

“I’m the Boss of Me” 2023 Final Report



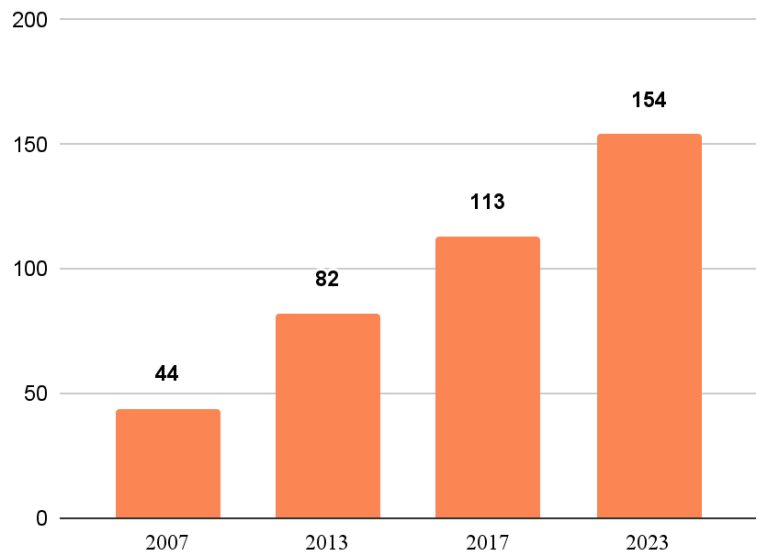
Back in action!

Reflecting on this season of “I’m the Boss of Me,” SSAIC is incredibly proud of how this project has grown and adapted since its inception. We excitedly returned to in-classroom presentations with our new hybrid model while keeping our virtual model available for schools outside of the city limits.

Once again, we are getting ever closer to delivering ITBOM to each and every Grade 4 classroom in the Saskatoon and area:

- We presented **154 shows**, our most successful season to date. **87** presentations were for classrooms in the Saskatoon Public School Division (SPSD), **57** in the Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division (GSCS), **9** in the Prairie Spirit School Division (PSSD), and **1** show at the Saskatoon Christian School.
- We booked shows in **98%** of bookable SPSD schools, plus alliance school Charles Red Hawk (47 of 48).
- We booked shows in **68%** of GSCS schools (30 of 44), an increase of 4 schools over last year.
- **16** of the 154 shows were virtual, enabling us to extend our reach past Saskatoon city limits.
- In total, we reached **4,166 students** in our ten weeks of shows, an increase of 610 over last year.
- We operated with a dedicated team of 8 volunteer facilitators, 1 practicum student, 1 SSAIC counsellor, the Program Coordinator and the Education & Outreach Coordinator.

Total Presentations Delivered



We have now presented “I’m the Boss of Me” to over 41,000 students since 2007.

Program Overview

“I’m the Boss of Me” is a school-based child sexual abuse education and prevention program delivered to students in Grade 4. It was created 18 years ago by SSAIC and operates in partnership with the SPSD and GSCS. Our program’s goals are to teach children:

- What various types of child abuse are;
- That abuse from an adult is never their fault;
- That they should never keep secrets about abuse;
- That they have the right to say “no” to anything that makes them uncomfortable;
- How to identify a safe adult to tell about abuse;
- To have empathy for other children who experience abuse; and
- That they are the boss of their bodies!

We aim to empower children through an understanding of bodily autonomy and consent at a young age in the hope of preventing children from staying silent when they are in abusive situations.

How do we achieve this? We provide classroom teachers with a unit of 6 curriculum-based lesson plans that build upon each other and bookend the puppet show presentation as Lesson 3 of the unit. The unit was designed to be easily picked up by teachers to engage Grade 4 students in order to maximize our message – that everyone is the boss of their own bodies. The puppet show and group discussion each take approximately 25 minutes, creating a 50 minute presentation in total.

Hybrid Model: After moving to remote delivery for two seasons due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we successfully implemented a hybrid model of ITBOM for the 2023 season. Rather than a strictly in-person or virtual delivery model, we combined the two delivery formats to re-enter the classroom while still utilizing the video recording of the puppet show. We continued to deliver ITBOM remotely via Zoom for classrooms outside of the Saskatoon city limits. This hybrid model reduces the number of volunteers required for in-person delivery, resulting in a smaller, stronger, and more close-knit group of program facilitators.

With the objective to reach as many students as possible, expanding the program outside of the immediate Saskatoon area has been an ongoing goal, and the continued opportunity to introduce ITBOM into Prairie Spirit schools was encouraging. We will continue to foster relationships with the Prairie Spirit School Division to express our interest in partnering with them in the future to bring ITBOM to their classrooms. We continued to emphasize the importance of school counsellors being in attendance for every presentation. This is to ensure students who may

disclose abuse during the show or were distressed by the content are appropriately and immediately supported.

Professional Development for Teachers / Counsellors / Administrators: In January, before the show delivery season began, SSAIC offered virtual training to Grade 4 teachers, administrators, and school counsellors. The material covered in the sessions included information on:

- Introducing the ITBOM program and how it works;
- The signs of child sexual abuse;
- The operation of systematic grooming used by perpetrators and the impacts of this process on children and their caregivers;
- How to support a child who discloses sexual or other types of abuse in a trauma-informed way;
- How to report a disclosure or suspicion of child abuse to the proper authority;
- What the process of reporting child abuse to police and/or the Ministry of Social Services looks like;
- Resources and services available in Saskatoon for children and their caregivers; and
- Where these professionals can get support or counselling for themselves if they require it.

This was the third year we have offered this training, which 51 professionals registered to receive (an increase of 18 people compared to the previous year). It is worth noting that we opened this presentation up to the general public and advertised it as part of our Online Learning Workshop Series, which is reflected in this increase of registration.

Program Delivery

Despite our ITBOM delivery season being a short ten weeks, the Education & Outreach Coordinator, with help from the Program Coordinator, works throughout the year to prepare the program for delivery. Responsibilities behind the scenes include recruiting and training program facilitators, updating the material packages provided to schools, booking presentations, and looking for new ways to expand and enrich our program. We work closely with the Saskatoon Public School Division and Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools to improve the program on an ongoing basis. Through this collaboration we are able to appropriately translate the tough topics to our key stakeholders: the students.

We require that our program facilitators are dedicated, kind, and approachable individuals who are comfortable and skilled with children and value the goals of our program. Facilitators must pass a vulnerable sector criminal record check and attend one half-day of child sexual abuse and presentation training before the season begins. This year, we also invited new facilitators to view

a puppet show presentation from start to finish prior to hosting their first shows. Each new facilitator’s initial shows are “shadowed” by either the Program Coordinator or Education & Outreach Coordinator. In addition to the narration of the puppet show, our program facilitators carry the responsibilities of working with the teacher to introduce the program, managing the presentation, facilitating a group discussion, communicating any concerns or disclosures of child abuse to the teacher or school counsellor, and communicating with the Program Coordinator about any issues, concerns, or disclosures.

During the program delivery season (mid-January to the end of March), our Program Coordinator is responsible for providing teachers with lesson plans, booking shows for each Grade 4 classroom in Saskatoon, organizing and inviting classroom teachers to Zoom meetings, scheduling facilitators to deliver each show, supervising the facilitators, and answering questions from teachers, administrators, parents, and school counsellors. The counselling team at SSAIC is also available to any of these individuals who have been personally affected by sexualized violence (either directly or indirectly) and are looking for support after being exposed to the material.

With the move to the hybrid model, the following predicted advantages proved to be true:

1. We delivered the program more easily and cost-efficiently with less human resources and staff time required (less training, supervising, management, scheduling and supporting a larger group of volunteers);
2. Our institution of volunteer interviews allowed us to gather a smaller group of strong volunteers, ensuring consistency in the quality of the program; and
3. We were able to continue providing “I’m the Boss of Me” virtually to schools outside of the Saskatoon city limits.

We found that we didn’t lose the flair of the live puppet show compared to the pre-recorded one, as the students are comfortable with virtual-based learning and our narrators were able to fill that personalized gap. However, the benefits of the change certainly outweigh the disadvantages, as the simplified delivery method frees up our staff to engage in other education and outreach activities while still primarily achieving the benefit of the program.

Changes this Year

2023 brought some administrative changes to the backend of ITBOM. With increased funding, the “Program Assistant” position was restructured to be the “Program Coordinator” position, with the Education & Outreach Coordinator now providing assistance to the Program Coordinator as needed throughout the season. We also developed a Program Coordinator Manual

for clearer understanding between team members on the coordination of ITBOM, as well as a clear budget to outline every cost for ITBOM, and reflect an appropriate ask to our funders for continued support.

For the presentation portion of ITBOM, we re-recorded the puppet show, including adaptations to the script that answered frequently asked questions by the students and incorporating feedback from stakeholders and our own observations and critique of the program. Additionally, the Resource Manual and Student Booklet were fully revamped, adding in new activities, updating old activities and scenarios, and generally connecting the resource closer to the Grade 4 Saskatchewan Health curriculum.

Program Costs & Funding

Costs of the program include the wages for core staff, honoraria for our program facilitators, office supplies, copying and printing resources, and facilitator appreciation. Our program would not succeed without the skill and dedication of our program facilitators, and we've chosen to pay them a small honorarium for each show. Some facilitators use the honorarium in place of a part-time job and it serves to accommodate them for this tough subject matter and secure their availability.

Our ability to deliver this program each year depends on the availability of grants, donor dollars, and our own agency's fundraising to cover a large portion of the costs. In 2023, our funding for "I'm the Boss of Me" came from three core funders. Our partners, the Saskatoon Public School Division and Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, have continued to fund the program annually since its inception. We were also fortunate to secure funding through grants from the Community Initiatives Fund once again. We thank those donors for their ongoing support. Additionally, we implemented a \$175 fee per presentation for any outlying schools from the aforementioned school divisions as a cost recovery and capacity building measure.

Stakeholders & Feedback

The following is a breakdown of the primary participants of this program:

- 169 teachers
- 41 school counsellors
- 4,166 students
- 12 program facilitators
- In total, 165 volunteer hours were completed

Students: The students are our number one priority. In addition to our presentation in the classroom, we leave each group with an “I’m the Boss of Me”-themed poster that lists the Kid’s Help Line and our 24-hour sexual assault crisis line phone numbers. Our goal is that every student feels empowered by our program to say “no” and has the tools to protect themselves from sexual and other forms of abuse.

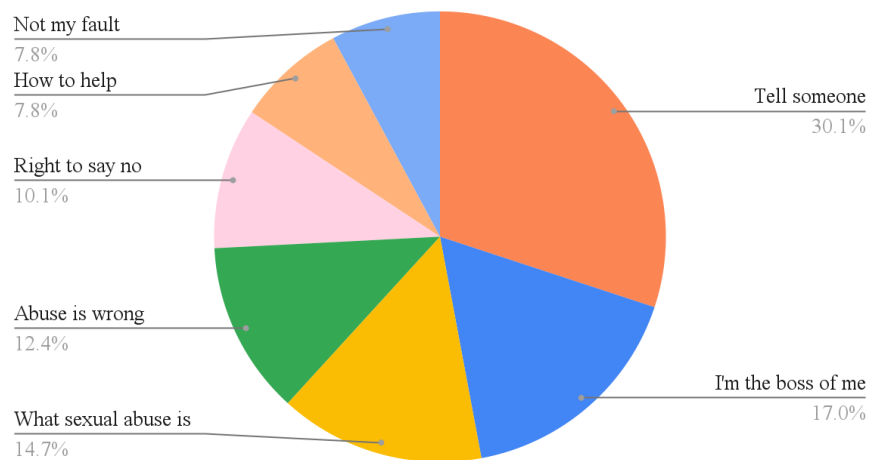
Student Feedback: Students were given an opportunity to provide feedback directly after the presentation through a “head / heart / hands” exercise. This evaluation collects intellectual, emotional, and behavioural feedback in the form of three questions:

1. **Head** - What did you learn from the puppet show? The “head” is meant to assess what students remember from the presentation. It allows us as presenters to know which areas of the presentation were memorable or impactful.
2. **Heart** - How did the puppet show make you feel? The “heart” is meant to assess if the presentation elicited any emotion in the students. By associating the presentation with an emotional connection, students are more likely to retain knowledge.
3. **Hands** - What is something you will do from now on? The “hands” is meant to assess if there were any actionable items that the students drew from the presentation. A call to action is one of the most effective ways to ensure knowledge retention.

I learned the types of abuse and to always tell a trusted adult. If you are ever getting abused it's never your fault. If someone is telling you what to do you can always say "no".
- Grade 4 Student

Of the 4,166 students that received our show this year, we received feedback from 13 classrooms, totalling 234 students in Grades 3, 4, and 5. This provided us with invaluable information about how they interpret our presentation. From their feedback, we see each year that our key messages continue to successfully sink in with the students:

When asked what students learned from ITBOM:



Teachers: “I’m the Boss of Me” is not simply a one-time presentation; teachers benefit by receiving 5 curriculum-based lesson plans on child abuse education to bookend the puppet show presentation. These lesson plans achieve many outcomes and indicators that are outlined in the Grade 4 Saskatchewan Health Curriculum, helping to take some of the planning workload off of teachers. In addition, teachers receive resources that assist in the delivery of this difficult topic to children, information about their duty to report, and the full support of the SSAIC counselling team. We work to adequately support teachers in facilitating this topic to children and, recognizing that the teachers may be among the survivor population, aim to support them in any way we can.

This was my second year with ITBOM and I will definitely be doing it every year. It is a great way to cover a hard topic. My students actually look forward to the puppet show and always learn something from it. It starts great conversations!

- Grade 4 Teachers

Of the 169 teachers who hosted presentations 36 provided feedback from which we received the following data:

General feedback (36 respondents):

- 94.4% of respondents shared that they would be happy to host “I’m the Boss of Me” again.
- 77.8% of respondents had hosted the presentation in prior years.
- 97.2% of respondents agreed that the presentation was delivered in a professional and knowledgeable manner.

Feedback specifically on the lesson plans (35 respondents):

- 94.4% of the respondents completed 2 or more of the 5 additional lesson plans in the “I’m the Boss of Me” unit.
- 97.1% of the respondents agreed that the lesson plans provided relevant supplementary material.
- 100% of the respondents agreed that the lesson plans were clearly outlined and easy to follow.
- 100% of the respondents agreed that the lesson plans enhanced their students’ knowledge about abuse.
- 100% of the respondents agreed that the lesson plans and content within them was easy to present and adapt for their students.
- 97.1% of the respondents agreed that their students enjoyed the activities included in the lesson plans.

- 100% of the respondents felt the lesson plans were age-appropriate.
- 100% of the respondents felt the lesson plans met their curricular outcomes.
- 100% of the respondents rated the lesson plans 4 out of 5 or better, with 34.2% rating the lesson plans 5 out of 5.

Feedback specifically on the supplementary content and learning outcomes (19 respondents) :

- 89.5% of the respondents felt as though they became more knowledgeable about child sexual abuse.
- 94.7% of the respondents feel more familiar with the indicators of child sexual abuse.
- 94.7% of the respondents feel more comfortable addressing child sexual abuse with their students.
- 100% of the respondents reported understanding how to respond to and report child sexual abuse.
- 100% of the respondents reported that they are aware of the support services that exist for survivors of sexual abuse.
- 100% of the respondents believe that the information presented was relevant to their students.
- 100% of the respondents believe the information presented was appropriate and professional.
- 94.7% of the respondents feel as though the information provided had an impact on the way they respond to students' concerns in the classroom.

Counselling Team: We haven't forgotten about our fellow social workers and school counsellors! Our program provides a resource package and support to this team in the form of age-appropriate handouts, referral information for children who disclose, and access to our counselling team at SSAIC for any additional questions they have or support they may need. Extra training seminars are available to this group, as well as personalized support from the Education & Outreach Coordinator.

EXCELLENT!! The students were very excited about the puppet show. I heard a few students informing students of other grades about the show. I believe the whole school heard the class shouting "ITBOM" during the presentation and the students fielded lots of inquiries and questions from students in other classes that heard the excitement. Thank you for all of the work and preparation that went into the design of the program, coordinating with the school and during the presentation! What a great proactive approach for equipping our kids to better be aware and protect themselves re. sexual abuse. THANK YOU!!!

- School Counsellor

Of the 41 counsellors who had presentations booked at their schools, 20 provided feedback (48.8%) from which we received the following data:

- 100% of respondents were able to attend shows booked at their schools.
- 100% of respondents reported that the facilitator(s) for their show(s) was on time and ready to present.
- 100% of respondents felt the shows were delivered in a professional, knowledgeable fashion.
- 90% of respondents found the Counsellor Package to be informative, and that they wouldn't change anything.

Program Facilitators: The program facilitators host and narrate our shows, lead group discussions, represent the Saskatoon Sexual Assault & Information Centre, and are the backbone of our program. These facilitators are most often university students in human service colleges, but can be from any walk of life. In addition to 1 returning volunteer, we welcomed 7 new volunteer facilitators and a practicum student who each attended a virtual training in early January, observed a puppet show presentation, and were shadowed by the Program Coordinator or Education & Outreach Coordinator before presenting their first shows. In addition to learning the script and honing their performing skills, ITBOM facilitators learn the signs of child sexual abuse, how to talk to children about abuse, and how to receive a disclosure in a trauma-informed way. The goal is that facilitators take away skills and information that they find valuable and will assist them in their future endeavours.

This season helped me recognize the importance of empowerment through education. It was amazing to watch children learn about complicated topics such as grooming, sexual abuse, handling a disclosure, how to be a good friend, and identifying safe adults to talk to. Helping children feel safe, heard, and understood is an important part of empowerment, and “I'm the Boss of Me” does a phenomenal job at doing it.

- Volunteer Facilitator

Of the 12 program facilitators, 7 provided feedback from which we received the following data:

- 100% of respondents felt the recruitment process was handled efficiently.
- 100% of respondents felt the training adequately prepared them for delivery of the program.
- 100% of respondents felt the booking process was well administered.
- 100% of respondents felt the level of supervision and support was appropriate for them.
- 85% of respondents felt that they became better educated about child sexual abuse and how it is experienced by a child.

- 100% of respondents felt better educated about how to support a child who discloses child sexual abuse.
- 100% of respondents feel more comfortable discussing the impacts and indicators of child sexual abuse.
- 100% of respondents felt they had increased their skills and comfort level in talking with children in a small group setting.
- 100% of respondents said the program met the expectations and goals they had set for themselves.

Parents: We know that the messages of our program extend beyond the classroom, so we aim to support parents of our program when we can. A personalized letter to parents is shared electronically by teachers on behalf of SSAIC, informing them that their children will be receiving the child sexual abuse education program. Explaining to parents what their children would be learning, why this content is so critical, and where they can find additional resources for their children and themselves is essential to creating comfort around this topic.

Recommendations for Improvement

Feedback from each of the stakeholder groups elicited the following recommendations:

- The post show lessons seemed more difficult to follow along - some pages were never mentioned from the student book. -Teacher
- Maybe including some kahoots or computer components would be beneficial. -Teacher
- It may be beneficial to have extra info for the teacher on how to go about discussing with students who ask questions about topics not covered in grade 4. Such as: body parts, rape, etc. Thanks! -Teacher
- I feel that there could be a little bit more guidance on actually talking to the students about sexual abuse in the lead up to the puppet show. I did the activity there (writing ideas on paper and scrunching them up to throw in a bin for me). But, I didn't feel really confident about how to address all of their ideas. -Teacher
- I was talking with another teacher and we both miss the time when the puppeteers would be able to show the puppets to the students. Even if one puppet could come into the classroom with the facilitator. -Teacher
- My only suggestion is that it would be better to have the presentations earlier in the day, or at least not during the last period of the day. My worry is that there may be a disclosure towards the end of the day (can't always be controlled but perhaps could be limited) which wouldn't leave enough time for MSS to follow up if required, or could put us in a difficult situation with families arriving as we're navigating a disclosure. I know you guys

are busy and have to fit in many presentations but this would be a suggestion I have!
-Counsellor

- The earlier teachers book in, the better chance Counsellors can be present. -Counsellor

Plans for Next Year

Moving into 2024, our intended changes and priorities for growth are:

1. Re-introducing the puppet aspect into the presentation by having the volunteer facilitators bring out one of the puppets at the end of the presentation for the students to handle.
2. Reviewing the Resource Manual for areas of improvement regarding continuity, clarity, and added activities.
3. Look for a better advertising avenue for the “Child Sexual Abuse Information Seminar” that is offered before the “I’m the Boss of Me” season begins, as some teachers mentioned feeling unprepared to answer questions around this topic.
4. Continuing to foster a relationship with school divisions outside of the Saskatoon city limits (Prairie Spirit School Division, Horizon School Division, etc.) to expand our reach.
5. Revising some of our training processes and volunteer expectations.

Acknowledgements

“I’m the Boss of Me” would not be successful without the many supporters of the program. Thank-you to Tammy Shircliff from GSCS and Jill Flath and Tyler Bergen from SPSD for supporting this program; ITBOM would not succeed without your efforts and trust. Thank-you so much to every teacher that takes on the daily work of not only teaching, but encouraging, supporting, and protecting students by providing them with this all-important knowledge, no matter how difficult it may be. We would also like to thank the school counsellors who work alongside the teachers, help book and attend shows, and respond to children who disclose abuse or require additional support. You play such a significant role in supporting students and teachers. We would also like to extend a huge thank-you to Ashley, our Program Coordinator, for her continued dedication to this program. Her passion for this work and patience with the ongoing adaptations was absolutely critical to our success this year. To our practicum student, Jada, who was eager throughout her entire practicum to get into the classroom, thank-you. Lastly, a special thanks goes out to all of our facilitators – these past three years have sent us through some big storms that we could not have weathered without you sharing your empathy, flexibility, and dedication to SSAIC.

2023 “I’m the Boss of Me” Volunteer Facilitators

Alex Brown

Brooke Anderson

Rheena Olave

Alysha Hudson

Brynn Colby

Vanessa Smith

Ashley Kasko

Megan Alton

Practicum Student: Jada Reimer

SSAIC Counsellor (Virtual Facilitator): Ashton Thomas

Program Coordinator: Ashley Voinorosky

Education & Outreach Coordinator: Morgan Price