

Child Abuse Awareness & Prevention Session for Children

(Suggested for Grades 2,3,4)

Note to the teacher: Parents and educators often teach their children about “stranger danger”, however, statistics show that about 90% of child abuse situations are perpetrated by someone the child knows. It is important that we teach our children that sometimes people they know may hurt them. Whether it is a stranger or someone they know that abuses them, children also need to learn that they can get help by telling someone they trust.

Child abuse can take many forms – physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, etc. The following session suggests using a book whose topic is sexual abuse. If you’d prefer to use a book about physical abuse, a book on that topic is listed in the resource section

If, during the session, a child reveals some form of abuse, report it to the person(s) who have been previously identified as receiving reports. If no person has been identified, then the church should work to establish clear reporting procedures. This session may elicit abuse revelation by a child when a question such as "Do you know people who would hurt you?" is asked. Think about what you will do if a child says, "Whenever my mother's boyfriend comes over, he"

Supplies:

Bible

White board or chart paper

Markers

Book - *Not in Room 204* (See resource section. Or use any other appropriate book you might find.)

Objective: Children will be reminded that they are precious to God. Children will learn that while most people around them are nice, sometimes strangers and even people they know might try to hurt them. Children will also learn that if someone hurts them or makes them feel uncomfortable they need to tell an adult whom they trust. Opening – We are precious to God. Introducing the word abuse.

I. Opening

Open the Bible and share places that show that we are precious and loved by God.

(eg. Isaiah 43:4 “You are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you...”

Mark 10:14b -16 “ ‘Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.’ And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.”)

Say something like –

The Bible tells us that we are each precious to God. God loves each one of us very much and doesn’t want us to be hurt. The Bible also tells us that Jesus thought children were very important, and that he loved and blessed them.

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Most of the people around us are nice, but some people are not so nice and some people may even want to hurt us. Sometimes these people are strangers. How many of you know about “stranger danger”? Good, that’s important. Something else you also need to know about is that sometimes children are even hurt by people they know.

Do you know what the word abuse means? (Listen to their answers and share that there are many kinds of abuse – i.e. Abuse can be someone beating you or hurting your body – physical abuse. Abuse can be someone telling you that you are stupid or no good, or that no one loves you – verbal/emotional abuse. Abuse can be someone touching your private parts or asking you to touch their private parts – sexual abuse.)

What I’d like for you to remember is that God doesn’t want children to be hurt or abused in any way. God surrounds us with people we can trust who know how to help us if we are being abused.

II. Reading and discussing *Not in Room 204*.

Say something like -

I have a book for us to read and discuss today. I think the book will help us remember that if we are abused by someone, we can start to feel better by telling someone we trust.

(Possible questions to discuss after reading the book include:

- Would you like to have Mrs. Salvador as a teacher? Why?
- Regina Lillian Hadwig was being touched in ways that she didn’t like – was she being abused by a stranger?
- Near the end of the book Mrs. Salvador said, “Knowing Stranger Danger is important,” - what else did she say?
- How did Regina Lillian Hadwig start feeling better?
- Does anyone have the right to hurt or abuse someone?
- Does anyone have the right to touch you or ask you to touch them?
- Is it okay to say “no” to something that makes you feel uncomfortable?
- Is it a good idea to keep secrets from your parents, especially if someone tells you to?
- If someone abuses you or touches you in a way that feels wrong or uncomfortable is it your fault?)

III. Creating and singing a song together

Say something like –

We’ve been saying that there are people around you who care about you who will help you if you are being abused. It’s also possible that you might see abuse happen to someone else. You can help that person by telling an adult you trust what you saw happen. Let’s make a list of some of the adults you trust.

(Using the white board or chart paper and markers, help the children to brainstorm a list of adults they trust* to tell if someone hurts them or someone else. Use this list to create verses for the song below. Sing the song together to the tune of “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands”.

*i.e. mother, father, teacher, pastor, doctor, neighbor, police officer, grandma, grandpa, school nurse or counselor, etc.)

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Chorus

If anyone hurts me, I need to tell someone.
If anyone hurts me, I need to tell someone.
If anyone hurts me, I need to tell someone.
I need to tell someone I trust.

Verses

Could tell my _____. Tell someone I trust.
Could tell my _____. Tell someone I trust.
Could tell my _____. Tell someone I trust.
I need to tell someone I trust.

Chorus

Verse

Could tell my _____. Tell someone I trust.
Could tell my _____. Tell someone I trust.
Could tell my _____. Tell someone I trust.
I need to tell someone I trust.

Chorus

IV. Closing

Do any recap you think needed. Encourage children to discuss today's session with their parents. Close with a prayer.

(eg. Dear God,

We know that you love us and want the best for us. Thank you for surrounding us with people who care about us. If we are ever abused or if we ever see someone else being abused, please help us to tell someone we trust. Amen.)

Resources

BOOKS

There are many books available on the topic of child abuse. Google 'sexual abuse prevention' for online choices for books to purchase or check your local library (a good source for books that are out of print.) Here are two that I found in Multnomah Co. Library system that I think are good ones:

Klassen, Heather - *I Don't Want to Go to Justin's House Anymore*, Child & Family Press, Washington DC, 1999. A book about a little boy who witnesses his friend being physically abused and decides to do something about it.

Riggs, Shannon - *Not in Room 204*, Albert Whitman & Co., Morton Grove, IL 2007. A book about a teacher who tells her students to come to her if they are being sexually abused.

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WEBSITES

There are many websites that teachers and parents can explore for further information. Here are just a few possibilities:

- childhelpusa.com Their National Abuse Hotline number is 1-800-422-4453. Abuse reporters can remain anonymous.
- darkness2light.org
- childabuseprevention.org

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