Cleo Conversation



PROTECTING OUR YOUTH

Simulation Summary

Simulation Summary

Protecting Our Youth teaches skills in identifying, discussing, preventing, and reporting child abuse, neglect and human trafficking.

Engaging in Trauma-Informed Conversations

- **Identify** using Neutral Observable Statements
- **Approach** using Open Ended Questions and Reflections
- **Refer**

Trauma-Informed Conversation Techniques

- Neutral Observable Statements
- Open Ended Questions
- Reflections
- Warm Hand Off

Types of Abuse and Neglect (partial list)

- Physical Abuse
- Neglect (can be physical emotional, medical)**
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse

** It is important to note that poverty is not a sign, type, or indicator of neglect or abuse. Conditions and indicators of child abuse and neglect can be present across the full socio-economic spectrum.

Warning Signs to Consider (partial list)

- Not handing in assignments
- Not participating in class
- Changes in friend groups
- Spending more time alone
- Not transitioning to new activities
- Being more withdrawn
- Trouble regulating emotions
- Not wanting to go home at the end of the day
- Crying or being upset
- Speaks of having no caregiver at home
- Being absent from school
- Disengaging during class time
- Hood up listening to music
- Skipping class, or withheld from special education service options
- Using substances
- Reckless behavior
- Obvious untreated medical or dental problems



PROTECTING OUR YOUTH

Role-Play Scenarios

Role-Play Scenarios

Role-Play Scenario A

Concerned Teacher

(Read this if you are playing the teacher role)

In class today, your student Adrian was picking his skin and seemed distracted during your lesson. You checked in with Adrian immediately after class and have talked to them more about their anxiety and coping skills.

Adrian

(Read this if you are playing the student role)

Your uncle has been taking more care of you and your siblings since your parents are now working extra, late-night hours. Your uncle is a strong authoritarian when it comes to completing schoolwork and only allowing “earned free time”. When he checks over homework with you, he caresses your body in progressively sexual ways. Even when you ask him to stop, he ignores your requests and continues talking about the schoolwork. With final exams approaching, you are unable to focus during class with the fear and anticipation of doing homework and being abused by your uncle.

Role-Play Scenarios

Role-Play Scenario **B**

Concerned Teacher

(Read this if you are playing the teacher role)

For the past few weeks, you've noticed your student Cleo has had big shifts in their friend group. Cleo has withdrawn from social groups and disappears during lunch. When you notice Cleo arrive at school with some strange bruises and a black eye, you decide to invite Cleo to eat lunch in your classroom.

Cleo

(Read this if you are playing the student role)

Your stepmom has been drinking more since your dad lost his job last year. Even though your dad is employed again, things are still stressful. Typically, dinnertime is when the most fights happen, it starts with unprovoked arguments and has recently escalated to physical fights. Your stepmom will slap, pull/push, and throw things at you during these fights. She's stopped making you lunches, picking you up from swim practice, and has said she doesn't care if you come home ever again. You feel too embarrassed to socialize with your friends and you spend lunch in the locker room watching videos on your phone to get through the day.