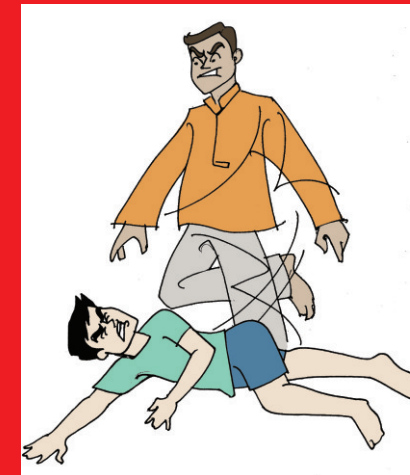




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LEARNING TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM ABUSE

A Handbook for Facilitators



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Save the Children works for children's rights.
 We deliver immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.

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PREFACE

Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out the obligation of the State to “protect children from all forms of violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them”.

The Study on Child Abuse: India 2007” by Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India states that over 50% children in all the 13 sample states were being subjected to one or the other form of physical abuse; 53.22% children reported having faced one or more forms of sexual abuse and every second child reported facing emotional abuse. Further, various studies indicate that in majority of the cases a child is abused by a known person who can be her/his parents, relatives, siblings, teachers and peers.

Due to stigma and fear, seldom incidences of child abuse are reported and children continue to suffer in silence not knowing how to seek help. Needless to say this has severe implications on their socio-psychological development, which may continue even in adulthood.

Lack of awareness is one of the key underlying factors of the widespread occurrence of child abuse in our country. Thus, the need of the hour is to make children, families and society at large aware about child abuse, its impact and protection mechanisms. This handbook titled “Learning to protect children from abuse – A Handbook for Facilitators” is an effort towards creating awareness among children on different forms of child abuse and how they can protect themselves and others.

The handbook has been developed as part of the “Child Rights for Change” project currently being implemented across 1886 villages in 8 districts of the two states of Maharashtra and Gujarat. The project aims to address child labour in agriculture, particularly in cotton forms and ensure that all children have access to education and live in an environment free of abuse, exploitation and violence.

We hope this handbook will empower children and give them the voice to speak up when faced with abuse.

Thomas Chandy
Chief Executive Officer
Save the Children, India

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I

INTRODUCTION

- All children have the right to be protected from abuse and neglect wherever they are, at home, in school, on the streets, and at all times, in times of peace or conflict or calamity.
- Their right to protection is as intrinsic to their well being, as is the right to survival, development and participation.
- Children deserve to live in an environment where the decisions and policies implemented by the government are made in their interest, for optimum realisation of their human rights.

“I have the right to be protected from abuse and neglect at home or in school or in the neighbourhood or on the street - at all times.”

“I want an environment free from abuse and exploitation which helps us children grow in a healthy manner and to our full potential.”

How to train children on child abuse?

Training Children's Groups is the most challenging task. It may not be possible to get children to sit through a three-day training programme. It could instead be done more through discussions over a period of time. It therefore requires a schedule that keeps in mind the availability of children, their time and attention spans. On the basis of this, a draft programme schedule has been devised to help children understand child abuse, its various forms, myths and facts about different forms of child abuse, what children can do to prevent and deal with it and how the laws protect them. (See Annexure for Draft Programme).

Purpose of this handbook

This handbook attempts to help children understand child abuse and how to deal with it.

For empowering adults, and especially member of Child Protection Committee a separate manual has been developed titled:“ Dealing with Child Abuse – A User’s Manual”

This handbook is a supplement to the manual and will be used to train Children's Group set up in various districts of Gujarat and Maharashtra by Save the Children.All users therefore need to be thoroughly familiar with the handbook and its contents before organising capacity-building programmes with Children's Groups.

Information regarding child abuse can be scary; but the reason for preparing such a Handbook is to help children realise that being scared will not help. They must learn to act!

Who is a child?

A child is any person who has not completed eighteen years of age. In other words every person up to the age of 18 years is a child.

What is child abuse?

Child abuse is more than bruises and broken bones. It can occur when someone hurts a child through the use of words, gestures or actions and makes a child feel ashamed, helpless, angry, hurt or miserable.

A child can be hurt in different ways. It can be any action which affects the child's body or feelings and thoughts.

Child abuse can result in all or any of the following:

- (a) Physical injury
- (b) Negligent treatment or maltreatment
- (c) Psychological and emotional harm
- (d) Verbal abuse
- (e) Sexual abuse
- (f) Trafficking
- (g) Economic exploitation
- (h) Child marriage
- (i) Corporal punishment

Some effects of child abuse are:

- (a) Physical impairment
- (b) Long-lasting health issues
- (c) Loss of basic self-respect, dignity and confidence which make a child feel unloved, unwanted and worthless
- (d) The long-term impact on growth and development – mental, social and even physical

Who is an abused child?

Any child up to the age of 18 years can be abused. An abused child can be a boy or a girl. The child can be from a rich family or a poor family, living with her/his parents or alone, in a boarding school, hostel or other institutions or on the street.

Any child can be subjected to abuse; even a new-born infant. For example, the severe shaking of a baby leading to breaking of the neck or damage to other body parts is known as 'Shaken Baby Syndrome'. It happens with babies, who are sometimes a few days or a few months old.

Child abuse can occur even when parents really love their children and are only trying to discipline them.

Child abuse may also occur when parents and communities are simply following a cultural practice that leads to certain actions or inactions which discriminate against the girl child or the disabled child. For example, it is normal for parents in many parts of India to force their children, especially girls, into child marriage; or girls are often kept within the confines of the house. Dedication of children to the Gods and Goddesses like in some parts of India is allowed in the name of the 'devadasi' tradition. Disability is often been believed to be a curse from God, and hence leads to neglect and abuse.

Who can be an abuser?

Abusers cannot be categorised in any one type or category. They may come from any class, caste, religion or ethnic group. An abuser can be a man, woman or even a child.

Sometimes, adults/parents think they know best and expect their children to do as they say. For example, they may put pressure on a child to excel at studies which could lead to stress, drug abuse, suicide etc.



Man



Woman



Child

What do the abusers do?

- They groom the child to win their trust.
- They identify their victims.
- They often pick children who lack confidence and self-esteem or are isolated from parent and peers.
- Abusers build a relationship with the child and family members to win their trust.
- Abusers may use a combination of charm and insincere sympathy and offer gifts, play games or buy treats.
- They pretend to show love, care and affection towards the target child.
- During the bonding process the perpetrator usually cautions the child to “keep it a secret”. For example, *“Here's a gift for you but don't tell your friends or they will feel jealous”* or *“Don't tell your mother otherwise she might take it away from you.”*
- The fake emotional bond leads to physical contact, initially a non-sexual and “accidental” touch such as putting an arm around the shoulders, a gentle pat on the hand, and stroking the child's hair.
- Such forms of touch break down the child's resistance to physical contact and a bond of trust starts to build with the abuser.
- Finally the abuser reaches his ultimate goal and begins to sexually abuse or assault the child. Threats are used to ensure the child's silence. For example, *“If you tell anyone this they will hate you”*. *“Your mother will kill herself”*; or *“I'll kill you. You are responsible for this.”*

- Perpetrators look particularly for passive, quiet, troubled, lonely children from single parents or broken homes. Family structure is one of the important risk factors in child sexual abuse.
- Children as well as families who are easily trusting or gullible often become a prey to sexual abuse.
- Children with disabilities are at a greater risk of sexual abuse.
- Children who witness crime, domestic violence or are victims of other crimes are also vulnerable to sexual abuse. Their emotional state of mind makes them vulnerable and easy prey.

How does a child understand abuse?

Unfortunately, often children do not know what abuse is. As a result, even if they are abused, they do not share it with anyone and remain silent. Reluctance on the part of adults to talk about abuse and safety with children makes them easy prey for the abuser.

Questions that may trouble a child's mind when faced with abuse:

What has happened to me?

Was it right or wrong?

Why did that happen?

Was it my fault?

Can I tell anyone?

Should I speak about it - who should I speak to?

How will my family react if I talk about my experience?

What will people think or say about me when they find out?

Will everyone blame me?

Who can I trust? How should I approach someone?

Is anyone going to believe me and help me?

Should I keep silent about it and not tell anyone?

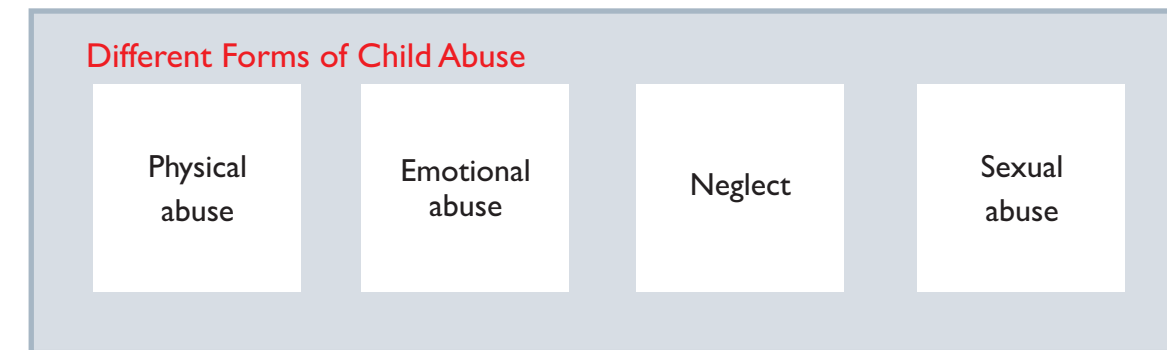
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HOW CAN WE ADDRESS CHILD ABUSE?

The most important starting point is to:

- Build an understanding of abuse amongst children.
- Learn to recognise signs of abuse.
- Help children self-recognise signs of abuse.
- Believe the child, even if it turns out be a false alarm at the end.
- Act immediately to help the child.

Understanding and Recognising Types of Abuse



“Child abuse effects may cause short term or lifelong damage to a child.”

Physical abuse

Raju was beaten every day by his parents as he was not able to complete his homework on time.

Rajini was beaten because she did not do the household chores or every time she made a mistake.

If children were late for school they were hit with a cane and made to squat on the floor.

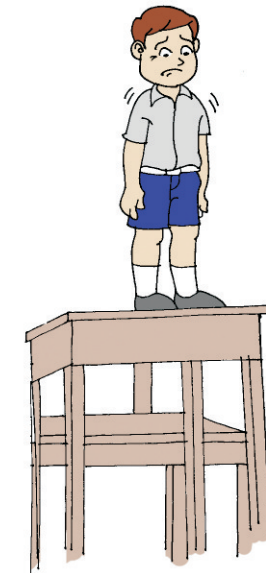
In a school a teacher would make the children kneel down for long hours if they were seen talking during the class, or if they forgot to bring their notebook.



Hitting with cane



Child in Murga position outside classroom



Make a Child stand on desk in a classroom

All these are instances of physical abuse.

Children are often punished by their parents, teachers, employers or other care givers or by an elder brother/sister, friend or any other child in a manner that hurts their bodies.

Physical abuse is inflicted on children:

- To discipline them and teach them a lesson or to make them realise that what they have done is ‘wrong’.
- To exert ‘control’ and authority over a child and to build fear in them so that they behave in a certain way.

In most societies, parents, teachers or other grown-up people believe that it is alright to punish a child physically to correct a child’s behaviour. These practices are culturally acceptable. However, they may still be harmful for children and amount to child abuse.

Physical abuse can result in physical injuries ranging from minor bruises to severe fractures. It can also leave long-term emotional impacts.

Signs of Physical Abuse

- Bruises especially down the trunk, upper arm, shoulders, neck or finger-tip bruising
- Burns
- Fractures
- Aggression, rage
- Scars
- Swelling and lack of normal use of limbs
- Serious injury with lack of / inconsistent explanation

Impact of physical abuse on children

The impact of physical abuse may be short term, long-term or even permanent, leading to permanent disability.

Long-term Impact

- It creates a rift between the adult and the child relationship. The child starts hiding her/his mistakes, which may lead to major problems later on.
- The child starts believing, “I am naughty; or “I am bad”; or “It is my fault;” etc. leading to a loss of self-esteem and behaviour changes such as:
 - Becoming submissive, fearful or/and aggressive
 - Having been exposed to violence, children begin to think it is okay to hit and hurt others
 - Aggression towards others
 - Unnatural complaints or unnecessarily rebellious behaviour or over-obedience

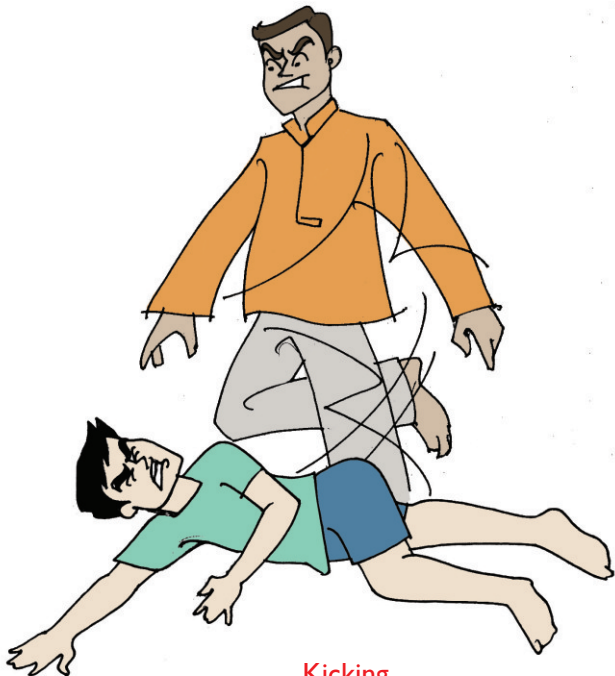
“Physical abuse is culturally most accepted form of violence. Hence it is important to address it immediately.”

Here are some examples of the manner in which physical abuse can be inflicted...

| | | | |
|----------|----------------------------------|---|----------------|
| Punching | Beating | Kicking | Severe shaking |
| Choking | Throwing | Stabbing | Pulling hair |
| Biting | Hitting (using hand, stick etc.) | Burning (with cigarettes or hot or boiling water, etc.) | |



Pinching



Kicking



Pulling hair

Activity

The case study given below can be used for better understanding of physical abuse. At the end of the case study, a list of questions has been given to initiate discussions. Explanations would help the user to guide the discussions and provide additional information.

Case Study

Pooja is an 11 year-old girl. Her parents died when she was just 8 years old. She lives with her aunt in a village in Gujarat. She has two brothers, 15 and 8 years old, and a 4 year-old sister. The 15 year-old brother and her aunt go out to work all day while her younger brother goes to school, leaving Pooja to look after her younger sister. Poverty and exhaustion often result in the aunt venting her frustration on Pooja by beating her.

One day, her aunt came back to find that Pooja had eaten the only food she had left for dinner. Her aunt was so angry that she dipped Pooja's right hand in boiling water. Due to severe burns she had to be admitted to the nearby health centre.

Despite being beaten up and burnt, Pooja believes it is not her aunt's fault as her aunt has too much stress owing to their poor economic condition. She simply blames it on destiny as most children do.

Questions for discussion on the case study:

- What are the ways in which Pooja is being mistreated or abused in her aunt's home?
- What does Pooja think or feel about her situation and herself? Give examples.
- What were some of your thoughts and feelings while reading Pooja's story?
- Can you think of any other ways in which children are physically punished?
- List the ways in which children can learn to be disciplined in positive ways?

Explanation

- Pooja suffers physically from the burning and beating. She also suffers emotionally. Her aunt's treatment makes her think that she is worthless and unloved. The abuse she is undergoing in her childhood may affect her whole life.
- It is important to understand that even though some practices are culturally acceptable, they may still be harmful to children. Pooja's aunt gives her a beating, due to stress. However, it is not justified and it is physical abuse.
- Frequent and severe physical beatings will result in injury, as well as feelings of rejection and worthlessness in a child. Some of the forms of child abuse are shown in Pooja's story.
- What Pooja goes through also happens to many girls and boys in our country. Pooja lives with her aunt, but it could also happen to children who live with their own parents.
- Most children learn to live with abuse because they love their parents and they sympathise with the daily struggles of their parents. They either see it as their fate or wish an angel would come and solve their problems.
- Indeed there may be difficulties faced by parents and perhaps they do not know any better way of raising children. However, an abuse is an abuse and cannot be justified. We need to think and decide if we want the cycle of abuse to continue generation after generation, because we do not know better ways or because of the situations we live in; or do we want to promote better ways of disciplining children. The answers lie with us and therefore we have to make the choice of fighting against abuse or letting it go on forever.
- However, standing up against abuse does not mean getting into a physical fight with our parents and caregivers or behaving badly with them. If children want parents and caregivers to use positive methods of disciplining they would also have to learn to use positive ways of fighting against violence and abuse in the homes and other places where they live.

There may be forms of abuse that amount to a crime and no crime should be tolerated in a civilised society. It then becomes important to learn to report crimes and be prepared for legal action against those who commit such crimes; even if it's against people we love. The questions before us should be: whether a crime can be justified; and what kind of a society do we wish to be? Always remember that when we justify one crime, we should be ready to accept all other crimes because every criminal will have a justification to offer.

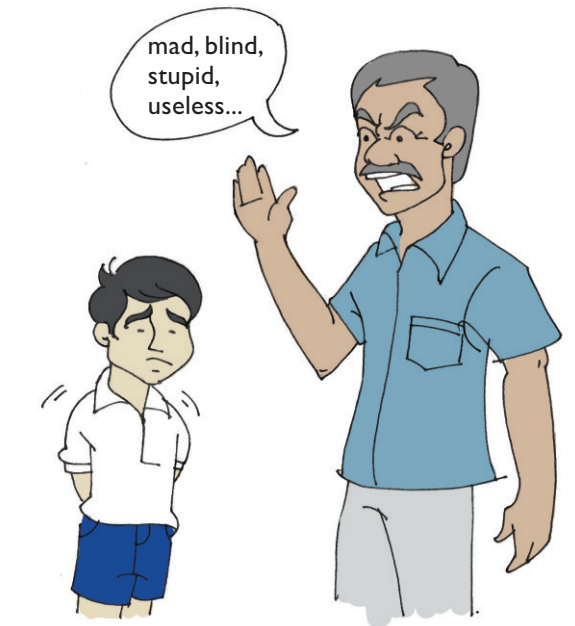
Emotional and verbal abuse (hidden bruises)

Ramesh's teacher calls him names like 'pagal' (mad) and 'buddhu' (stupid) if he forgets his books at home.

Suraj is always bullied by the older children in his locality. They call him 'chotu' and make him polish their shoes and ask him to buy cigarettes for them.

Calling children names, referring to them by their caste names, humiliating them in public are some of the ways in which adults deal with children in order to discipline them to exercise their authority and power over them.

“When someone uses words to hurt children's feelings or to control them it is termed as verbal or emotional abuse. Verbal abuse makes a child feel bad, low or sad.” (Safe you & Safe Me, 2010)



Teacher or parent verbally abusing a child

Emotional abuse occurs when:

- Children are denied love, security, and the company of friends and relatives.
- Parents/a family member or anyone who is taking care of the child do not care for them or praise them.
- Parents, a family member or anyone who is taking care of the child humiliate them.
- Older children bully the younger ones, or some fellow students or peers or siblings bully other children to assert their power.

Impact

Following are some of the many deep-rooted impacts of emotional abuse:

- Lack of attentiveness /concentration
- Unusual compliance to adults
- Withdrawal/isolation
- Aggression
- Poor trust/lack of confidence
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationships
- Fearful of adults
- May even manifest later in life in some form of long-term mental illness such as depression.

Some examples of emotional abuse

- *When someone breaks personal things like a doll, pencil etc.*
- *When someone uses humiliating words like 'ugly', 'fat', 'stupid'.*
- *Whenever a child wishes to talk to her/his parent they tell her/him to go away.*
- *Other children around a child do not want to be her/his friends.*
- *Parents constantly ridicule the child or threaten or frighten her/him.*
- *Bullying.*

Signs of Emotional & Verbal Abuse

- Lack of confidence
- Someone who talks very little or does not talk at all
- Feels scared of saying anything
- Keeping to herself/himself
- Overreacting or all of a sudden becoming angry and loud
- Bullying other children by saying bad things to them

“They cannot be seen BUT the hidden bruises are painful.”

Activity

The case study given below can be used for better understanding of emotional and verbal abuse. At the end of the case study, a list of questions has been given to initiate discussions.

Case Study

Sonu is an 8 year-old boy. Both his parents go to work. When he finishes school he goes to his aunt's place and later in the evening either his mother or father comes to pick him up. Sonu's aunt is not very fond of him and so her interaction with Sonu is limited to minimum. When Sonu and his parents return home, his parents have dinner with him and send him to bed. The parents are tired after the day's work and so have very little energy to spend too much time entertaining little Sonu.

On his part, Sonu does what he is asked to do. Whenever he tries to talk to his parents or asks them something they tell him to keep quiet. If he persists, they shout at him and ask him to stop being stupid and selfish, and for bothering them when they are tired.

They also compare him with the next door neighbour's son for whom Sonu's parents are always full of praise.

In school, Sonu usually stays quiet and does not have any friends. Other children call him 'mental' since he does not talk much. As a result, Sonu is usually alone. The teachers in the school have a busy schedule and are unable to give individual attention to Sonu all the time.

Questions for discussion on the case study:

- What do you think makes Sonu behave in the way he does – aloof and quiet?
- What were some of your thoughts and feelings while reading Sonu's story?
- Can you think of any other ways in which children are emotionally abused?

What is bullying?

Bullying is a problem which many children experience. Bullying is when someone (or group) intentionally uses words or actions against a person to cause distress and risk to their safety or comfort or wellbeing. It is repeated unwelcome behaviour and is a result of a person or group of persons trying to exercise their power on others. Some of the ways in which a child can be bullied are:

- Calling names
- Saying or writing nasty things
- Leaving someone out of activities
- Not talking to a person
- Threatening
- Making a child feel uncomfortable or scared
- Taking or damaging their things
- Hitting or kicking them, or making/forcing them to do things they do not want to do



older child bullying the younger the child to polish his shoes

Not liking someone is not bullying. If one does not use words or actions that are deliberate and repeated to cause distress to another person it is not bullying.

Any single or one time act of physical harm, rejection, exclusion, meanness etc. can cause great distress. However, it cannot be termed as bullying because bullying is repeated and deliberate.

Bullying can happen anywhere. It can happen

- In school
- At home
- In the neighbourhood, playground, etc.

Some children bully because:

- They think that they will succeed or will get what they want.
- They want to be a part of the group and want to make an impression or entertain their friends.
- They are themselves being bullied by someone else so they bully others to enjoy the feeling of power over others.
- Many times a child turns into a bully as she/he is not able to understand that their act is wrong.
- Many times a child imitates what she/he sees at home.
- Some children bully others to prevent it from happening to them.

How do bullies choose their ‘targets’?

People who bully choose their ‘targets’ to establish their power. Children are picked by bullies sometimes because they are unlike themselves in different ways – the way they talk, their size or shape or skin colour, or their name or family. Children are often bullied as the persons bullying them think that the child will not stand up to them.

A child who is bullied or a witness may feel

- Depression or high anxiety wondering what to do and why this is happening to me.
- Loneliness or isolation. A child can feel that no one is standing up for her/him.
- Low self - esteem and self - confidence.
- Health problems, loss of appetite, etc.
- Hopelessness and helplessness with a feeling of: *‘I cannot get rid of such situations’*
- Unsafe and scared
- Poor grades in school
- Suicidal thoughts
- Feeling fearful
- Feels powerless to act
- Feels guilty for not acting
- Tempted to participate

Bullying in School

Bullying in school impacts the child in various ways. When it continues and no action is taken against the bully, it can affect a child in the following manner :

- A child feels insecure and uncomfortable in school.
- She/he starts disliking school or may want to give up studies.
- A child faces difficulty in learning and concentrating and her/his performance begins to suffer.
- Environment of fear and disrespect develops.
- A child starts perceiving that teachers and other staff have no or little control and they do not care about her/him.

How a Child can Protect Herself/Himself from Being Bullied

- If someone is bullying a child, she/he should share it with an adult she/he trusts - it can be a friend, teacher, school principal, parent, someone from her/his family or a friend's parent. Adults can take action to get the bullying stopped.
- The child should tell an adult even if she/he has solved the problem by themselves. If the person with whom she/he has shared the problem has not done anything, the child should share it with someone else. Incidents of bullying should not be kept secret.
- A child should be aware and comfortable about her/his looks, body etc. If she/he is different she/he must learn to be confident about it. The child should spend time with her/his family or friends, as bullies rarely pick on people if they are in a group.
- Whenever the bullying starts, the child must tell the person to stop or walk away or try to act unimpressed.
- The child can even share the problem of bullying in writing if she/he is not comfortable talking about it.
- A child must remember that they are not at fault nor are they the problem. A child has a right to feel safe and secure.

Neglect

Neglect is different from other forms of abuse. In other forms of abuse a caregiver/parent does something wrong or does something that they are not supposed to do. However, in the case of neglect the caregiver/parent fails to do what she/he is supposed to do.



Child going near the fire while the mother is busy talking to her neighbour.

Saleem does not take his child to the doctor even though his child is injured or ill.

Pinky has a brother. Her parents always pay more attention to her brother. He gets the best food, clothes and schooling. She always feels left out and uncared for.

Ragini and Rustam, both have very busy parents. They have time for everything else and everyone else except for their own children. The children are left alone to fend for themselves.

Lakhi is disabled. His parents do not see the need to invest too much time and energy on him. They think he is of no good and their only responsibility is to feed him as long as he is alive. For days they do not bathe him or change his clothes. Most of his needs are neglected.

Neglect is a failure on the part of parents or guardians to attend to a child's basic needs – food, shelter, clothing, education, medical aid, love and emotional support.

Some Examples of the Impact of Neglect on Children

- Constant hunger/tiredness • Physical or psychological illness • Absenteeism from school or being late • Low confidence • Running away from home or school • Stealing etc. • Feeling out of place among friends and others • Behavioural changes for example, sleeplessness, lack of appetite, etc.
- Anger or other destructive tendencies.

What is the difference between poverty and neglect?

Although poverty and child neglect are related, poverty cannot be said to be the cause of neglect.

Poverty is when the caregiver does not have the resources to provide for the needs. Neglect is when the caregiver has the resources, but chooses not to meet the basic needs of a child.

In fact, neglect permeates all kinds of families, rich or poor.

Parents or guardians may neglect children because:

- It is a social or traditional way of life, for example, neglect of a girl child.
- They are not able to plan properly for the family's needs.
- They lack the right knowledge of how to look after children.
- They have low self-esteem themselves.
- Have themselves been victims of abuse in their childhood.
- They suffer from a mental disability or illness.
- They are addicted to drugs, alcohol and other such harmful substances.
- They lack support from their family and community.

“In neglect the caregiver fails to do what she/he is supposed to do.”

Some examples of neglect are:

- Denying children food, shelter, clothing, education, love, care and protection even when parents have the resources or the means but choose not to provide them.
- Leaving them alone for long periods of time.
- Not speaking/lack of communication with the child.
- Not giving enough time to the child.
- Comparing a child with her/his peers/siblings.

Signs of Child Neglect

- Constant illness or dullness
- Sad look
- Unusually withdrawn from others
- Poor performance at school
- Untidy or dirty appearance
- The child feels out of place among friends and other people
- Untreated injuries and/or illness

Activity

The case study given below can be used for better understanding of neglect.At the end of the case study, a list of questions has been given to initiate discussions.

Case Study

Sunita is a 10-year old girl. She is withdrawn, pale, thin and looks much younger than her age. Her clothes are usually torn and dirty and her hair looks frizzy and uncombed for days. She is seldom seen to step out of her house.

Further, because of her poor physical condition, Sunita is frequently ill but is never cared of or taken to the doctor by her parents.

Vistors to the family find Sunita uncommunicative and shy. She only responds by moving her head in “yes” or “no” when she is spoken to.

However her 9-year-old brother always looks clean, healthy and happy. Sunita can never understand why her parents always love her brother OR why she is always kept hungry or why she is never allowed to go out and play OR make friends with other children in the neighbourhood OR why she has to sleep on an empty stomach if her mother gets angry.

Questions for discussion on the case study

- What are the ways in which Sunita is being mistreated or abused?
- What in your opinion does Sunita think or feel about her situation and herself?
- What were some of your thoughts and feelings while reading Sunita's story?
- What type of abuse is she undergoing that might affect her whole life?
- Can you think of any other ways in which children are neglected?
- Sunita is a girl, but boys too may face neglect. Can you think of some examples?

Sexual abuse

- This is one of the most sensitive topics to be discussed. Anyone who has to talk about sexual abuse to children must ensure that the words are used carefully and in the right tone.
- For example, do not use any direct words referring to a private area. Explain the term as: “Private areas are parts which are not shown to anyone and those areas which are covered by undergarments”.
- Also, one should observe that if a child is feeling uncomfortable or showing signs of fear then the topic should be changed to cover a light activity or to another topic like “places where we like to visit for a holiday”; or “what does a child enjoy doing”.

Juhi's uncle hugs her or cuddles her even though she dislikes it.

Aseem's aunt tells him to take off his clothes in front of her. If he does not listen to her then she gives him a beating. He does so in fear and feels ashamed about telling anyone about the incident.

A teacher insists on rubbing his hand on the bodies of his students when speaking to them.

Child sexual abuse is shrouded in shame and secrecy and hence is difficult to detect or sometimes detected too late. Even parents and family members who really care for their children refuse to acknowledge it or act on it if it takes place. Children themselves hesitate to talk about it. A child may be abused by any member of the family, teacher, and any member from the community or another child/minor.

“Sexual abuse is one of the most traumatic experiences that a child can face, and has a very long-lasting physical and psychological impact.”

Some facts about child sexual abuse

- Child sexual abuse is when someone behaves towards a child in a sexual manner.
- It is a sexual activity against a child's wish.
- The child does not completely understand the act and does not give her/his consent.
- Sexual acts involve both touching and non-touching behaviour.
- It involves the abuse of authority/power and betrayal of trust.
- Mostly, it is kept as a secret.
- It is coerced – the abuser uses tricks, bribes and threats.
- It usually happens in a place familiar to the child.
- All children are equally at risk, irrespective of caste, class and culture.
- Both boys and girls are equally at risk.
- Rape is not the only form of sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse can take place even without physical contact. Here is an example...

Chintu was a 10-year-old boy who lived with his parents and chacha. Chintu often used to see his chacha watch movies and was keen to watch them too. He approached his chacha and was happy when his chacha agreed. For a few days Chintu's chacha showed him cartoons, but one day Chintu's chacha told Chintu that he would show him something special and it should be kept a secret. Chintu was excited, but soon realised that the movie was something he had never seen before, with two people not wearing any clothes. Chintu did not like it and left the room.

The next time, Chintu was forced by his chacha to sit and watch the movie. The third time around he was threatened by his chacha who said that he would tell Chintu's parents that Chintu was in the habit of watching dirty movies. Chintu had no option but to obey his chacha, who soon started unzipping his pants during the movie and showing Chintu his private parts.

What might put a child at risk of sexual abuse?

- Perpetrators look particularly for passive, quiet, troubled, lonely children from single parent or broken homes. Family structure is one of the important risk factors in child sexual abuse.
- Children as well as families who are easily trusting or gullible often become prey to sexual abuse.
- Children with disabilities are at a greater risk of sexual abuse.
- Children who witness crime, domestic violence or are victims of other crimes are also likely to be sexually abused. This can be due to the emotional disturbance they suffer which makes them vulnerable to abuse.

Impact of Child Sexual Abuse

- It leaves the child traumatised during the most critical period of her/his life.
- It hampers the child's subsequent psychological and social maturation.
- The experience of such betrayal and suffering leads to erosion of trust and confidence.
- It leads to poor coping patterns – a child may develop the tendency of denial, suppressing memory, and/or self-harm to avoid painful memories or to reduce the emotional pain.
- It has a long-term negative impact on the child and the family.

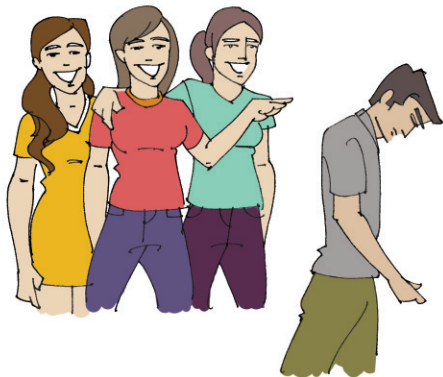
Some Examples of Physical and Non-Physical Sexual Abuse

Behaviours involving physical contact

- Touching a child's private parts (private parts are the ones we do not expose or show to others)
- Making a child touch someone else's private parts
- Kissing a child forcefully
- Sex with a child
- Encouraging or forcing the child to play or do things with her/his private parts

Non-touching behaviours include

- Showing one's private body parts to a child
- Showing films, magazines, books, pictures containing sexual content like nude or semi-nude pictures
- Telling or sharing dirty jokes or stories with a child
- Watching a child change clothes or undressing herself/himself with or without the child's knowledge
- Looking or making gestures of a sexual nature



Eve teasing of a boy by a group of girls



A young boy pulling a girl's duppata

Some Facts About Child Sexual Abuse

Physical signs

- Pain or itching in the private areas
- Bruising or bleeding near genital area
- Sexually transmitted disease/infection
- Discharge or infection from/at private parts
- Stomach pain
- Pregnancy
- Discomfort/pain while walking or sitting down

Changes in behaviour which might also indicate sexual abuse

- Sudden or unexplained aggression or withdrawn behaviour
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- Nightmares
- Running away from home
- Drawings expressing sexual content or aggression/fear
- Bedwetting
- Sexual knowledge beyond age, or development level
- Over-eating or anorexia
- Self-harm or self-mutilation
- Substance or drug abuse



Rape



An adult male showing indecent photographs to a child

Activity

The case study given below can be used for better understanding of sexual abuse. At the end of the case study, a list of questions has been given to initiate discussions.

Case Study

Rajni lost her husband and married again. She has a 13 year-old daughter, Neha, from her previous marriage. One day Rajni had gone to visit a friend. While she was away, her second husband raped Neha, who became pregnant. When Neha told Rajni that she was pregnant, Rajni got so annoyed that she beat Neha in the presence of her second husband until Neha told her that he was the one who had done it. The husband accepted the responsibility and asked for forgiveness and Rajni forgave him. Neha was taken for abortion and the matter was hushed up.

On a later occasion, Rajni left her 10 year-old daughter asleep while she went to see a doctor. This time, her husband raped his own daughter. Rajni's daughter told her what had happened and also mentioned that her father had said, "If you tell anybody I will kill you."

Questions for discussion on the case study:

- In Rajni's story what type of abuse did her children suffer?
- What were your thoughts and feelings while reading Rajni's story?
- How would Rajni be thinking or feeling about her situation and herself? Give examples.
- What do you think the two girls who were sexually abused felt about it?
- Can you list other ways in which a child can be sexually abused?

Explanation

- In Rajni's story we learn how, in some cultures, women are supposed to obey their husbands in many ways. Children are not allowed to answer back or express views contrary to the elders, which would be seen as a challenge and could lead to punishment. Adults often do not want to talk or think about child sexual abuse which has left children unprotected and helpless.
- In the story, Rajni was more concerned about her husband and saving her marriage than she was about her children's pain and suffering. She chose to forgive him instead of taking action against him. Rajni was also afraid of what the community would say. The situation would be seen as shameful. Her culture demands that she remains committed to the marriage. If she spoke against her husband, some members of the community would think of her as a bad wife who cannot keep 'family issues' private.
- While Neha's abortion was hushed up, Rajni could not think that her other daughter who was the man's own child could also become a victim of his lust.
- Sexual abuse by one's own father or by a blood relation is called 'incest'. It is even more difficult for our society to accept existence of incest.
- When no action is taken to protect the victims of sexual abuse, they feel completely devastated and live with all the anger pent-up inside.
- Victims of sexual abuse lead a traumatic existence all their lives, especially when they get no justice.

“The damage suffered due to sexual abuse can leave a person emotionally disturbed for life

What is the difference between “Good Touch”and “Bad Touch”

It is important to know the difference between good and bad touch just as it is important to know about hygiene, road safety, etc

Let us try and understand the difference between the two.

| Good Touch | Bad Touch |
|---|--|
| <p>Touch that feels good and leaves the child happy and comfortable.</p> <p>It is a way for people to show they care for each other. It feels good to be hugged and kissed by the people children love.</p> <p>It is good touch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When a mother gives a hug and kiss after a child wakes up• When a father gives a goodnight hug and kiss• When grandfather and grandmother hug and kiss make a child feel loved and wanted• Holding hands with friends, sharing meals, etc. | <p>Touch that feels unsafe, confused and leaves the child feeling uneasy or uncomfortable.</p> <p>It is not a likeable touch and the child wants it to be stopped right away.</p> <p>It is a bad touch if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Someone touches the child where she/he does not want to be touched• The child feels fearful and nervous of the touch• She/he is forced to touch the other person• She/he has been asked to keep it a secret after the person has touched her/him, which she/he did not like• A person threatens to hurt the child if she/he tells anyone about touching her/him• A person gives gifts and asks the child not to tell anyone |

What should be done when someone touches a child inappropriately or in a manner that does not feel okay?

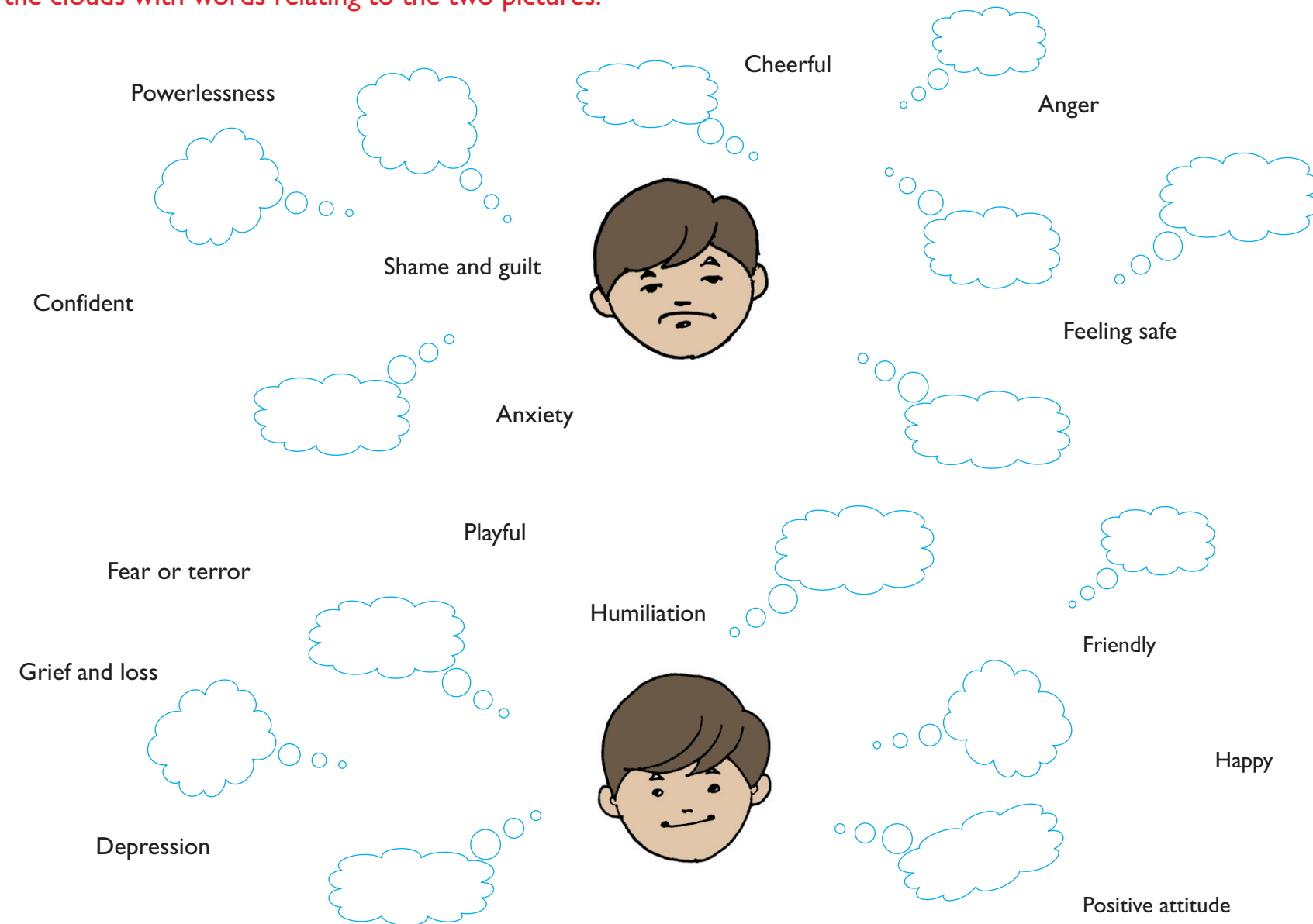
The child should do the following:

- Say a firm NO!!! Tell the person that she/he does not like it and does not want to be touched.
- Run away from the person who touches or tries to touch her/him.
- Make a noise about it.
- Do not stay alone with that person again.
- Do everything to stay away from the threatening and intimidating person.
- Not allow threats to scare her/him into running away or keeping quiet.
- Call for help. Scream for help.
- Believe in one’s self and that she/he did nothing wrong.
- Speak to someone she/he trusts about what has happened so that they can help. She/he should not feel ashamed and should not keep it a secret.

Remember
“If anybody hurts or tries to hurt a child in a manner that the child feels sexually abused, it is not the child’s fault.”

Activity

Fill the clouds with words relating to the two pictures:



How to tell children about abuse

As it has been mentioned earlier, the complexity of the subject makes it difficult to discuss it with children. In fact the very first hurdle is how to even introduce the subject to children and start a discussion . Here are some suggested tips.

Discussing child abuse with the Children's Group – a suggested method

- Organise a meeting with the Children's Group.
- Start with a prayer or a song.
- Set the ground rules – facilitate children to decide and finalise
- The starting point could be
 - Who is your favourite hero or favourite heroine?
 - Why do you like them?
 - Which is your favourite film and why?
 - Is there any film you have not liked? Why?
 - What kind of characters do you like in a film and why?

These light and enjoyable questions always pave the road for discussions on characters that children like and dislike, the reasons for their like and dislike, why do they think a villain is bad, what are the bad things that he does, do such things happen only to adults, etc.

Alternatively, reading the newspaper and discussing any particular news item on abuse can be used as a method for introducing the topic. Such methods are useful if a relationship or rapport has already been established with the children.

Direct discussions on abuse will not set the tune for the session. It is important for a trainer to plan out the strategy for discussing 'abuse' with the Children's Groups. Otherwise children may shy away from the discussion or get frightened. It is important to familiarise them with the topic with some exercise or activity and then begin the discussion on the issue.

Some pointers on discussing sexual abuse with children

Often children feel uncomfortable discussing sexual abuse.The issue of sexual abuse is very sensitive and needs to be dealt with sensibly. It is very important for a trainer to have alternative plans if any plan does not work out. Here are some ways in which the issue of sexual abuse can be discussed with children.

Begin with discussing the issue of ‘fear’

Discussing child sexual abuse is the toughest. It is suggested that a beginning should be made by discussing the issue of fear.A general discussion on what children are scared/afraid of; what they fear and what can help the facilitator gradually come to the topic of sexual abuse.

The issue of ‘rape’ could be touched with the help of a film/posters/flip charts

A film or a poster or flip charts are useful tools to start a discussion on the subject of sexual abuse. It also helps maintain the seriousness of the issue and generates a healthy discussion.

Listing crimes against children

Another way is to get children to discuss and list out crimes against children and then compare their list with the government’s list. They are bound to come across the crime of ‘rape’, which can then be discussed in detail. It is also important to remember that while discussing ‘rape’ or for that matter any form of abuse, children should be informed about their rights and how the law protects them.

A trainer while discussing the issue with children above 10 years of age must keep the following points in mind:

- There is a need to have a dialogue with children, not lecture them.
- Girls and boys should be separated as far as possible.
- Confidentiality of children needs to be maintained.
- The discussions should always be done in a room and **NOT IN THE OPEN IN FRONT OF EVERYONE**. If needed, ask two Child Protection Committee (CPC) members (one male and one female) to be present as observers.
- It is important to tell children to be serious while discussing the issue of ‘rape’. Giggles and jokes during such discussions should be discouraged and this should become part of the ground rules in the beginning itself.

It is also important for a trainer to understand that every detail of child sexual abuse need not be discussed with children below the age of ten.What they need to know more importantly is:

- The distinction between ‘good touch’ and ‘bad touch’
- To make noise if they do not like something
- To inform someone they feel close to if they do not like something
- Even if a doctor touches them in a manner they do not like, they should inform their parents or a person they are close to/trust.

3 WHAT CAN CHILDREN DO WHEN THEY HEAR ABOUT CHILD ABUSE?

Even as children they can help others...

We see child abuse all around us. We know that it is wrong, so why do we shy away from protesting or taking action to stop it from happening? Each one of us in society has a role to play in stopping child abuse.

Most forms of child abuse are against the law and hence an offence. We can take or help the child take legal recourse to get justice.

There are other ways also in which we can help children suffering from abuse. We can do this as individuals or as a peer group.

How children can help as individuals...

- Be a true friend.
- Listen to the child who wants to share her/his suffering.
- Believe in her/him.
- Encourage her/him to speak to an adult who can be trusted. This could be a parent, a teacher, a relative, or a friend's parent, a social worker or a member of the panchayat or a member of the Child Protection Committee.
- Gather information about the available agencies and persons that can help and seek assistance for the child such as Child Helplines/NGOs/Child Welfare Committees (CWC)/ Child Protection Officers, etc. for the same.

How children can help as a peer group...

- Spread awareness.
- Initiate a campaign for 'ZERO TOLERANCE FOR CHILD ABUSE'.
- Take adults along in the campaign.
- Let adults know that they cannot treat children badly.
- Support and help an abused child to cope as a peer group.
- Let the child know that she/he is not alone.
- Let the child know that it could happen to anybody.
- Know their legal rights and help other children know them too.
- Collect information about people and existing agencies to protect children and create directory of all emergency services.
- Ask their parents to demand that the schools should also maintain such a directory.
- Help the child to register complaint to the authorities such as the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights or the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Child Helplines, police, etc. if necessary.
- Report instances of abuse without breaking the confidentiality of the child who seeks help.

What Can be Done When a Child sees Another Child Being Bullied

- Get together and try to talk to the bully. Bullying a child is not okay and if those who watch it happen do nothing, it means they are encouraging bullying and saying that bullying is acceptable. It is important therefore to always try to stop it. A bully must know that such behaviour is not acceptable. Try to have a conversation but do not make it intense or discourage them from talking about it.
- Do not become a party to it. Do not cheer the bully or stand around to watch. Such behaviour should be discouraged. Often a bully likes the attention, and they pick on the targeted child even more. Show the bully that what they are doing is stupid and mean.
- If a child is being bullied, help that child find someone who can stop it. Speak to another friend, teacher, parents, sarpanch, etc.
- Get to know about the child who is being bullied.
- Reach out to the bullies and try to strike friendship with them. A bully should realise that there are other ways to interact with people. She/he must be made to understand that to show their power or to seek attention and acceptance of others they do not need to bully people.
- Never advice a child to fight back, as it can do more harm to the child.

Some exercises on how to deal with bullying

Some case studies are given below. These can be used to help children understand what they can do when they are a witness to such situations.

Case Study

Rajender, an 11-year-old child, in your class is often picked on by Sudesh, who is 15 years old and studying in a higher class. One day, in the lunchroom you see that Sudesh trips Rajender. Rajender drops his tray of food and falls on the ground. All the other children start laughing at Rajender. Rajender is upset and looks like he is going to cry.

What would you do if you were there?

Explanation

There can be many ways to handle such a situation. Some options for handling the situation are given below:

- Ignore the bully. Do not pay any attention to the bully. If the bully tries to get a reaction do not laugh or join her/him.
- Let her/him know that you do not think what she/he is doing is funny or cool or you approve of such behaviour.
- Get together with a group of friends to help the child clean up his spilled lunch. You can also invite the child to sit with you.

Case Study

Aasha lives in your village; you often see her in the playground by herself. People call her names and spread malicious rumours about her. One day, she walks over to play on the tyre swing. A kid screams at her and tells her to go away. She tries to talk to another group of girls and asks them whether she can play with them; instead one of the girls tells the others that the group would not play with whoever talked to Aasha. Aasha looks very upset and walks away as the other girls call her names.

What would you do?

Explanation

There can be many ways of handling such a situation. Some options for handling the situation are given below:

- Invite Aasha over to play with you and your group.
- If anyone is spreading rumours stand up for her and say some good things that you have noticed about her.
- You should not become a part of such rumours and don't pass on what you hear, even if they are very laughable. You must remember how you would feel if it happened to you.

A Few Important Things To Know

Agencies for children

- Police
- Child Helpline/NGOs
- Child Welfare Committees (CWC)
- Magistrate
- State Commission for Protection of Child Rights
- District Child Protection Committee

Persons (other than parents) who may be helpful in situations

- Panchayat members
- Aanganwadi worker
- School teacher
- ANM/Doctor
- Asha didi
- Child Protection Committee
- District Child Protection Officer
- District officials

Emergency numbers to remember

- Police : 100
- Women Helpline : 1091
- Child Helpline : 1098
- Ambulance Number : 102

All children should be aware of the above-mentioned agencies, people and important numbers. These are the people who can be approached by any child who is facing, or suspecting or has identified abuse. Children's Groups should ensure that other children and people from the community are educated about these important people and organisations.

Some Myths Related to Child Abuse

Myth: Child abuse is a very personal issue and we have no right to interfere in someone else's family.

Fact: Child abuse has a long-lasting impact on a child's life and places society at the risk of perpetuating the cycle of abuse. It is important to break this cycle.

Myth: If I interfere in someone's home, it will lead to the breakup of the family; as a result the child will lose her/his family.

Fact: The purpose of intervening in an abusive situation is to break the cycle of violence, not break the family. Interference in such a situation does not mean a child will be removed from the home by the police/NGO unless the child's life is under threat or in danger. The family can be supported by providing parenting classes, anger management or other resources. Such good-intent interference will help a child to live a dignified life with her/his family.

Myth: My interference will not make any difference in a child's life.

Fact: Such intervention creates fear in the mind of the abuser and helps a child speak out about the violence and abuse that she/he has faced. This also gives the impression to a child that she/he is also important and people do care about her/ him. Every voice gives the child strength and creates fear in the mind of the abuser. It is very important to raise your voice against abuse as it can help a child come out of an abusive situation. Your decision can change the life of a child suffering from abuse.

Some other common myths are:

- Reporting abuse is likely to make things worse for the child so it is better not to do or say anything.
- There is no proper legal system for reporting abuse cases, so it is not worth reporting anything.
- The police will not be of any help if child abuse is reported.

4 LAWS THAT PROTECT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Children have a right to be protected from all forms of exploitation and abuse.

Some situations of exploitation make children more vulnerable to abuse than others. Therefore, for those who want to act against child abuse, it is important to know the laws that deal with such situations.

In this section we will look at the different laws that can be used to deal with some kinds of child exploitation and child abuse that are prevalent in society.

Laws that protect children from physical, mental and emotional abuse; and neglect

If a child is subjected to physical, mental or emotional abuse, or neglect, the abusers can be punished under the following laws.

Section 23 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 (JJ Act) provides for punishment to such persons who abuse children kept under their charge or control. These include parents, school principals or teachers, in-charge or staff of a children's home or any institution where children live, a doctor or a nurse who is treating the child, Anganwadi teachers, the employer, etc.

The Indian Penal Code punishes those who cause any of the following offences to any person, including children:

Physical harm or injury of serious or non-serious nature

- Criminal force or assault
- Criminal intimidation
- Confinement of children illegally
- Abandonment of a child below 12 years of age

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 bans corporal punishment in schools. Children can make a complaint to the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights if they face corporal punishment in school. If there is no State Commission, a complaint can be made to the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights.

Laws protecting children against sexual abuse

As such there is no separate law which specifically deals with child sexual abuse; but steps are being taken to make a separate law on sexual offences against children. Until then the law protects children from sexual abuse in the following manner:

Sexual abuse of girls

The Indian Penal Code provides punishment for eve-teasing, molestation or outraging the modesty of a girl in other ways and rape.

If a girl below 16 years of age is raped, the law provides for greater punishment and does not allow any question on the consent of the girl. In other words, the accused cannot take the plea that the girl had given her consent for the sexual act.

A girl below the age of 15 years can file a case of rape against her own husband. The law also deals with such a situation very strictly.

Sexual abuse of boys

Unlike girls, boys have no protection against non-touch sexual offences. But the Indian Penal Code recognises that boys can also be subjected to rape and provides punishment for it. The 'rape' of boys is commonly known as sodomy and is covered in the Indian Penal Code as an 'unnatural sexual offence'.

- In the last few years the courts have time and again given judgements that lay down guidelines for the police, hospitals and courts on how to deal with victims of sexual abuse.
- Special courts are meant to be set up at the district level to deal with crimes against children and ensure speedy justice.
- No child can be called to a police station. It is the duty of the police to reach out to a victim of child abuse. The policemen cannot be in uniform when they are interacting with children.
- In case of rape, the medical examination of the victim can be conducted only if the victim or her/his parent/guardian gives consent for it. Every child who is a victim of rape has a right to know the details of the medical examination before giving her /his consent. She/he also has a right to ask for her/his parent or a social worker or an adult she/he trusts the most to be present with her/him at the time of the examination.

Child marriage

Under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

- To make a girl less than 18 years of age and a boy less than 21 years go through a marriage is an offence.
- A complaint against child marriage can be filed by any person.
- All persons participating or providing any kind of help in a child marriage can be punished.

If a child has been married at an early age even then there is hope! Child marriages can be annulled, which in other words mean they can be cancelled within two years of the child victim becoming a major. A girl can file an application for the cancellation of her marriage within two years after she completes the age of 18 years and a boy within two years after completing 21 years of age.

Child labour

Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 (CLPRA) prohibits the employment of children below 14 years in hazardous occupation. In non-hazardous occupations, no child below the age of 14 years is allowed to work during night, they cannot be made to work more than 6 hours and they must get a break between their working hours.

The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 prohibits forcing a person into bonded labour for repayment of debt. It includes cases where parents pledge their child into bonded labour and also forced labour.

Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 (JJ Act) recognises cruelty by persons having control over a child less than 18 years of age and their employment in hazardous occupations, as a special offence and provides punishment for these. Even persons who traffick children or buy and sell children for labour can be punished under this law.

All children below the age of 18 years are protected under the JJ Act. No child can be mistreated below the age of 18 years. No one can keep her/him in bondage and withhold her/his earnings or use such earnings for their own purposes.

Free and compulsory education for all children in the age group of 6-14 years is a fundamental right.

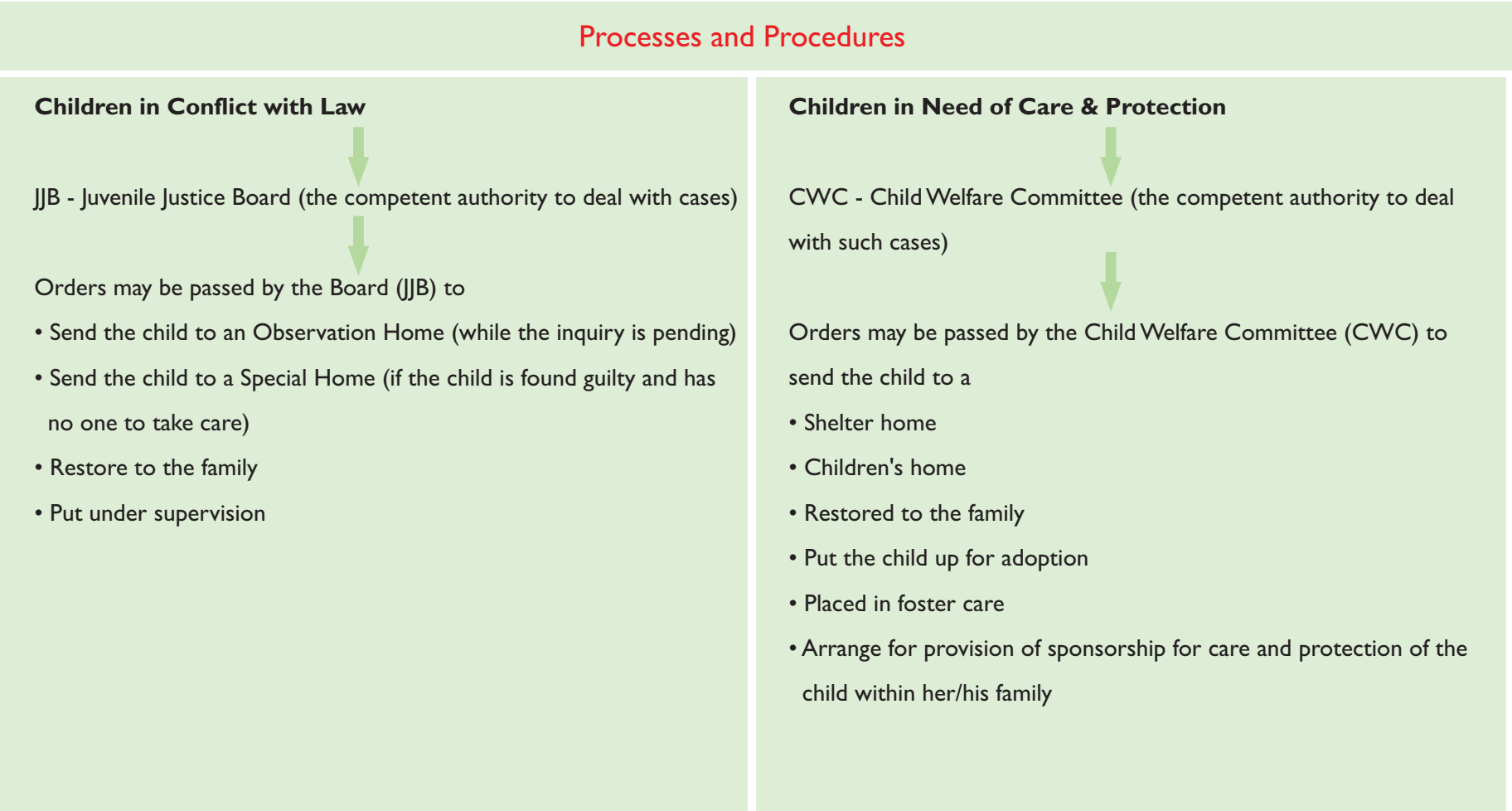
Child trafficking

- Children who are victims of trafficking are children in need of care and protection under the JJ Act, 2000. Such children have a right to be protected, rehabilitated and restored to their families, if their families are not abusive or exploitative.
- Child Welfare Committees are supposed to exist in every district to look after cases of children in need of care and protection.
- Buying and selling children or kidnapping children for sexual purposes is an offence under **the Indian Penal Code**.
- Trafficking a minor for prostitution is a serious offence punishable under the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, 1986.

Rights of children living in institutional care

Children may be living in institutions because they have no one to look after them or because it is not safe to send them to their families or because they have been accused of breaking the law. While children accused of breaking the law are called 'Children in Conflict with the Law', others in difficult circumstances can be treated as 'Children in Need of Care and Protection'.

The legal process and procedures for both the categories of children is laid down in the JJ Act, 2000 as follows:



While dealing with children under this Act

- The police must wear plain clothes
- A child should never be handcuffed even if accused of a heinous offence
- The child cannot be locked up in a police station or a jail
- A child must be produced before the Board/Committee within 24 hours
- Identity of children must not be disclosed by media unless permitted by the Board (JJB)/Committee (CWC)

Care and Protection of Children in Institutions

The Act also requires all institutions to maintain certain standards of care and protection and meet the basic needs of children. Abuse by the staff of an institution amounts to a special offence under this law. Children can directly report abuse to the Board (JJB) or the Committee (CWC).

Frequently Asked Questions

Is there a need for the child to be present in the police station when the offender is being questioned?

No. In fact, the child need not be brought to the police station at all.

Is there a procedure for taking photographs? Who is allowed to take photographs?

Photographs related to injury and other such details must be recorded. However, there is no specific procedure laid down in the law in this regard. Such photographs cannot be published in any news if they disclose the child's identity and are not in the interest of the child.

In case of child victims, is it mandatory that the child herself/himself should lodge a complaint in the police station?

No. The offence can be reported either in writing (personally or through post) or by narrating orally to the officer in-charge of the police station or even through telephone. Any person having information regarding the offence can report it.

When a victimised child comes to a police station, what are the safeguards to minimise her/his trauma?

In every police station, officers are designated as the 'Juvenile or the Child Welfare Officer'. They are expected to handle the matters relating to children in distress as well as children in conflict with the law. They work in association with approved NGOs. This is to ensure that the child is not handled in an insensitive manner by untrained officers in uniform.

Can a child be kept in the police station during enquiry?

No. A child in conflict with the law or a child victim cannot be kept in a police station. As an immediate measure, the care of the child victim should be entrusted to an approved NGO/ child helpline organisation. A child in conflict with the law should be produced before the Board (JJB), within 24 hours or taken to an observation home. A child in need of care and protection should also be produced before the Committee (CWC) within 24 hours or sent to a recognised children's home.

Can a child witness be taken to the police station for enquiry?

No. A child witness can be examined by the police only at her/his residence.

What is the role of the designated Juvenile Welfare Officer in a police station?

The designated Juvenile Welfare Officer in a police station is also the nodal officer responsible for attending the calls from the 'child helpline' and for investigating cases relating to child abuse. It is the duty of the Station House officer (SHOs) to ensure that the designated officers personally attend cases involving children.

¹ Centre for Child Rights, 2007: Combating Child Trafficking: A User's Handbook, HAQ.

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| 5 ANNEXURE | | | |
| Preventing Child Abuse Draft Programme for Training of Children's Groups | | | |
| It may not be possible to get children to sit for a three-day training programme. Training Children's Groups requires a schedule that is spread over a couple of days keeping in mind the availability of children, their time and attention spans. On the basis of this, a draft programme schedule has been devised to help children understand child abuse; it's various forms; the myths and facts about different forms of child abuse; what children can do to prevent it and deal with it; and how the laws protect them. | | | |
| Session I | | 2 hours | |
| Setting the ground for discussions on child abuse | | | |
| Who is a child? | | | |
| Listing out various situations when children feel unprotected | | | |
| What are children's rights? | | | |
| What do we mean by right to protection? | | | |
| Session II | | 2 hours | |
| What does it mean to be abused? | | | |
| Who is an abused child? | | | |
| Who can be an abuser? | | | |
| How does a child understand abuse? | | | |
| Questions that arise in a child's mind when faced with abuse | | | |
| Session III | | | |
| Understanding child abuse | | 2 hours | |
| Physical Abuse | | | |
| Signs and symptoms | | | |
| Impact | | | |
| Myths and facts | | | |
| (Group work using case studies based on real life situations) | | | |
| Session IV | | 2 hours | |
| Emotional and verbal abuse | | | |
| Signs and symptoms | | | |
| Impact | | | |
| Myths and facts | | | |
| (Group work using case studies based on real life situations) | | | |
| Session V | | 2 hours | |
| Neglect | | | |
| Signs and symptoms | | | |
| Impact | | | |
| Myths and facts | | | |
| (Group work using case studies based on real life situations) | | | |
| 55 | | 56 | |
| | | CMYK | |

Session VI **2-3 hours**

Sexual Abuse

Signs and symptoms

Impact

Myths and facts

How can children protect themselves?

(Group work using case studies based on real life situations)?

Session VII **2 hours**

Some exploitative situations that may turn abusive

Child labour

Corporal punishment

Child trafficking

Child marriage

Session VIII **2 hours**

What can children do when they hear about child abuse?

As individuals

As a peer group

(Using role play)

Session IX **3 hours**

Knowing your rights some important laws that protect children

Session X **1 hour**

Summing up and feedback

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