



PROOF POSITIVE

Empowering Sexually Abused Boys

By Lisa Dunn, executive vice president and director of programs with The Children's Alliance of Hawaii

Resilience is a central point in The Children's Alliance of Hawaii's (CAH) recently launched program, Ho'omaka for Boys. Based on best practices and resiliency theory, the program advocates for and empowers sexually abused male children and adolescents ages 9 to 21 living on Oahu.

Ho'omaka matches male victims of sexual abuse or sex trafficking with a professional mentor for at least 12 months. Mentors and mentees meet weekly for one- or two-hour scheduled sessions, with the amount and length of sessions adjustable to fit individual needs.

Building a trusting relationship between mentor and mentee is especially important because many sexually abused boys and young men don't see themselves as children or as victims, which makes it difficult to get them to seek assistance from service providers. After developing a healthy, trustful and caring relationship with their mentors, these boys and young men will learn and practice how to make well-informed decisions, create quality relationships with adults and peers, and set personal goals. Mentoring

sessions are activity-based and are chosen to match a mentee's interests, strengths and/or goals.

Activities include but are not limited to hiking, studying, going to the beach, fishing, playing sports and volunteering.

In addition, mentoring sessions will include top-

and self-esteem. They will be able to identify personal strengths and have formulated and initiated a personal plan. For 80 percent of participants who attend at least 24 sessions, the hope is that they experience an increase in resiliency.

As for the long-term outcome, CAH hopes mentoring



Children's Alliance of Hawaii's Ho'omaka for Boys program matches male victims of sexual abuse with professional mentors for weekly activities that interest the mentee, such as hiking and sports

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ic-structured discussions on short-term and long-term goal setting, healthy relationships, healthy sexuality, teen pregnancy/STD prevention and assertive communication.

The expected and favorable short-term outcome of Ho'omaka is that 60 percent of participants who attend at least 16 sessions will experience increased self-efficacy

sexually abused male children and adolescents will enhance the continuity of an integrated system of comprehensive services, protecting victims by reducing the negative effects of past sexual abuse as well as reducing the risk of further abuse.

To learn more or find out how you can help, visit ChildrensAllianceHawaii.org or call 599-2955.

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