

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION CURRICULUM GUIDE

www.EndChildAbuseLB.org Rev 1/14/04

FIRST CLASS VISIT

INTRODUCTION

Who we are: Your name, your company, Long Beach ALIVE!

Why we are here: to share valuable information about the subject of family violence and child abuse. We want to talk about what people, especially young people, can do when we need help with these problems.

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

(Note: When discussing abuse, help maintain some distance between acts of violence and the students. Talk about things that happen to “someone”, “children”, “families”, rather than to “you”.)

We all know how we want to be treated, and how we should treat others. In what ways shouldn't family members treat each other?

WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF VIOLENCE OR MISTREATMENT THAT WE KNOW SOMETIMES HAPPEN IN FAMILIES?

PHYSICAL: Non-accidental injury - hitting that causes bruising, whipping with objects, throwing objects, biting, burning.

What is the difference between discipline and child abuse? Discipline becomes abuse when it causes bruises or injury of some kind.

What does “injury” mean? (cut, black eye, sprain or strain, broken bones) Dictionary definition: harm or hurt.

Wouldn't it be nice if nobody ever hit?

What might the world be like without violence? (maybe no wars, etc.)

What do you think families would be like? (no abuse, gangs, etc.)

SEXUAL: Sex abuse means being touched by another person in your private parts. (Note: Legally, a child cannot give permission for sexual contact, therefore all sexual touching involving children is abusive.)

Your body is your own! No one has the right to touch you in a way that makes you uncomfortable.

What are the parts of your body that are private? Those parts which are covered by a bathing suit.

If someone makes you feel uncomfortable by the way they talk to you:
(Kids say) IT'S NOT OK!

If you don't feel comfortable with the way someone is touching you:
(Kids say): IT'S NOT OK!

Sometimes kids feel curious and want to see or touch other kids. When children are about three or four years old, there is curiosity about the differences between boys and girls. This is a natural part of growth and development. Sometimes kids your age are curious about sex. This is also natural, because bodies are growing up, but it will be many years before minds and spirits are mature enough to handle sexual experience.

If sexual abuse should happen to someone, what should they do to the abuser?

(Kids say) TELL THEM TO STOP AND TELL ON THEM.

What if it was someone they knew?

(Kids say) TELL THEM TO STOP AND TELL ON THEM.

What if it didn't hurt?

(Kids say) TELL THEM TO STOP AND TELL ON THEM.

Even if it is hard to do, why should they tell? Because THEY HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAY NO. Because OTHER CHILDREN MAY BE GETTING HURT TOO. Because IT WON'T STOP UNLESS THEY GET HELP. Because IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

WHAT TYPES OF PEOPLE MIGHT BE SEX ABUSERS?

People you know: Sexual touching can happen with brothers and sisters, moms and dads, grandparents, step-parents, cousins, uncles, aunts, other relatives, friends of your parents.

People you meet: coaches, teachers, police officers, priests, ministers, rabbis, etc.

(If students mention doctors, explain that they have the right to have mom, dad, or a nurse with them in the doctor's office.)

THESE PEOPLE HAVE A PROBLEM. TELLING ON THEM GETS PROTECTION FOR THE ABUSED AND HELP FOR THE ABUSER.

EMOTIONAL: Most of us know how bad it feels when we get called mean names, or left out by other kids sometimes. But can you imagine what it would be like never to be hugged by your parents, or never to be told that you were special, or that you were loved? That happens to some children.

WHY? Some children are born to parents who did not want them. Some parents are so deep into drugs or alcohol that they have nothing to give anyone else. Sometimes grownups who were unloved as kids just don't know how to show love.

SOME TYPES OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE: Threats, put-downs, harassment, withholding love, not caring. Some parents are so involved with their own problems that their kids feel like they don't matter or are not important.

NEGLECT: Neglect means having our basic needs unmet - food, caretaking, clean clothes, medicine or the care of a doctor when we are sick or hurt.

WHY? Sometimes because of drug or alcohol abuse; sometimes because of depression or other mental illness; sometimes because parents are under great stress and can't cope with life.

IN WHAT TYPES OF FAMILIES DOES VIOLENCE OCCUR?

In all types of families regardless of income, race, or religion. It can happen in any home.

STATISTICS: (Discuss Chart.) 90% of prison inmates report they were abused as children. People hurt others because they have been hurt. People repeat hitting they learned in their homes.

HOW DOES VIOLENCE AFFECT FAMILY MEMBERS?

ALL FAMILY MEMBERS SUFFER:

They may have poor self-esteem (feel bad about themselves)

They may have depression (a sense of hopelessness - helplessness)

They may do poorly at school or work

They may become withdrawn/isolated (don't want to bring friends home)

They may become very angry and create more violence.

WHAT ARE SOME CAUSES OF FAMILY VIOLENCE?

- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Parents who don't know what else to do
- Parents who were abused themselves
- Societal attitudes (Violent movies, TV, video games, music)

REVIEW: Ask the meaning of abuse (to treat badly); neglect (when a child is ignored and not cared for); guardian (someone who is supposed to watch over a child).

SHOW VIDEO 1

Questions to ask after viewing:

1. Why were Kurt and his sister allowed to go back to their parents?
2. What did Xochi's mom do when Xochi told her she was being abused by her stepfather?
3. What were some of the signs Anthony's parents noticed that told them something was wrong?
4. How was Rachel neglected?
5. In each case, how did the abuse stop?
6. Who were the people who helped the children?

CONCLUSION: SUMMARIZE KEY POINTS.

1. Violence can happen in any family. The four kinds of family abuse are Physical, Sexual, Emotional, and Neglect. It's not OK. It's not the abused person's fault. Violence is the failure of human kindness.

2. When personal or family problems are serious, there are many services available to help. There are many people whose job it is to help children with these situations.

3. We all have the ability to change situations. We don't have to remain victims.

4. It 's scary and it takes courage to tell someone, and sometimes it's very hard to change things right away, but nothing will change as long as we keep things a (kids say) SECRET!

CLASS EXERCISE

Ask the class to anonymously write any questions they would like to have discussed at the next session. Ask the teacher to save the envelope for you.

Remind class that if they have a problem and need help, they can talk to an adult whom they trust, such as a teacher, counselor, minister or priest.

Praise the class for their attention and courtesy. Tell them you look forward to the next presentation.

SECOND CLASS VISIT

EXPRESS YOUR PLEASURE AT BEING WITH THEM AGAIN.

REVIEW: Who can remember something we talked about last time? (child abuse; kinds of abuse; tell abuser to stop and tell on them; people whose job it is to help)

PRESENT RESOURCE CARD: (hold one up) This is called a resource card. On it are the addresses and phone numbers of several agencies and community groups that provide people to listen and give help to callers. Many of them are 24 hour hotlines.

That means a person can call any time, day or night.

PASS OUT CARDS; DISCUSS THEM: Do you remember what “anonymous” means? (You don’t have to give your name). When you call a hotline, if you report that you are being abused, they will ask for your name so they can start the process of getting help for you. If you report the abuse of someone else, you can be anonymous, but you will have to give your friend’s name and address. Where is a safe place to call? (pay phone, friend’s house, school office) What happens when you call a hotline? (may be delays while operator connects you to right person)

Ask hypothetical questions to allow students to search the card for examples.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. If someone’s dad was hitting their mom, what number might they want to call?
2. If someone wanted to talk about a parent’s alcohol or drug abuse?
3. If someone suspects a friend or relative is being abused?

HOTLINE SCENARIO: Sometimes it’s hard to pick up the phone and share a problem with a stranger. So we’d like to show you what a call to one of these numbers might be like.

(Select or have teacher select four students to read the hotline scenario. Applaud and praise readers after the scenario.)

DISCUSSION: Conflicts and problems occur every day all around us. Most are handled without violence or hurting others. But we are here to talk about getting help with the conflicts and problems that do involve violence. How would you describe the following types of people?

1. BULLY: Aggressive, raises voice, threatens, hits.
2. DOORMAT: Lets others walk all over him/her; passive; does nothing.
3. HERO: Positive, confident, defends rights, seeks help for self and others.

SHOW VIDEO 2: ASK STUDENTS TO IDENTIFY BULLY, DOORMAT, HEROES IN DAVID’S STORY.

ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM ENVELOPE: Now that we’ve had a chance to share some information with you, We’d like to answer any questions you might have. (Remember that you are not soliciting disclosures but answering any questions the students might have. If a student discloses abuse, openly or indirectly, work with the teacher and the school staff to ensure that a Report of Suspected Abuse is filed. FOLLOW UP!)

CONCLUSION: Problems usually don’t have simple answers. Sometimes we won’t be able to get the help or the attention we need at first. We may need to talk with several adults to get help. It’s important to keep trying and to have the attitude of a HERO.

We’ve shared some valuable information with you. Now it is in your hands, to use it if you or someone you know needs help. Although abuse probably won’t happen to you, it could, so it is best to be prepared. (Encourage students to share what they learned in class and the information on the resource cards with their families and friends.)

Remember how we talked? IMAGINE THE WORLD WITH NOBODY HITTING OR CALLING ANYONE NAMES. Everyone who works to stop the cycle of violence brings that world a little bit closer to reality. Remember, we can all be heroes!

Again, thank the class and teacher for their time and praise their attention and their courtesy.