

**Safe Environment Training
for
Volunteers**

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Daybreak community education program

Goals

- To educate volunteers about child abuse & neglect
- To increase skills in assessing and responding to children
- To help prevent child abuse and neglect

Objectives

- To increase knowledge of the various forms of child abuse and neglect
- To be able to identify the signs of abuse and neglect
- To be able to respond to suspected cases of child abuse
- To learn strategies to prevent child abuse
- To learn about resources in the community

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Forms Of Child Abuse

- Physical
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Sexual

PHYSICAL ABUSE: Any Act
Which Results in a Non-accidental
Trauma or Physical Injury

- Hitting
- Shaking
- Biting
- Punching
- Broken bones
- Burning
- Kicking
- Killing
- Throwing
- Hair pulled from scalp

**Physical Signs
Of Physical Abuse**

- Bruises
- Welts
- Burns
- Skeletal injuries
- Lacerations & abrasions
- Head/internal injuries
- Bald patches on scalp

Behavioral Signs Of Physical Abuse

- Fearful when others cry
- Behavior extremes: aggressive or withdrawn
- Frightened of parents/caregivers
- Wary of adult contact
- Self-abusive behaviors
- Unable to focus

NEGLECT: Failure to Provide for a Child's Basic Needs.

- Lack of shelter/food/clothing
- Lack of medical care
- Rejection
- Inadequate supervision
- Belittling
- Chronic truancy
- Malnutrition
- Abandonment
- Withholding affection

Physical Signs Of Neglect

- Chronically dirty or unbathed
- Failure to grow or thrive
- Dress inadequate for weather
- Fatigued/falling asleep
- Hunger
- Attempted suicide
- Alcohol or drug abuse

Behavioral Signs Of Neglect

- Poor self-image
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Lack of social skills
- Difficulty relating to others
- Self-destructive behavior

EMOTIONAL ABUSE: A Pattern of
Destructive Behavior That Attacks a Child's
Development of Self and Social Competence

Types of emotional abuse:

- Rejecting
- Ignoring
- Terrorizing
- Isolating
- Corrupting

**Physical Signs Of Emotional
Abuse**

- Speech disorder
- Inability to play as most children do
- Sleep problems
- Lags in emotional/intellectual growth
- Attempted suicide
- Drugs and alcohol abuse

Behavioral Signs Of Emotional Abuse

- Insecurity
- Poor self-esteem
- Withdrawal
- Compliant/demanding
- Extreme passivity/aggression

SEXUAL ABUSE: Forcing, Tricking, or Coercing a Child Into Sexual Contact, Activity, And/or Behavior

- Fondling
- Kissing
- Genital exposure
- Masturbation
- Oral-genital contact
- Child pornography
- Digital penetration
- Vaginal or anal intercourse

Physical Signs Of Sexual Abuse

- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Pain or itching in genital area
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Eating disorders
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Self-inflicted injuries
- Injuring/killing animals
- Early pregnancy

Signs Of Sexual Abuse In Younger Children

- Compulsive masturbation
- Bed wetting/soiling
- Excessive curiosity about sex
- Inappropriate sexual play
- Nightmares
- Learning disabilities
- Extreme fear of "monsters"
- Fear of certain people or places
- Somatic complaints
- Becoming seductive

Signs Of Sexual Abuse In Pre-teens

- Stealing
- Running away
- Starting fires
- Excessive bathing
- Lying
- Aggressiveness
- Falling grades
- Sudden mood swings
- Withdrawn and passive
- Alcohol or drug abuse

Signs Of Sexual Abuse In Teens

- Suicide attempts
- Early marriages
- Pregnancy
- Cutting
- Juvenile delinquency
- Joining gangs
- Substance abuse

Myths & Facts

- Child abuse occurs rarely and, most often, in poor or minority families
- Most abused children suffer obvious injuries.
- One out of 4 girls and one out of six boys will be sexually assaulted before they turn 18

Myths & Facts

- Children don't always tell the truth about molestation.
- Most children who are abused have done something to cause the abuse.
- Children can't sexually abuse other children.
- Children are resilient and can recover from child abuse.

Myths & Facts

- Most children are sexually assaulted by strangers.
- Most child molesters are gay, sexually deprived, or mentally ill.
- Child abusers are easy to identify.

Tips On Identifying Abusers

- Someone who spends most spare time on activities involving children.
- A person that finds excuses to be alone with children.
- A teen whose only relationship is with younger children.
- A person who talks about children in sexual ways.
- People who ingratiate themselves with families.

How To Respond To A Child

- Find a safe place
- Stay calm
- Always believe the child
- Tell the child it is not their fault
- Validate the child's feelings
- Listen without interruption
- Don't show shock or blame the child

How To Respond To A Child

- Don't ask leading questions
- Let the child know s/he has a right to be safe
- Find out what the child wants from you
- Do not make any promises
- Let the child know what actions you intend to take
- Seek medical & psychological help

Filing A Child Abuse & Neglect Report

- Who is a mandated reporter?
- Mandated reporter responsibilities
- Who is a caretaker?
- How/when is a report made?
- What information is needed to make a report?
- What happens after a report is made?

Roles and Responsibilities of Volunteers

- Not legally mandated to report
- Report to staff person (same day)
- Assist staff person in completing report

Information Needed to File

- Identifying information about child, parents, and/or caretakers
- Language spoken by family
- Information regarding abuse: nature of abuse; most recent incident; prior injuries
- How you became aware of abuse
- Action taken to protect child
- Person responsible for abuse

Domestic Violence

- Relationship between domestic violence and child abuse
- Reporting domestic violence when filing a child abuse and neglect report

Prevention Strategies

- Communication
- Assertiveness
- Confidence

Prevention Strategies

- **Communicate with children**
 - Be available
 - Answer questions openly
 - Give information appropriate for child's age
 - Listen to your child

Prevention Strategies

- **Discuss body safety rules**
 - Your body belongs to you
 - Teach anatomically correct names for body parts
 - Identify different kinds of touches
 - Define safe and unsafe secrets

Prevention Strategies

- **Practice keeping safe skills**
 - Give children permission to say "NO"
 - Yell loudly
 - Run away from danger
 - Play "what if..." Games
 - Brainstorm names of safe adults

Prevention Strategies

- **Discuss home safety rules**
 - List rules & review periodically
 - Teach how to dial 911
 - Never reveal he/she is alone in the house
 - Never open the door
 - If your child is scared...

Prevention Strategies

- **Promote child's self-esteem**
 - Give lots of praises
 - Help child set realistic goals
 - Offer constructive criticism of the action, not the child

Other Approaches to Prevent Child Abuse

- Programs for new parents
- Education for parents
- Early and regular child and family screening & treatment
- Child care opportunities
- Programs for abused children
- Life skills training for children
- Family support services
- Public information and education

**If You Suspect Child Abuse,
Call:**

**Worcester 508-922-2000
Statewide 1-800-792-5200**

Community Resources

- Child Protection Program 508-856-6629
- MSPCC 508-753-2967
- Children's Friend 508-753-5425
- YOU, Inc. 508-849-5600
- Parental Stress Line 1-800-632-8188

