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*The Sex Abuse Treatment Center's mission is to support the emotional healing process of those sexually assaulted in Hawai'i, to increase community awareness about their needs and to reduce the incidence of all forms of sexual assault.*

## FROM THE HEART

*Comments from those served by the SATC staff*

"Thanks so much! I taught another lesson today and the students really liked it. Everyday, before and after a lesson, we say aloud, "My Body, My Boundaries," and we read the two posters altogether. They love it, I even let them shout it." (teacher trained on SATC's sexual abuse prevention curriculum)

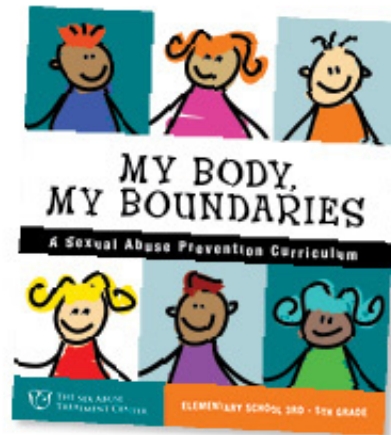
"(THERAPIST'S NAME) helped me to recognize that it wasn't my fault and how to cope with my loneliness and depression."

"It (COUNSELING) has helped me cope with the emotions. Navigating through school, work, and family life would have been next to impossible without the Sex Abuse Treatment Center."

## Sanne and Ron Higgins Champion Child Sexual Abuse Prevention in Hawai'i

*Adriana Ramelli, SATC Executive Director*

I'd like to share a story about Sanne and Ron Higgins, a special couple who have a strong and heartfelt desire to protect children from sexual abuse. It was serendipitous that I should meet Sanne Higgins over 8 years ago. Just prior to meeting her, our Sex Abuse Treatment Center (SATC) staff had approached me about a new and exciting prevention initiative. They wanted to create comprehensive sexual abuse prevention curricula for teachers to use in the classroom with their students. It was an ambitious project — to produce an educational product to build the capacity of teachers statewide to engage in prevention work.



When I met with Sanne for the first time, our conversation immediately focused on the prevalence of child abuse in Hawai'i, particularly sexual abuse. She was keenly aware of the emotional and physical repercussions of abuse on young lives. Our conversation led to a discussion about protecting children and Sanne wanted to know how SATC could expand its role to help prevent sexual abuse. It was a perfect moment in time! I was engaged in a conversation with someone who had a passion and a vision for prevention education. The rest is history.

Sanne and Ron Higgins, through the Higgins Family Foundation, invested in SATC's dream and together we created the Sexual Violence Prevention Curricula and Training Program for students in K-12th grade. The curricula covers a range of topics tailored to a child's age, such as basic lessons on personal boundaries, accessing help if sexually victimized, sexual harassment prevention, how to stay safe from internet predators and how to develop safe, respectful relationships. To date 500 teachers, counselors and administrative staff from 150 schools statewide have received specialized training on the curricula.

Thanks to Sanne and Ron Higgins thousands of Hawai'i's children have learned critical skills and information to keep them safe from sexual abuse. It has been an extraordinary privilege to partner with them.

*"The decision to support this project is rooted in our commitment to make a difference in the lives of our keiki. We firmly believe that through this curricula, young people's risk of sexual victimization can be reduced and abusive behaviors can be replaced with healthy interactions. This curricula is important in shaping a healthy and violence-free Hawai'i."*  
SANNE AND RON HIGGINS (TAKEN FROM THE CURRICULA FORWARD)

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*Executive Director*

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The Sex Abuse Treatment Center  
55 Merchant Street, 22nd Floor  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

535-7600

www.satchawaii.com

## Micronesian Women Complete SATC Training

Thanks to funding from the Hawai'i Women's Legal Foundation, the Sex Abuse Treatment Center (SATC) staff successfully trained six Micronesian women leaders to co-facilitate community trainings using the Micronesian Sexual Violence Prevention Outreach Curriculum.



*Micronesian trainers are honored at a graduation ceremony on May 20. (L to R): Nite Kristoph, Millie Phillip, Kalista Marbou and Ansy Simor.*

The curriculum addresses topics such as sexual violence awareness from a cultural perspective, impact of victimization, child sexual abuse, sexual assault laws and prevention strategies.

*"I was very happy with the curriculum we worked on because I know that we can help the Chuukese community, especially the youth."*

Together with the SATC staff, the Micronesian trainers reached out to members of their community, providing them with much needed sexual violence education. The trainings, rooted in an understanding of cultural norms, enabled the participants to better understand the dynamics of sexual violence, to learn about Hawai'i sex crime laws, and to challenge old beliefs.

The project was a pioneering effort as the female Micronesian trainers challenged cultural mores to implement a curriculum that emphasizes each person's right to make choices about sexual behavior. As Micronesian trainer Nite Kristoph explained, "As women, it was important to learn that we have the right to say no. Back home we have no choice. Whatever they want, they expect us to be obedient."

"I was very happy with the curriculum we worked on because I know that we can help the Chuukese community, especially the youth," said Nite Kristoph. "They are unaware of the difference of the law, and with this curriculum they can learn the law and the consequences that can ruin their lives. I want this curriculum to be presented in the community so everybody can understand."

**SAVE  
THE DATE!**

October 12th, 11:30–1:30pm

The Annual SATC Benefit Luncheon • O'ahu Country Club • 535-7600

## Using Music to Educate New Child Safety CD

Ask any parent or teacher, and they will tell you that music is an effective way to engage and teach young children. That's why the Sex Abuse Treatment Center (SATC) decided to create an educational CD to help keep children safe from sexual abuse.



The new CD is part of SATC's school curriculum developed for teachers to use in the classroom with children in kindergarten through 2nd grade. The three lesson curriculum entitled "My Body is Special" is endorsed by the Hawai'i Department of Education and is used in elementary schools statewide.

The CD reinforces key messages with young children such as my body is special and belongs to me; no one should touch my private parts and ask me to keep it a secret; and I need to talk to a grown-up I trust if unsafe/secret touching happens to me. "We took familiar childhood tunes and then added our safety themed lyrics," explained Christine Trecker, SATC Education Manager. "Children enjoy singing the songs and in the process learn the important safety messages."

Le Jardin Academy generously volunteered its services to produce the "My Body is Special" CD. Micah Hirokawa, Music Director for Le Jardin Academy's Lower School, directed student vocalists and provided the music accompaniment.

Download the CD, lyrics and Parent Tips at SATC's website ([www.satchawaii.com](http://www.satchawaii.com)).

## Sexting and Our Children Sobering New Research

Earlier this year University of Hawai'i Professor Thanah Truc. T. Nguyen of the Curriculum Development Group released findings from a survey showing that 31 percent of Hawai'i's children in 5th – 12th grade have participated in sexting using cell phones. Sex text messages or "sexting" refers to the sending of or receiving sexually explicit photos or videos by computer or cell phone. According to the findings, 19 percent of the youth surveyed have friends who have sent or received sex text or photos and 33 percent have forwarded such messages they received.

As Hawai'i and other states explore the legal ramifications of sexting among minors, attention has focused on educating youth about the personal consequences of such behavior.

A national public education campaign targeting youth called *That's Not Cool* ([www.thatnotcool.com](http://www.thatnotcool.com)) addresses various forms of digital abuse, including sexting. The campaign's website urges young people to consider the following before engaging in sexting:

- Private information can go viral in a matter of seconds.
- Photos that were meant to be private often end up being public because the receiver circulates them to show off or brag, as revenge during a break-up, or even just by accident.
- It is NEVER okay for someone to use pressure or threats to get someone to send a nude or private picture.

## April was Sexual Assault Awareness Month

On March 30th Mayor Peter Carlisle signed a proclamation declaring April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. (L to R) Paula Chun from the Hawai'i Coalition Against Sexual Assault and SATC Executive Director Adriana Ramelli.



# Helping Victims Recover

## *Prolonged Exposure Therapy*

After a traumatic event such as a sexual assault, many individuals experience symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Memories, thoughts, feelings, and situations that are related to the trauma are especially distressing. Prolonged Exposure (PE) is one type of therapy that helps survivors change how they react to stressful memories.

From February through May of this year, the SATC clinical staff received advanced training on PE techniques with Allison Aosved, Ph.D. of the Traumatic Stress Recovery Program at the Department of Veteran Affairs. Extensive research has demonstrated that PE therapy effectively reduces PTSD symptoms in a wide array of traumas, including sexual assault and combat- and terror-related PTSD. The military has implemented the use of PE therapy nationally with its veterans with notable success and this recent training exemplifies SATC's commitment to providing empirically based trauma-informed care to survivors.

"PE therapy involves repeated exposure to assault-related thoughts, feelings, and situations in conjunction with education, real world practice and talking through the trauma," explained SATC therapist Christy Werner. "This process helps reduce the power of memories to cause distress. In short, survivors learn that they can control their own life."



*SATC therapist Christy Werner, LCSW*

The Sex Abuse Treatment Center  
55 Merchant Street, 22nd Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



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