

Seasons of Peace

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS FOR ABUSE PREVENTION PREKINDERGARTEN–HIGH SCHOOL

The title “Seasons of Peace” is taken from a poem in this document. These curriculum frameworks will help students resist and find help in coping with child abuse and neglect, abduction, domestic violence, and dating violence. We seek to foster seasons of peace... for our students today, and for their own children in years to come.



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor



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Carmen Fariña, *Chancellor*

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Preface

Seasons of Peace: Curriculum Frameworks for Abuse Prevention, Prekindergarten–High School has been developed to help students resist—and find help in coping with—child abuse and neglect, abduction, domestic violence, and dating violence. It enables them to seek assistance and intervention in the event they, or someone they know, is abused or suffers some form of family violence.

Not everyone is comfortable in talking or teaching about controversial topics such as sexual molestation, corporal punishment, and physical and emotional abuse. Yet for millions of children from every walk of life these horrors remain everyday facts of life. The Children’s Defense Fund reports that every day in the United States:

- 3 children die from child abuse;
- 9 children are murdered;
- 13 die from hand guns;
- 27 children—enough to fill a classroom—die from poverty;
- 7,945 children are reported abused and neglected.

This curriculum guide provides children with concepts and skills that foster personal safety. Developmentally appropriate activities hold the children’s interest and allow them to practice the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to protect themselves from abuse and family violence. These activities help children understand that they have the right to feel safe, to seek help, to trust their feelings, and that they have the responsibility to themselves to speak up about abuse and family violence. By vesting children with the skills to prevent and combat child abuse, *Seasons of Peace* endeavors to break the cycles of abuse and family violence, so that children everywhere will be free of their terrible legacy.

...

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Acknowledgments

Seasons of Peace: Curriculum Frameworks for Abuse Prevention, Prekindergarten to High School is a project of the New York City Board of Education's Division of Student Support Services, Francine B. Goldstein, Executive Director. The development of this document is attributed to the vision and leadership of Priscilla Chavez-Reilly, Director, Office of Student Guidance Services. The research and compilation of materials and resources for the development of this document was undertaken by Joshua Marquez, Citywide Coordinator for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention. Betty Rothbart, Comprehensive Health Coordinator and Curriculum Writer, was a major contributor and chief editor.

Grateful acknowledgment is extended to the following individuals for their valuable comments, insights, recommendations, materials, and generous time and support.

Urania Anderson, Consultant, New York City Board of Education

Patricia Brennan, Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator, Mayor's Office

Carol A. Brown, Administration for Children's Services

Olivia Brown, Administration for Children's Services

Effie Bynum, Division of High Schools, New York City Board of Education

James Cameron, New York State/National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse

Cristina Casanova, Office of Student Guidance Services, New York City Board of Education

Joseph Colletti, United Federation of Teachers

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Felicia Cruickshank, Parent—Citywide Policy Council—Lower East Side

Demetris Daniels-Foster, Office of Student Guidance Services, New York City Board of Education

Georganne Del Canto, Center for Population and Family Health, Columbia University

Alisa Del Tufo, Family Violence Project

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Carol Fernandez, Agency for Child Development

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John Fitzgerald, Office of Comprehensive Health and Substance Abuse Prevention, New York City Board of Education

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Renee Hicks, The Center for Children

Patricia E. Henry, Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator, Mayor's Office

William Joyce, Office of Legal Services, New York City Board of Education

Margo Joseph Levy, Citywide Special Education Programs, New York City Board of Education

Regina King, Brooklyn High School Superintendency, New York City Board of Education

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Jacqui Miranda, Parent—Chancellor's Parent Advisory Committee, New York City Board of Education

Lorna Morgan, Victim Services

Eleanor Pam, City University of New York

Jorge E. Pastor, Administration for Children's Services

Thelma Prince, Council of Supervisors and Administrators

Eugene Rubin, Community School District 1, New York City Board of Education
Linda L. Schaller, Commission on the Status of Women
Marge Scheuer, Citizens Committee for Children
Roberta Shaw, District Council 37
Ellen Shelton, Office of Comprehensive Health and Substance Abuse Prevention, New York City Board of Education
Carolyn Simpson, New York City Department of Investigations
Priscilla Suarez, Super Start Program, New York City Board of Education
Melvina Thompson, Administration for Children's Services
Everton Tolbert, Administration for Children's Services

Susan Tucker, Victim Services
Eleanor Grieg Ukoli, Early Childhood and Elementary Education, New York City Board of Education
Irene Varon, Parent—President's Council, Community School District 20, New York City Board of Education
Wilma Velasquez, Parent—Citywide Policy Council—Bushwick United Head Start
Marceline Watler, Administration for Children's Services
Terry Weiss, Administration for Children's Services
Marion White, Child Abuse Prevention Program, Inc.

This publication also includes concepts and materials adapted from the following publications:

Child Lures: The Power of Prevention Programs, Kenneth Wooden, The Wooden Publishing House, 1986.

Dating Violence Intervention & Prevention for Teenagers, Domestic Violence Intervention Services, Inc., Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1993

Growing Up Safely: A K-12 Curriculum to Educate Children in the Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Abduction—K-8, Orange Ulster Board of Cooperative Education Services, Revised Ed., 1996.

9-1-1 Emergency Training Guide, Gene Moore, Child Safety Communications, Inc., 1990.*

Identification and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect: A Practical Guide for School Staff, New York City Board of Education, 1994.

PEARLS (People Empowered to Address Real-Life Situations) Curriculum, Victim Services, Metropolitan Assistance Corp., 1992.

Personal Safety Decision Making (Grades 6-8), Committee for Children, 1988.

The Safe Child Program, Speak Up for Yourself, Sherryl Kraizer & Health Education Systems, Inc., 1989.

The Safe Child Program, All About Strangers & Your Body Belongs to You, Sherryl Kraizer & Health Education Systems, Inc., 1989.

The Safe Child Program, It's Your Body & Strangers Aren't Bad—They're Just Strangers, Sherryl Kraizer & Health Education Systems, Inc., 1989.

The Safe Child Program, The Choice is Yours, Sherryl Kraizer & Health Education Systems, Inc., 1989.

Talking About Touching—A Personal Safety Curriculum, Seattle Institute for Child Advocacy's Committee for Children, 1984.

Talking About Touching with Preschoolers, Committee for Children, 1988.

* The *9-1-1 Emergency Training Guide* has been donated to the New York City public schools by Millenium, Inc.

The manuscript of *Seasons of Peace: Curriculum Frameworks for Abuse Prevention* was prepared for publication by the Office of Instructional Publications, Nicholas A. Aiello, Ph.D., Director. Christopher Sgarro copyedited and designed the book.

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Resources for Teachers and School Staff

NOTICE

All school personnel are mandated reporters and have an affirmative responsibility to make a report or cause a report to be made whenever they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused, neglected, or maltreated. **The State Central Registry's phone number for mandated reporters is 1-800-635-1522.** Additional hotline and information numbers appear at the end of this Resources section.

Children Cannot Control What Adults Do.

But teachers can help students develop skills for reducing their risk, reporting abuse, and seeking help. By increasing students' awareness that abuse is unacceptable and illegal, we can provide them with an avenue out of abusive situations. We can also encourage them to avert abuse in their own relationships, and to avoid passing on a legacy of abuse if they become parents themselves someday.

These curriculum frameworks and activities weave together three “strands” that can empower students to protect themselves:

STRANDS FOR SAFETY

1. PERSONAL SAFETY (PS).

Students need help in distinguishing between safe and unsafe situations, and in learning safety and emergency skills.

Students need to know that they have the right to be safe and to seek help.

2. SELF-AWARENESS (SA).

Students need to be aware of their feelings, and to trust them. Feelings are valuable. An “uh-oh” feeling can be a valuable internal alarm, signaling a student to avoid or leave a dangerous situation. A “confused” feeling can alert a student to ask a trustworthy adult for help. A “secure, safe” feeling can help a student identify trustworthy adults who can help.

Students need to know that they have the right to feel safe and to trust their feelings.

3. COMMUNICATION (C).

Students need constructive ways to respond to abuse, neglect, and family violence. They may not always be able to stop an adult's harmful actions, but they *can* resist and report abuse, request help, and recognize that abuse is not their fault.

Students need to know that they have the right, and the responsibility to themselves, to speak up about abuse.

Appearing under the strand headings are performance objectives, numbered for easy reference and labelled PS, SA, or C to indicate the strand for safety they address, each followed by suggested classroom activities. These developmentally appropriate activities are designed to enable students to meet the performance objectives by practicing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to protect themselves from abuse and family violence.

Effective Empathy: Building Safety and Trust in the Classroom

The accounts and reports of child abuse, maltreatment, and family violence to which children are subjected often engender misconceptions in the child and the impression that they are completely unable to protect themselves from abuse. In addition, children who are abused, neglected, or experience violence develop an emotional filter that may seriously impede their ability to process and retain cognitive information presented by the teacher. ***No matter the type of abuse or level of severity, it is of paramount importance for children to understand that they are not to blame for an abusive situation.***

The classroom needs to be a safe haven, a place where students can learn and practice safety and communication skills, and feel respected and secure. Teachers can create an atmosphere of *effective empathy* in the following ways:

- Create an accepting classroom environment. Learn to express empathic responses to students' circumstances.
- Get to know each student. Observe students' feelings, behaviors, and verbal and nonverbal ways of expressing themselves.
- Understand that a given student may have been abused, is currently being abused, or may live in a home where a parent is being abused. Researchers have found that many abused children never told anyone about the abuse because no one had asked them. By emphasizing the importance of asking a trustworthy adult for help, you may give students a key with which they can unlock their silence.
- Recognize that students benefit from hearing about how other families function. For example, some abused children may not even realize that their parents' mistreatment is “abuse,” “neglect,” or “domestic violence” until they discover that other

parents do not mistreat their children or use violence to resolve conflicts. Such students may come to realize that they have a right to responsible and proper care.

- Be aware of the physical and behavioral signs of child abuse and neglect. See “Physical and Behavioral Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect” (page 6).
- Be aware of behaviors that may signal that a child lives with family violence, but is not the target. See “When a Child Is Exposed to Family Violence” (page 10).
- If a student discloses personal information to you, respond in a supportive, nonjudgmental way. ***Seek assistance and support, as necessary, from administrative or other staff.*** See “How to Handle Disclosures of Neglect or Abuse” on page 11. Refer to Chancellor’s Regulation A-750 re: Reports of Suspected Child Abuse and Maltreatment. (A copy may be obtained from your school principal.) Highlights of Chancellor’s Regulation A-750 appear on page 14 of this Resources section.
- Respect the choice of a student who declines to verbally participate in class discussions involving issues that may be sensitive. Some students may find such participation emotionally difficult.
- If a student cries, be supportive and understanding. Try to find out the source of the problem and, if appropriate, encourage classmates to be supportive as well. Offer to refer the student to a counselor, and follow up with the student yourself, too.
- Help students to identify and express their feelings, to listen to the feelings of others, and to acknowledge one another’s rights to privacy. Model these skills yourself.
- Establish classroom “ground rules” that cultivate respect, trust, and consideration:
 - Everyone gets a turn to speak.
 - Every student has the right to choose not to verbally participate in a classroom discussion involving matters that are personal or sensitive.
 - Listen to the person who is speaking.
 - Do not interrupt, interrogate, put someone down, or gossip.
 - Respect other people’s “physical space.” Don’t crowd or isolate anyone.
- Facilitate open-ended discussions. Open-ended questions elicit more responses and keep students from getting overanxious about whether they have the “right” answer. Initiate discussion with broad comments. Give examples to get things started. Help students recognize connections to the material. For example, have them identify how students are similar or different; which tasks or topics are difficult, which are easy.
- Acknowledge and accept individual differences. This encourages students to participate, to be engaged, to remain open to exploration, to trust their teacher and classmates, and to feel less defensive and less isolated.
- Gradually guide discussions from the broad to the specific. Focus on personalized experiences and responses. In an art activity, for example, you might ask: “How did it feel to use blue? Did everyone who used blue feel that way?” If you sense conflict, use your intuition and go slowly. ***Take cues from the students.***
- Show students how to pursue in-depth discussions:
 - ***Don’t be afraid to speak or respond.*** Everyone’s ideas are valuable. If you don’t know how to word something, ask others for suggestions. You may find that someone else has had similar thoughts or experiences.
 - ***Don’t be afraid to ask something more.*** Questions are a gateway to learning. There are no foolish questions.
 - ***Don’t be afraid to bring up the obvious.*** Something that seems apparent to one person may not be to another. Even when something is commonly understood, putting it into words may elicit new insights or lead to discussion of related issues.
- Respect students’ range of readiness. Students differ in maturity, experiences, and ability to articulate thoughts and feelings. A quiet student and a talkative student both may benefit from class discussion. Participation is not just talking, but listening; not just paying attention to a discussion today, but thinking about it later, too.

- Revisit important concepts. A student may need time to get used to the idea of discussing a particular topic. The first time it is introduced, the student may seem uninterested or distanced; the fifth time, the student may be more comfortable joining the discussion.
- Use a variety of teaching strategies. One student may be comfortable with speech, while another is more eloquent in a drawing. Some students thrive in whole-class discussion, while others are more comfortable working in small groups or pairs. Puppets, masks, and role-plays let students put a comfortable distance between themselves and a topic, while still encouraging involvement.
- Use classroom displays to elicit and reinforce discussion. Have students bring in newspaper and magazine articles and books, or make posters or murals about safety and resources. Post hotline numbers on a bulletin board.
- Teach students the motto, “**NO, GO, TELL.**” Have students create stories or posters so you can confirm that they understand the motto. Their work should clarify that a student in danger should:
 - **Say “NO” or “STOP.”** Use a firm, strong voice. Even if this doesn’t stop the abusive behavior, at least you know you tried—and the abuser knows you did not consent.
 - **GO.** Identify “safe havens” in your home, community, or school.
 - **TELL a trustworthy adult.** If the adult does not believe or help you, tell someone else until you do get help.
- In situations of family violence, it may be too risky for a student to say “**NO**” or “**STOP**,” but may be able to **GO** and **TELL.** The student may not be able to “rescue” an abused parent who, as an adult, must seek help for her- or himself. But a student always has the right to seek help and support. Sometimes students indicate their situation indirectly, such as by withdrawing or by painting or drawing scenes of family strife.
- Have students discuss how to identify a “trustworthy” adult, i.e., one who merits their confidence. Standard advice in child abuse prevention is “Tell a trusted adult.” However, too often it is trusted adults who betray that trust. To emphasize how important it is for students to identify adults to whom they can entrust problems, these curriculum frameworks use the term “*trustworthy* adults.”
- Give students ample opportunities to practice “**NO, GO, TELL**” skills:
 - Try out different ways to say “**NO/STOP.**”
 - Identify places you can **GO.**
 - Identify people you can **TELL**, and words you can use.
- Recognize cultural differences in child rearing. At the same time, clarify that in this country, child abuse and neglect and spousal abuse are illegal. Although families have different ways of disciplining children and coping with conflict and stress, behavior is abusive if the object of the behavior (the child) feels physically or emotionally damaged.
- Be aware of your own feelings, experiences, and concerns with child abuse and neglect and family violence. Discussing these topics with your students may evoke some feelings or memories of your own. By recognizing them and discussing them with peers, family members, friends, counselors, or other trustworthy adults, you will be better able to help your students.

Physical and Behavioral Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect

The following summary definitions and indicators of maltreatment are drawn from *Chancellor’s Regulation A-750, re: Reports of Suspected Child Abuse and Maltreatment*, 6/30/93 (summary definitions, pages 3 and 4, indicators of maltreatment, Appendix “G”). They may also be indicators of exposure to family violence. See “When a Child is Exposed to Family Violence,” following this section.

The list of indicators is not exhaustive, and the presence of a single indicator does not necessarily prove that maltreatment exists. However, if you have a reasonable suspicion that the child is abused or maltreated, you are required to report your suspicion to the principal or designee and ensure that the State Central Registry (SCR) is called. The SCR phone number is 1-800-635-1522.

Under New York State Law, a child is considered abused or maltreated if the child is less than 18 years old (21 years old or less if in a residential placement) and a parent or other person legally responsible for the child's care harms the child, creates substantial risk of harm, or fails to exercise a minimum degree of care to protect the child.

Note: It is not the role of a mandated reporter to conduct an investigation. School personnel are prohibited from undressing a student or asking a student to undress. School personnel do not need to verify physical indicators by removing a child's clothes. If the student says he or she is bruised, that is sufficient for reporting. The Administration for Children's Services (ACS) is the authorized investigator. Authorized child protective service workers may verify physical injuries by following the procedures described in the Chancellor's Regulation A-750, page 13, section 2.1, d.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

The non-accidental physical injury of a child inflicted by a parent or legal caretaker which ranges from superficial bruises and welts to broken bones, burns, serious internal injuries and, in some cases, death.

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNEXPLAINED BRUISES AND WELTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — ON FACE, MOUTH, LIPS, TORSO, BACK, BUTTOCKS, THIGHS — IN VARIOUS STAGES OF HEALING — CLUSTERED, FORMING REGULAR PATTERNS — REFLECTING SHAPE OF ARTICLE USED (ELECTRIC CORD, BELT BUCKLE) — REGULARLY APPEAR AFTER ABSENCE, WEEKEND, OR VACATION • UNEXPLAINED SWELLING, DISLOCATION, SPRAINS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — ANKLES, WRISTS, OTHER JOINTS • UNEXPLAINED BURNS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — CIGAR, CIGARETTE, ESPECIALLY ON SOLES, PALMS, BACK, OR BUTTOCKS — IMMERSION BURNS (SOCK-LIKE, GLOVE-LIKE, DOUGHNUT-SHAPED ON BUTTOCKS OR GENITALIA) — ROPE BURNS ON NECK, ARMS, LEGS, OR TORSO • UNEXPLAINED FRACTURES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — TO SKULL, NOSE, FACIAL STRUCTURE — IN VARIOUS STAGES OF HEALING — MULTIPLE OR SPIRAL FRACTURES • UNEXPLAINED LACERATIONS OR ABRASIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — TO MOUTH, LIPS, GUMS, EYES, EXTERNAL GENITALIA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WARY OF ADULT CONTACTS • APPREHENSIVE WHEN OTHER CHILDREN CRY • BEHAVIORAL EXTREMES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — AGGRESSIVENESS — WITHDRAWAL • FRIGHTENED OF PARENTS • AFRAID TO GO HOME • REPORTS INJURY BY PARENTS • WEARS LONG-SLEEVED OR SIMILAR CLOTHING TO HIDE INJURIES
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PHYSICAL NEGLECT

The withholding of, or failure to provide a child with adequate food, shelter, clothing, hygiene, medical care, and/or supervision needed for optimal growth and development.

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CONSISTENT HUNGER, POOR HYGIENE, INAPPROPRIATE DRESS • CONSISTENT LACK OF SUPERVISION, ESPECIALLY IN DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES OR FOR LONG PERIODS • UNATTENDED MEDICAL NEEDS (E.G., EXTENSIVE PEDICULOSIS PROBLEMS) OR DENTAL NEEDS • INADEQUATE GUARDIANSHIP • ABANDONMENT • DELAYED MENTAL AND MOTOR DEVELOPMENT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BEGGING, STEALING FOOD • ALCOHOL OR DRUG ABUSE • EXTENDED STAYS AT SCHOOL • EARLY ARRIVAL, LATE DEPARTURE • CONSTANT FATIGUE, LISTLESSNESS, OR FALLING ASLEEP IN CLASS • DELINQUENCY (E.G., THEFTS) • STATES THERE IS NO CARETAKER

SEXUAL ABUSE

The sexual exploitation of a child by a parent, guardian, relative, caretaker, or other person which may range from non-touching offenses such as exhibitionism to fondling, intercourse, or use of child in the production of pornographic materials.

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIFFICULTY IN WALKING OR SITTING • TORN, STAINED, OR BLOODY UNDERCLOTHING • PAIN OR ITCHING IN GENITAL AREA • BRUISES OR BLEEDING IN EXTERNAL GENITALIA, VAGINAL, OR ANAL AREAS • SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE • PREGNANCY 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNWILLING TO CHANGE FOR GYM OR PARTICIPATE • WITHDRAWAL, FANTASY, OR INFANTILE BEHAVIOR • BIZARRE, SOPHISTICATED, OR UNUSUAL SEXUAL BEHAVIOR • POOR PEER RELATIONSHIPS • DELINQUENT OR RUNAWAY • REPORTS SEXUAL ABUSE BY CARETAKER

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Acts or omissions that cause or could cause serious intellectual, behavioral, or psychological dysfunction as a result of such parent or caretaker behavior.

EMOTIONAL NEGLECT

The withholding of physical and emotional contact to the detriment of the child's normal emotional development. Must be attributed to unwillingness or inability of the parent or custodian to exercise a minimum degree of care toward the child.

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SPEECH DISORDERS• LAGS IN PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT• FAILURE TO THRIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HABIT DISORDER (ANTISOCIAL, DESTRUCTIVE, ETC.), DEVELOPMENTAL LAGS• BEHAVIORAL EXTREMES: COMPLIANT, SHY, AGGRESSIVE, DEMANDING• OVERLY ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR: INAPPROPRIATELY ADULT OR INFANTILE• ATTEMPTED SUICIDE

EDUCATIONAL NEGLECT

Failure of a person in parental relation to a child to ensure that child's prompt and regular attendance in school, or the keeping of a child out of school for impermissible reasons.

Physical Indicator	Behavioral Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ATTENDANCE IN SCHOOL INFREQUENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CHILD'S UNEXPECTED ABSENCES ARE NOT THE RESULT OF THE CHILD'S DESIRE TO BE A TRUANT

When a Child Is Exposed to Family Violence

“Domestic violence is the use or threat of physical, emotional, sexual, and/or financial violence in order to gain control over a partner or other family member.”

— *PEARLS (People Empowered to Address Real-Life Situations)*
Curriculum, Victim Services, Metropolitan Assistance Corp.,
1992

A student exposed to family violence at home may exhibit some of the above indicators of physical or emotional distress. The student may suffer from sleeplessness, worry, stress, difficulty learning in school, feeling caught in the middle of the fighting, etc. Even if the student is not the target of violence, witnessing it can cause him or her to become withdrawn, to act out, to have difficulty learning, to abuse alcohol or other drugs, to appear fatigued or distracted, or to show other abnormal behavior.

A student may be reluctant to divulge domestic violence due to feelings of guilt, fear, or embarrassment. Keep this in mind when discussing the topic of domestic violence in the classroom. A student may be relieved to hear a teacher state that abusive adults are wrong, that abuse and domestic violence are never a student’s fault, and that a student always has the right to talk with a trustworthy adult (family or nonfamily, neighbor, teacher or other school staff member).

Encourage brainstorming about what a student can do when domestic violence occurs. Make sure students recognize that they are not responsible for intervening physically or verbally. Such intervention may endanger their own health or safety. Students’ options include turning to a trustworthy adult, calling the hotline for the National Council on Child Abuse and Family Violence (1-800-222-2000), the New York City Youthline (1-800-246-4646), or 911 if they feel someone is at risk of being seriously hurt. Additional hotline and resource numbers appear at the end of this Resources section.

DATING VIOLENCE

“Dating violence is the physical, sexual, or emotional maltreatment of a dating partner for the purpose of gaining control and power over that person.”

— *Dating Violence Intervention & Prevention for Teenagers,*
Domestic Violence Intervention Services, Inc., Tulsa, Oklahoma,
1993

Adolescents may become the perpetrators or targets of “dating violence,” also known as “intimate violence.” As with domestic violence, one partner tries to control the other through verbal, emotional, or physical abuse, sexual or other coercion, excessive possessiveness, etc.

Young people may not identify such relationships as abusive. They may misconstrue jealousy as a measure of love, coercion as a test of love, hitting as something one must endure for love. Students who are inexperienced with dating relationships, or who have witnessed domestic violence in their own families, may be blinded to the fact that abuse is not normal and should not be tolerated. They may fear that people won’t believe them when they disclose the abuse. Or they already may have tried to discuss it and were not believed.

Classroom discussion may affirm students’ own experience, or serve as a warning of what to look out for, as a clue to what’s going on with a distressed friend. Assure students that even if a young person has tried to discuss the situation and has not been believed, eventually he or she will find someone who does believe and will be supportive. Post the numbers of such hotlines as the New York City Youthline 1-(800)-246-4646). The short story “In the Beginning” on page 80 provides an opportunity for class discussion.

MIXED SIGNALS MAY INDICATE EMOTIONAL ABUSE

One sign of emotional abuse is confusion arising from an abuser's mixed signals. For example, an adult beats a child, then goes about daily chores humming, as though nothing happened. An adult says "I love you" while brutalizing a child. An enraged man strikes his wife, then buys her a bouquet of flowers. A boyfriend coerces his girlfriend into cutting her ties with her family and friends, insisting that he needs to be the sole recipient of her attention.

Many emotional abusers are adept at manipulating other people's feelings, keeping family members or dates off-balance and flustered. Some common tactics include:

- alternating expressions of moodiness, playfulness, rage, lovingness, anger, forgiveness, sweetness, bitterness, etc.
- getting angry "out of the blue"
- overreacting to minor problems
- coercing family members through persistent persuasion or emotional blackmail ("If you really loved me, you would do this.")
- playing on a family member's vulnerability or weakness

These behaviors are tactics for gaining and exercising control. A household may come to revolve around the abuser's moods, with family members practically walking on eggshells to prevent another outburst. Because the emotional abuser is unpredictable, family members are constantly on edge, waiting for the next storm. They may be unable to relax in their own home even when things are calm because they fear that something may set the abuser off again. In contrast with physical abuse, emotional abuse isn't always easy to describe. Emotionally abused family members may not even realize it's happening. They only know that they are confused, stressed, and fearful.

Students need to know that confusion can be a valuable indicator that something is wrong. If a person is confused, it doesn't necessarily mean he or she doesn't know what's going on. Sometimes it means that an abuser is deliberately (or unconsciously) causing that confusion in order to manipulate the person's feelings.

HOW TO HANDLE DISCLOSURES OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Students sometimes disclose abuse to teachers, counselors, or other adults in the school setting. Some students are unaware that their disclosures are remarkable. They may believe, for example, that all parents use beatings or cigarette burns as a method of discipline, or use violence when they fight with each other. For others, telling represents a giant step across a gulf of silence. It may be an expression of hope ("Please help me") or despair ("I can't keep this secret any more").

Disclosures occur in several ways:

- ***Direct Disclosure:*** A student announces the abuse privately or in class, perhaps during a discussion, perhaps feeling safe in doing so because of the nurturing atmosphere you have created. If the student discloses in front of the class, acknowledge the disclosure, then tell the student that you want to talk further privately. Find a private time and place to do so.
- ***Indirect Disclosure:*** A student alludes to abuse rather than describing it directly. For example: "My babysitter wants to tickle me a lot." "My neighbor told me to go into his bathroom." "My dad can't sleep at night." "A lot of stuff goes on in my house." "I don't like going to my uncle's house any more." A student may be trying to open a door, but may not know how to speak more directly, may feel too embarrassed or afraid to tell, or may be trying to get around a promise to stay silent. Encourage a student to be more specific, but do not supply the words. Ask open-ended questions such as "Can you talk about that a bit more, so I understand?" or "How do you feel about that?"

- **Disguised Disclosure:** A student depicts the abuse as a friend’s problem: “My friend is having problems with his stepfather.” “My friend’s boyfriend is beating her up.” “What would you think if a girl told her parents that someone was following her, but they thought she was making it up?” “I know someone who was abused.” Do not challenge the student’s account. Encourage the student to talk with you further, and reassure the student that the problem is not his or her friend’s fault. In time, the student will probably tell you that the problem is not a friend’s, but his or her own.
- **Disclosure With a Catch:** A student wants to reveal a problem, but asks you not to tell: “Something is happening to me, but this has to stay just between us.” The student may want the relief of discussing it, without risking that something negative will happen to the abuser. Don’t make promises you can’t keep. As a mandated reporter, you are legally required to report abuse as described in the Chancellor’s Regulation A-750. Offer your help, but inform the student immediately that you may need to consult or refer the student to the school counselor, social worker, principal, or other appropriate person. Students usually will proceed with a disclosure if you explain the process and offer your support.

Students who disclose abuse will watch your reaction carefully. They may worry that you won’t believe them, or will recoil, as if their secret were an explosive device. CAPP, the Child Abuse Prevention Program, Inc., advises, “Showing shock or disgust (or worse—disbelief) could cause the student to stop the disclosure or recant the allegation. If you appear calm and under control, the child will feel more comfortable talking to you.”

When a student discusses an abusive situation, it is important to:

- Understand that a school staff member’s role is to listen and accept, not to act as a therapist or investigator.
 - Convey a sense of caring and interest. Use “active listening” skills.
 - Allow the student to relate the information in whatever way he or she finds most comfortable. Don’t change the student’s choice of words.
 - State that a student has the right to tell, and that it is courageous to do so.
 - Emphasize that abuse is not the student’s fault.
-
- Use open-ended questions to elicit the *what, who, when, where* for the report to the State Central Registry, e.g.:
 - **What is happening?** This will indicate what type of abuse is occurring and to whom (the student, another family member, a parent).
 - **Who is doing that?** This will indicate who is (are) the abuser(s).
 - **When did it happen? Were there other times?**
 - **Where were you when it happened?**
 - Inform the student about what you will do and who else may need to be involved.

Remember: All pedagogical and nonpedagogical school personnel are mandated reporters, and must follow the guidelines described in Chancellor’s Regulation A-750.

SEASONS OF PEACE

by Betty Rothbart

Some families are storms with infrequent eyes.
Others ride seasons in peace.
Most are a puzzle of intricate ties,
Traditions to treasure, clashes to cease.
Every new branch of a family tree,
Shaded and shaped by the branches before,
Echoes their patterns, yet also is free
To grow its own way, to learn something more.
For children, like birds, sing the songs they are sung,
Their melodies legacies parents renew,
But when it comes time to tend their own young,
Can croon the old tunes, or choose some that are new,
 Resolve family puzzles, the clashes to cease,
 And transform ancient storms into seasons of peace.

HIGHLIGHTS OF CHANCELLOR'S REGULATION A-750

If you have reasonable cause to suspect maltreatment:

Mandated Reporter must personally make the report by calling the State Central Register (SCR) - 1(800) 635-1522

Immediately call it in to the SCR and obtain a "Call I.D." number

The mandated reporter must identify the name, title and contact information for all the school officials having direct knowledge of the allegations.

Inform the Principal or Designee of the allegations and the "Call I.D." number

After the oral report is made to the SCR, immediately notify the "Principal or Designee" of the allegations and of the "Call I.D." number obtained from the SCR.

Submit Written Report LDSS – 2221-A within 48 hours

Principal/designee prepares the LDSS 2221-A and will email, mail or fax the form to the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) in the borough where the alleged subject lives.

The form must include name, title and contact information for all the school officials having direct knowledge of the allegations. Copies of the LDSS 2221-A form and the email addresses may be obtained at:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/StudentSupport/NonAcademicSupport/ChildAbuse/default.htm>

Complete a Department of Education "OORS" report immediately

Principal or designee enters the "Call I.D." number obtained from the SCR and indicates the type of abuse that was reported on the "On-Line Occurrence Reporting System" (OORS).

Report to the Field Support Center (FSC) Deputy Director for Student Services

A copy of the LDSS 2221 A is submitted to the Field Support Center Deputy Director for Student Services.

Local Child Protective Services Investigation Process

ACS investigates all reports of suspected child abuse and neglect and offers a broad range of services to children and families when family circumstances threaten the well-being of children.

State Central Register Transmits Report to the Local ACS Application Section

ACS receives report from the SCR and immediately determines if the family is known to ACS. ACS enters this information on the report and immediately assigns it to a Field Unit for investigation. ACS is mandated to initiate an investigation of the allegation(s) within 24 hours of receiving report. The source of the report must be contacted.

Protective/Diagnostic Field Unit Supervisor

Reviews report and immediately assigns the case to a caseworker for investigation.

Protective/Diagnostic Caseworker

Discusses report with the Supervisor, initiates investigation, does a complete assessment and determines whether or not, based on the investigation, some credible evidence has been found to support the report. Based on assessment, a service plan is developed. ACS has up to 60 days to make a determination.

Report Breach of Confidentiality to the DOE Office of Legal Services at (212) 374-6888

Obligation to Report Sexual Misconduct to the Special Commissioner of Investigation (212) 510-1400

Every employee has an affirmative obligation to immediately report to the Special Commissioner of Investigation any information concerning sexual abuse and/or misconduct involving students by Department of Education employees or others connected with school programs or services, whether on or off school premises. Where the alleged misconduct constitutes a crime, the principal/supervisor must notify the police.

Chancellor's Regulation A-750 is available at: **<http://schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/ChancellorsRegulations/default.htm>**

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION RESOURCE NUMBERS

New York State Central Register:

Mandated 1-800-635-1522
Non-Mandated 1-800-342-3720

ACS Preventive Service Directory Link:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/D4A034DB-C081-4A9B-A945-135451812739/0/PPRSDirectoryMay2014.pdf>

Suspected Sexual Abuse or Misconduct by School Staff:

Special Commissioner of Investigation – Misconduct	1-212-510-1400/1500
NYC Department of Education Office of Special Investigation	1-718-935-3900
OSI Corporal Punishment Reporting Form Link	http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/osi/form.asp
<u>Breach of Confidentiality – Office of Legal Services</u>	1-212-374-6888

Suspected Sexual Abuse or Rape by Stranger

Police – Special Victims/Sex Crime Unit:	
Manhattan	1-212-694-3010
Brooklyn	1-718-230-4425
Bronx	1-718-378-8921
Queens	1-718-520-9363
Staten Island	1-718-556-9847

Protective Services for Adults & Disabled (18+ Years)

Central Intake Office	1-212-630-1853
Brooklyn	1-718-722-4650
Bronx	1-718-994-6200
Manhattan	1-212-279-5794
Queens	1-718-883-8254
Staten Island	1-718-420-4963

ACS FIELD OFFICES:

BROOKLYN	1274 Bedford Ave., 11216	1-718-623-4975/4997
BRONX	2501 Grand Concourse, 5 th Fl., 10468	1-718-933-1212
MANHATTAN	110 William St., 3 rd Fl., 10038	1-212-676-7055
QUEENS	165-15 Archer Ave, 20 th Fl. 11433	1-718-557-1745/1746
STATEN ISLAND	350 St. Marks Place, 4 th Fl., 10301	1-718-720-2833
Emergency Children Services	492 First Ave., NY, NY 10016	1-646-935-1630

ABUSE PREVENTION & INTERVENTION RESOURCES

ACS – Parent’s and Children’s Rights Unit (Hotline – Mon-Fri 10am-4pm)	1-212-676-9421
ACS – Safety First (Ombudsman Office)	1-718-KID-SAFE (543-7233)
Child Abuse Prevention Program, Inc.	1-212-660-1375
Child Protection Center – Montefiore Medical Center (Bronx)	1-718-920-5833
Columbia Presbyterian – Child Advocacy Center (Manhattan)	1-212-305-6474
Covenant House	1-212-613-0300
Crime Victims Hotline (Domestic Violence)	1-212-577-7777
Helpline: Professionals & Parents (www.preventchildabuseny.org)	1-800-342-7472
HOPE (Domestic Violence)	1-800-621-4673
Jacobi Medical Center – Family Advocacy Program (Bronx)	1-718-918-4183
Jane Barker Brooklyn Child Advocacy Center (Brooklyn)	1-718-330-5400
Love Our Children USA	1-888-347-KIDS (5437)
Lifenet (Suicide Prevention, Info. & Referral for Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services)	1-800-543-3638
Lincoln Hospital – Child Advocacy Center (Bronx)	1-718-579-5446
Manhattan Child Advocacy Center (Manhattan)	1-212-517-3012
National Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-4-A-CHILD (22-4453)
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children	1-800-843-5678
Youth Connect (Abuse, Suicide, etc.)	1-800-246-4646
NY Foundling Parent Helpline	1-212-472-8555
New York State Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline (English)	1-800-942-6906
NYS Missing Persons Clearinghouse	1-800-FIND-KID (346-3543)
Prevent Child Abuse New York	1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373)
Prevent Child Abuse America	1-312-663-3520
Queens Child Advocacy Center (Queens)	1-718-575-1342
Safe Horizon	1-800-621-HOPE (4673)
Staten Island Child Advocacy Center (Staten Island)	1-718-556-0874
The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.	1-212-206-1090
The Door	1-212-941-9090
The Crisis Nursery	1-212-472-8555
The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children	1-212-233-5500
The Samaritans (Suicide Prevention)	1-212-673-3000

REVISED 7/29/2015:rw

EMERGENCY PLAN CARD

Student		
Home Address		Phone
School		Class/Grade
School Address		Phone
Parent/Guardian		
Address		
Home Phone		Work Phone
Parent/Guardian		
Address		
Home Phone		Work Phone
PEOPLE IN MY FAMILY OR COMMUNITY WHO CAN HELP ME		
Name		Relationship
Address		Phone
Name		Relationship
Address		Phone
Name		Relationship
Address		Phone
PEOPLE IN MY SCHOOL WHO CAN HELP ME		
Teacher	Room	Phone
Teacher	Room	Phone
Guidance Counselor	Room	Phone
Principal	Room	Phone
Assistant Principal/Dean	Room	Phone
Other (SAPIS, nurse, secretary, guard)	Room	Phone
	Room	Phone
	Room	Phone

Curriculum Frameworks for Abuse Prevention

- PREKINDERGARTEN–GRADE 2
- GRADE 3
- GRADE 4
- GRADE 5
- GRADE 6
- JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
- HIGH SCHOOL

PREKINDERGARTEN–GRADE 2

ABUSE PREVENTION: PERSONAL SAFETY

1. Students will be able to identify situations and locations that make students feel safe and secure or unsafe and insecure. (PS)

Teacher Note: Students need to learn to trust their feelings, and to identify trust-worthy people with whom to share them. This activity helps them to: (a) identify feelings, and (b) think in advance about people and places they can turn to.

Activity

- Ideally, have students sit in a circle for an activity that produces a feeling of relaxation. If a circle is not feasible, make sure all children can see and participate easily.
- Have students sing a pleasant song, do slow deep breathing, or listen to recorded music.
- Ask students to describe how the activity makes them feel (e.g., comfortable, relaxed). Ask them to describe times in their life that have given them that same feeling. For example, when a parent reads them a bedtime story or takes them on a special trip, or when they hug a favorite toy.
- Ask them to describe times they have felt uncomfortable. For example, when adults in the family argue with each other or call the children names.
- Ask what they do when they have uncomfortable feelings. For example, they may comfort themselves by hugging a doll, stuffed animal, or toy. They may discuss their feelings with a trustworthy adult or sibling. Emphasize that it is important to share feelings and get help when necessary.

2. Students will be able to discuss the difference between comfortable and uncomfortable touches. (PS)

Teacher Note: A student who can identify uncomfortable feelings and touches is better equipped to resist and report possibly abusive situations. However, avoid giving students the impression that touch, in and of itself, is a bad thing. Children need loving, nurturing touch from the people with whom they are close.

Activity

- Have students give examples of occasions when adults touch them. For example, hugs and kisses; assistance with bathing, feeding, dressing, and using the toilet; holding hands when crossing the street. (For older students who manage some self-care activities independently, the “assisting” touch of an adult might be inappropriate and/or abusive.)
- Have students distinguish between touches that make them feel comfortable or uncomfortable. For example:
 - A loving hug feels good. / A hug that goes on too long may feel uncomfortable.
 - Having someone wrap a towel around you after a bath can feel warm and cozy. / Having someone rub you roughly with the towel may feel uncomfortable.

- A little tickle may make you giggle. / Tickling that goes on too long, even after you say “stop,” may feel uncomfortable.
 - Most children have an innate sense of what is an uncomfortable touch. Tell students that they have a right to ask adults—or other children—to stop if a touch is uncomfortable. They should tell a trustworthy person about any instances of uncomfortable touch.
3. Students will be able to discuss the right of children to say “No! Stop!” to situations that may hurt them. (PS)

Teacher Note: Children are often in the powerless position of having to do things they don’t want to do. Often this is for their own good—getting an immunization shot, for example, or waking up early to get to school on time. Nevertheless, children need to know that (a) when threatened with harm, children have a right to say no; (b) if children cannot manage to say no, or if an adult persists anyway, it is not the child’s fault—*children cannot control what adults do*; (c) children who are threatened or harmed should tell a trustworthy adult.

Activity

- Have students sit in a circle, if possible. Ask students to take turns giving examples of situations in which someone would ask or encourage them to do something that would make them feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or unhappy. Have children discuss how they feel about these things, and role-play how they could say no. For example:
 - Someone asks you to heat soup on the stove.
Answer: “My mother doesn’t let me use the stove.”
 - Someone asks you to hold a knife or a gun.
Answer: “I’m not allowed to do that,” or “No, that’s not safe.”
 - Someone asks you to ride your bike without a helmet.
Answer: “No, my teacher said to use a helmet.”
 - Someone asks you to ride your skateboard or in-line skates in traffic.
Answer: “No, I only ride on the sidewalk.”
- Encourage children to express themselves so they can say what’s uncomfortable and why. Guide them to identify what an “unsafe behavior” is.

PREKINDERGARTEN—GRADE 2

ABUSE PREVENTION: COMMUNICATION

4. Students will define “friend” and distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate expressions of friendship. (C)

Teacher Note: Children need to recognize that real friends do not try to cause each other discomfort or pain. Friends do not ask children to keep an uncomfortable or potentially dangerous secret. People who cause children pain or ask them to keep certain behaviors secret may be abusers.

Activity

- Have students look through magazines for pictures that show people expressing friendship or lack of friendship. For example, “friendly pictures” may show people hugging, smiling, playing, or talking. “Unfriendly pictures” may show people fighting, arguing, or pulling mean pranks. Have students share their pictures with the group. Discuss “appropriate” and “inappropriate” expressions of friendship, and how friends help each other. Note that even when friends argue, they can make up and still be friends.

5. Students will be able to practice how to initiate and maintain a conversation. (C)

Teacher Note: Initiating a conversation is an important communication skill. It builds self-confidence, develops articulation and listening skills, and helps students overcome isolation. Students need to develop this skill both to strengthen peer relationships and to feel confident reporting emergency or other important information to a trustworthy adult.

Activity

- Ask two volunteers to portray students who meet for the first time one morning in a schoolyard before other students have arrived. One student is new to the school, dressed in a style of clothing that is unfamiliar to the other one. Have the students start a “get acquainted” conversation and keep it going for two or three minutes. After the role-play, ask them to discuss how they started and sustained the conversation. Have other students in the class contribute ideas and try other role-plays.

6. Students will be able to practice how to ask for help and support. (C)

Teacher Note: It's not enough to tell children to ask trustworthy adults for help. Children need practice with each step: how to select the adult, how to get the adult's attention, how to describe the situation, and how to approach a different adult if the first one does not help.

The *9-1-1 Emergency Training Guide* by Gene Moore (Child Safety Communications Inc., 1990) may be available at your school or your community school district office. The guide can assist you in teaching children how to identify emergency situations and use the telephone to call for emergency help. It includes illustrations of such situations as fire, choking, unconsciousness, and an intruder.

Activity

- Using hand puppets or role-play, have children pretend they are in need of help. Have children discuss whom they should choose for assistance and why. Discuss who else they may turn to for assistance if a need arises.
- For example, a role-play or puppet-play may show a child at the street corner near the school. A crossing guard is on the opposite corner. The child calls, "Excuse me!" The crossing guard is speaking to someone and doesn't hear the child. The child repeats the phrase but adds something else: "Excuse me, crossing guard! Would you please help me cross the street?" Now the crossing guard responds, and helps the child across the street. The child thanks her. Or, the crossing guard still may not hear, and the child may need to enlist another child to call the crossing guard too, so that they will be heard above the traffic.
- Have students practice using the telephone to dial 911, giving their address and telephone number, describing an emergency, and requesting help. Use the *9-1-1 Emergency Training Guide* (see Teacher Note, above). Ask students "What if..." questions to determine if they have been prepared with emergency plans.

PREKINDERGARTEN–GRADE 2

ABUSE PREVENTION: SELF-AWARENESS

7. Students will identify a variety of feelings and emotions. (SA)

Teacher Note: Children have a rainbow of emotions, from sunny cheerfulness to blue moods. This activity affirms that their feelings are important and encourages them to empathize with others.

Activity

- Bring into the class a variety of musical selections (cassettes, CDs) that suggest strong emotions—joy, sadness, love, whimsy, fear, anger. Choose selections with a dance or march tempo to encourage children to participate. Have children move to the music and describe what the music makes them see in their imaginations. Model movements for them, or encourage them to create their own. Alternatively, ask children to “make faces” that demonstrate the emotion of the music.
- Distribute paper printed with a circle for a face. Have students fill in the features to express emotions suggested by the music.
- Help children to identify feelings common to all. Have them raise their hands to indicate whether they have ever had those feelings, and discuss what happened to make them feel that way.

8. Students will develop an awareness that certain parts of the body are “private.” (SA)

Teacher Note: Children gradually become aware of which parts of the body our society identifies as “private” (the genitals and other parts of the body that are covered by a bathing suit). Along with this awareness should come an ability to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate types of physical contact with people in their lives. Some touches are comfortable. Any that make a child feel uneasy should be reported to a trustworthy adult.

Activity

- Discuss appropriate and inappropriate examples of touch. Illustrate through drawings or posters, or encourage the children to draw their own pictures. For example:
 - It’s appropriate for Mom or Dad to check a child’s teeth after brushing.
It’s inappropriate for a store clerk to do so.
 - It’s appropriate for close family members to hug and kiss a child.
It’s inappropriate for strangers to do so.
- Emphasize that if someone’s touch makes children feel uncomfortable, they should say, “No! Stop!” and tell a trustworthy adult. Ask children if they can think of a situation in which this could occur.

9. Students will develop an awareness that sometimes children need to turn to others for help. (SA)

Teacher Note: Young children need help with many things, and are proud when they learn to do things for themselves. However, they need to be aware that they should always seek adult help with situations of abuse or family violence, and not try to handle them on their own.

Activity

- Ask students to identify some things for which they need to obtain adult help. For example, students may list:
 - crossing the street
 - getting a toy off a high shelf
 - pouring juice from a heavy pitcher
 - cutting with a sharp knife
 - carrying hot foods
- Ask students to name moments in their family life when they need help and support for their feelings. For example:
 - A parent yells and doesn't give the child a chance to explain.
 - A sibling misbehaves, blames the child, and is believed.
 - A babysitter gets angry and hits the child, then warns him or her not to tell.
 - Parents are fighting.

Teacher Note: Have the children come up with examples. They may cite situations of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse between parents, or primarily by one parent against the other.

- Have students draw pictures of people in their lives with whom they feel safe and secure. Tell them that it is very important to tell those people when something uncomfortable is happening in their lives. Have children share their pictures with the entire class, so each child can learn that there are many possible people in their own lives in whom they may be able to confide, such as parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, neighbors, teachers or other school staff, clergy, and police officers.

10. Students will identify what makes children feel good about themselves, and what gives them an “uh-oh” feeling. (SA)

Teacher Note: The “uh-oh” feeling is an internal alarm, clueing a child to avoid, leave, or report an uncomfortable or dangerous situation. Children need to be aware of what triggers their “uh-oh” feeling, and what makes them feel better.

Activity

- Divide a piece of paper in half. Write the following statements at the top and have children illustrate them.
 1. “I felt good about myself when....”
 2. “I got an ‘uh-oh’ feeling when....”
- Discuss the statements first to make sure children understand them. Have students share and discuss their pictures.

GRADE 3

ABUSE PREVENTION: PERSONAL SAFETY

1. Students will discuss the meaning of “safe havens” in the family, school, and community. (PS)

Teacher Note: Everyone needs “safe havens”—people in whom to confide, and places that give them a feeling of security and protection. Discussing safe havens should give students a sense of empowerment as they develop a plan for avoiding or coping with hazardous situations.

Help students identify trustworthy adults, usually parents and other close family members, good friends, and neighbors. Unfortunately, physical and sexual abuse sometimes occurs between children and closely related adults. Therefore, have students identify trustworthy people and emergency contacts outside their immediate families, too. Especially in instances of family violence, children may need to turn to a trusted neighbor or teacher.

You may wish to have children complete the Emergency Plan Card (see Resources section, page 17) as homework so they can ask parents to help them fill it in.

The *9-1-1 Emergency Training Guide* (by Gene Moore, Child Safety Communications Inc., 1990) may be available from your school or your community school district office. The guide can assist you in teaching children how to identify emergency situations and use the telephone to call for emergency help. It includes illustrations of such situations as fire, choking, unconsciousness, and an intruder.

Activity

- Play a game in which students who enter a “safe zone” cannot be “tagged” or caught. Afterwards, compare the “safe zone” to a “safe haven” in one’s life. Define a safe haven as a place where one feels safe and free from harm. Have students give examples of safe havens in their lives. For example, they may feel safe in a grandparent’s home, at the kitchen table when talking with Mom, in a guidance counselor’s office, in the school library, on a neighbor’s porch, or in the pizza store around the corner. Point out that “Safe Haven” stores have a sign on the door.

Further activities can include:

- Use “What if...” questions to help students identify situations in which they would feel unsafe. Have students identify people and places that provide safety in emergencies.
- Have students practice using the telephone to dial 911, giving their address and telephone number, describing an emergency, and requesting help. Use the *9-1-1 Emergency Training Guide* (see Teacher Note, above). Ask students “what if...” questions to determine if they have been prepared with emergency plans.
- Have students develop lists of “safe havens” in their communities. Have them keep the lists in their notebooks and bookbags and post drawings of safe havens in the classroom.
- Post hotline numbers on a classroom bulletin board, e.g., New York City Youthline (1-800-246-4646), the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse/New York State (1-800-CHILDREN), and the New York State Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-942-6906). (For additional numbers, see the list in the Resources section in the front of this document.)
- Have students complete the Emergency Plan Card (see Resources section, page 17). Keep a copy, then give the originals back to students to keep in their notebooks or bookbags, or fold and keep in their pockets. They may also want to keep a copy in a safe place such as their rooms at home.

2. Students will define “privacy” and explain why it is important to respect others’ privacy and insist on respect for one’s own. (PS)

Teacher Note: Introduce students to the concept of privacy—a feeling that one’s body, thoughts, or things are personal, just for oneself, to choose to share (or not) with others. Abuse often involves invading a child’s mental or physical privacy, touching or exposing private parts of the body. An abuser dishonors a child’s privacy by asking a child to keep the abuse a secret.

Activity

- Elicit examples of what children think of as “private.” For example:
 - *private things...* to keep in a child’s room, dresser drawer, shelf, or box.
 - *private thoughts...* to confide to a special friend or write in a diary.
 - *private parts of the body...* to cover with a bathing suit.
- Emphasize that children have some rights to privacy, especially of their body and thoughts. Students should respect other people’s rights to privacy, too.
- Discuss instances when students felt uncomfortable about lack of privacy. Stress that it is okay to avoid or back away from such intrusions—and always tell a parent or other trustworthy adult.

3. Students will discuss situations in which students can say “No! Stop!” to things they do not like or want. (PS)

Teacher Note: Role-playing is an effective way for students to practice saying “No! Stop!” in an uncomfortable or dangerous situation. After each role-play, have the actors “shake off the character” by shaking their hands and legs. Discuss the role-play as a class.

Activity

- On index cards, describe scenarios of potentially abusive situations. Examples include:
 - A stranger approaches a child.
 - A stranger shows a child a toy, or takes a child’s toy.
 - A stranger asks a child to accompany him or her home “at your mother’s request.”
 - Dad comes home drunk and yells at his child.
 - A family member touches a child’s private parts and tells the child not to tell.
- Assign roles to the students (child, stranger, other adult and child nearby, parent and sibling at home). Have students role-play **NO—GO—TELL**: Say **NO**, **GO** away, **TELL** a parent or other trustworthy adult. Have children make **NO—GO—TELL** posters or reminder cards.
- In some instances, such as domestic violence, it may not be possible or advisable for a child to say no or to intervene. A different slogan and principle may be more appropriate: ***If you can’t say NO, just GO. If you can’t GO, TELL someone you know.***

GRADE 3

ABUSE PREVENTION: COMMUNICATION

4. Students will recognize the ways friends support each other. (C)

Teacher Note: Friends can be a resource when children need someone to talk to and trust. Be sure to make the point that if a friend confides something that a child doesn't feel able to handle alone, ask a trustworthy adult for advice and help.

Activity

- Have children define the word “support.” The following is an excerpt from the definition in the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*.

support 1. To bear the weight of.... 2. To hold in position, keep from falling, sinking, or slipping.... 3. To be capable of bearing.... 4. To keep (one's spirits, for example) from failing during stress; lend strength to.... *Synonyms:* uphold, sustain, maintain, advocate, champion.
- Tell children they are going to play a game in which they will give each other “physical support.” Divide students into pairs. Have each pair sit on the floor back to back and link arms at the elbows. Instruct them to stand up while keeping their arms linked.
- Now divide students into trios. Give them the same task. Continue increasing the group size until you eventually include the entire class. After the exercise, have students discuss how it felt to be “supported” by their friends. Ask students to brainstorm other ways that friends support each other.

5. Students will describe appropriate ways of showing affection for peers and adults. (C)

Teacher Note: Throughout child abuse prevention lessons, affirm the importance of affection in our lives. Emphasize that it is unfair for someone to feign affection in order to gain someone's trust or exploit someone's confusion. Some abusive adults use these tactics with children or with other adults in the family. There are also some instances in which an older child, such as a sibling, cousin, or neighbor, uses these tactics against a younger child.

Activity

- Describe or have children brainstorm scenes in which they might express affection toward someone familiar to them. For example:
 - You are seeing your best friend for the first time in several months.
 - Your friend just did a big favor for you.
 - You got hurt and your friend came to your rescue.
- For each scene, have students use hand puppets to act out appropriate ways of showing affection. Ask students to describe how the puppet characters feel. Has anything similar ever happened to them? How did they express affection? How did someone else express affection for them?

- Contrast these scenes with one that shows inappropriate adult-child interaction:
 - Your uncle asks you to sit on his lap, then won't let you go. You struggle to get up but he grabs you tight and tells you to be quiet.
- Have children act out this scenario with the puppets. Ask the children how the puppet-character should resolve the situation. Be sure the character asks for and receives adult help. Have the child and/or adult helpers confront the uncle.

6. Students will demonstrate appropriate, constructive ways to express emotions. (C)

Teacher Note: In this activity students experience giving and receiving both positive and negative feedback.

The positive comments should help students recognize that:

1. Other people see good qualities in us, sometimes qualities which we may not be aware of;
2. Knowing that others value us helps us to feel good about ourselves.

The negative comments should offer a sharp contrast, helping students to recognize that:

1. Put-downs can make people feel bad about themselves;
2. Negative feelings can be expressed tactfully, so as to articulate a problem without causing someone unnecessary pain.

In facilitating this activity, make sure to remind students that the standard classroom ground rule, “No put-downs,” applies. This is not an opportunity for students to hurt each other’s feelings; it’s a way to explore how to respect each other’s feelings. Acknowledge that adults don’t always follow this ground rule. Many adults, too, need to learn how to express anger, frustration, or impatience without put-downs. It’s okay to have these feelings, but one must learn to control and manage how they are expressed. Anger should not be allowed to become violence, or discussions to become emotional abuse.

Activity

- Have students sit in a circle if feasible; if not, adjust the seating so they can see and interact with one another. Ask students for examples of friendly comments. For example: “I appreciated your help during our art lesson.” “It was nice of you to help Judy with her math problem.”
- Going around the circle, have students make friendly comments to each other, starting with the student to their left. The comment may begin with “I,” which includes the speaker or with “You,” which focuses on the person receiving the compliment. Have the recipient say, “Thank you.”
- Ask students how they felt when giving and receiving a compliment. Elicit that being treated kindly by others often makes one feel more inclined to “pass along the kindness.”
- Ask students how this “pass along” concept applies to negative comments. Elicit that being treated unkindly often makes one feel like taking out these feelings on someone else, or turning them inward, causing depression. Ask students for examples of negative comments that classmates may make. Ask why a student might make such comments. For example: The student is spoken to unkindly at home, may have low self-esteem, or may need to work out a problem but doesn’t know how else to do so.

- Expand on the last point. Model how to use “I” statements to express negative feelings without putting down, blaming, or accusing someone. For example:
 - “I feel angry when someone says something bad about my family.”
 - “I feel bad when I am not included in something my friends are doing.”
- Elicit that such statements open a door to communication.

7. Students will practice saying “no” in uncomfortable or unsafe situations. (C)

Teacher Note: Role-playing is the one of the most effective methods of teaching protective strategies. This activity gives students an opportunity to:

- practice using their voice as a weapon, saying “No! Stop!” in a deep, loud voice.
- practice using body language to protect themselves.
- formulate other protective strategies.

Activity

- Have students sit in a circle, if feasible, or adjust seating so that they can see and interact with one another easily. Have them role-play or use hand puppets to enact the following scenarios involving potentially abusive situations. Point out that children should say **NO, GO** away from a person with whom they feel uncomfortable or unsafe, and always **TELL** a parent, teacher, or other trustworthy adult. A shortcut way to remember these steps is “**NO—GO—TELL.**”
- Remind students that there are verbal and nonverbal ways of communicating. Have them identify each after the role-plays. Ask what important things they remember from each role-play.
- Tell students that adults are aware that children cannot always get out of abusive situations. Abuse is not a child’s fault. *Children cannot control what adults do.* But they can do their best to resist and to report what happened.

<i>The Problem</i>		<i>Protective Strategies</i>			
SCENARIO	VERBAL	NONVERBAL	ALTERNATIVES	REMEMBER	
An older student tries to grab your lunchbox, wallet, or coat.	Say "NO" in a loud voice. Ask friends for help. Tell a teacher.	Run away and tell a teacher.	Stand tall. Make eye contact with the student. OR Avoid eye contact with the student if you think it might inflame the situation further. Instead, make eye contact with a nearby adult who could help.	If the older child is big and strong, let him have the lunchbox. Then tell. An adult can help you get another lunchbox, coat, or wallet – but no one can get another you.	
A sales clerk in the candy store blocks the door and says you have to kiss him before he'll let you leave.	Say "NO" in a loud voice. Scream. Tell him that if he doesn't move away from the door you will tell your parents and the police. Threaten to push things off the shelves if he won't let you go.	Cross your arms and glare at him. Mess up the store until he lets you go.		Abusers count on you to keep the abuse a secret. They may try to make you feel ashamed as a way to get you not to tell. Be cautious about going into stores by yourself.	
Someone drives by and calls you to go over to the car to give directions, or asks you to help look for a lost dog.	From a distance, yell "NO, I CAN'T!" or ignore the request. Tell a parent or other trustworthy adult.	Shake your head no. Run away.		Strangers have no right to ask kids for directions. It doesn't matter what a stranger looks like or says; never go to a car or on an errand (such as to look for a "lost dog" or to mail someone's letter) without a parent's permission. Abusers often use such "ruses" as a way to abduct children.	
Your parents are fighting, and your dad starts to hit your mother.	Say "STOP!"	Leave the room.	Do not speak up if you feel that it might make the situation worse or put you in danger. Ask a trusted relative, neighbor, or other adult to help; go to them in person or call on the phone. If you don't know whom to turn to, call a number on your Emergency Plan Card (Teacher: See Resources section), the New York State Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-942-6906, the New York City Youthline at 1-800-246-4646, or 911.	It is never your fault if parents fight or your responsibility to make them stop. The adults are responsible for stopping their fighting and for getting help. Even if they don't, you have the right to find someone you trust to talk with. Don't isolate yourself or let shame, embarrassment, or fear keep you from expressing your feelings to someone you trust.	

GRADE 3

ABUSE PREVENTION: SELF-AWARENESS

8. Students will discuss feelings associated with being touched. (SA)

Teacher Note: Encourage students to recognize and express the feelings associated with being touched. It is important to affirm the value and meaningfulness of loving touch (i.e., we feel loved when someone we care for hugs us affectionately). Affirm a child's right to avoid or resist any uncomfortable touches and to report them to a trustworthy adult.

Activity

- Have students brainstorm types of touch. For example, hugs, kisses on the cheek, “pinching cheeks,” “high-five” slaps, shaking hands, etc. Discuss touches that students like, such as a parent's good-night kiss, a hug from a best friend. Then ask them what touches they don't like, such as being forced to hug a disliked relative, being wrestled and overpowered by an older cousin, or being tickled too long by an older sibling. Affirm that in the latter instances, they should say, “No, stop!” and tell a trustworthy adult.
- Have students draw pictures of someone touching them in one of the positive or negative ways they listed.

9. Students will identify behaviors and feelings that trigger the need to turn to others for help. (SA)

Teacher Note: This activity reinforces the importance of listening to one's feelings and getting help when necessary. Explain that even if a situation may seem minor to some people (such as a squabble with a sibling), students should seek help if they can't resolve the situation to their satisfaction. In a potentially dangerous situation, such as the scenario below, students should ask a trustworthy adult for advice immediately.

Activity

- Brainstorm situations that might make students feel happy, sad, uneasy, uncomfortable, or afraid. Have them complete the sentence, “I feel _____ when....” For example:
 - “I feel **happy** when... (I play with my cousin).”
 - “I feel **sad** when... (I argue with my brother).”
 - “I feel **upset** when... (my relative comes over and yells at me in a loud voice).”
 - “I feel **scared** when... (a man on the corner calls out bad words when I walk by).”
 - “I feel **adventurous** when... (I play on the slides and swings in the playground).”
 - “I feel **upset** when... (my parents fight).”
 - “I feel **worried** about my mom when... (my dad yells at her).”
- Ask students how they feel when these things happen. Ask what situations have prompted them to get help from a parent or other trustworthy adult. Ask how the adult responded. Tell them that sometimes students have to go to more than one adult if the first one doesn't listen or help.
- Relate to the students the following scenario:

A student comes out of school one day and waits to be picked up by Mommy. A stranger comes over and says, “Your mother is feeling sick. She wants you to come with me. I will take you home right away.”

- Ask the class how the student might feel and what he or she should do. Elicit that the student probably feels upset and confused. The student should trust these “uh-oh” feelings. The student should not go with the stranger. Instead, the student should go into the school office to ask for help. School personnel will call the child’s home.
- Make children aware that some abusers use this tactic to kidnap children. Mention that some families establish a secret code word or phrase to use in such situations.

- Relate to the students another scenario:

Lee’s parents frequently argue. Lately, it’s been happening more and more. Last night, for the first time, Dad shoved Mom. He shoved her hard, against the wall. She slumped to the floor and started to cry. Dad sent the children out of the room. This morning Mom and Dad acted like nothing had happened. When Lee asked Mom how her head was, she said, “I’m fine. Let’s not discuss it.”

- Ask the class to describe how Lee might feel and what Lee should do. Elicit that Lee probably feels worried, afraid, and perhaps angry at Dad for shoving Mom, and at Mom for not discussing it. Ask for possible explanations about why Mom won’t talk about the incident. For example: she is afraid, she is trying to “forget” it happened, she doesn’t want Lee to worry. Elicit that children have a right to talk about their feelings. If the mother won’t talk about it, Lee might approach another trusted adult—a relative, neighbor, teacher, clergy, etc.

10. Students will discuss how children feel when adults are loving or angry. (SA)

Teacher Note: Children can gain strength from each other when they realize that they are not alone in feeling upset when an adult is angry. Most children are mischievous, stubborn, or acting-out at times, and may experience an adult’s anger. But for some children it may be an eye-opener to realize the range of ways that adults express their anger. For example, a child who is often beaten or locked in a closet may think that’s the normal way families live. It may never occur to him or her to ask for help. A child who realizes that these are not universal or acceptable means of child rearing may feel encouraged to disclose the abuse and seek help.

Activity

- Have children divide a piece of paper in half by drawing a line vertically down the center. On the left, have them draw their family showing anger; on the right, their family showing love. (Alternatively: On one half, draw parents disciplining child; on the other half, how the child feels.)

Drawing provides a distancing mechanism that helps students express themselves. Have students volunteer to share their drawings. Stay general in discussion and comparisons. Then ask more specifically:

- How do you feel when love is expressed?
- What are some ways parents discipline their children? How do they make children feel?
- If you were a grown-up, how would you discipline your children?
- How do children feel if their parents are fighting?
- If you were a grown-up, how would you and your partner treat each other?

11. Students will understand that everyone has feelings, and that we should trust our feelings, not hide them. (SA)

Teacher Note: Discussing puppets' experiences may help children feel safer about drawing parallels to their own. Children may disclose abuse or neglect they once faced or are coping with now. Help children understand that they are not alone. Everyone has feelings. We feel closer with people when we express empathy for them and seek it for ourselves.

Make sure to discuss what an "uh-oh" feeling is (a gut feeling inside that something is wrong). An "uh-oh" feeling is a valuable warning signal; urge students to trust it and to tell a trustworthy adult.

Activity

- Have children create and perform skits using puppets who are coping with "uh-oh" (confusing) or abusive situations (suggested by either the teacher or the students). For example:
 - A big "older-child puppet" hits a small "younger-child puppet."
 - A "parent puppet" repeatedly insults a "child puppet" by making demeaning "you are..." statements ("You are stupid/careless/clumsy/worthless.")
 - Parents keep their children from going to school, even when they are not sick, so they can help out at home.
- After each skit, discuss how the puppets feel. Ask for suggestions on what the puppets should do. Make sure children understand the concepts of physical and emotional abuse, and educational neglect. (See Resources section.)

GRADE 4

ABUSE PREVENTION: PERSONAL SAFETY

1. Students will identify positive people and places in the community that can help students stay safe and secure. (PS)

Teacher Note: Learning about safety is a three-part process: identifying possible dangers, learning to avoid them, and learning how to cope if they do occur. Thinking in advance about where to go and whom to tell can enhance a child’s feeling of personal safety and resourcefulness.

Activity

- Brainstorm people and places that provide safety and security. For example: certain relatives, neighbors, clergy, police officers, community centers, houses of worship, firehouses.
- Have students draw maps of their communities, marking places where they can go for safety and assistance if necessary. Have students share their maps and exchange ideas about possible “safe havens.”
- Take the class on a neighborhood walk. Point out the children’s and additional safe havens. Be sensitive to the needs of any children in your class who do not live in the same neighborhood as the school. Ask them if there are comparable places in their own neighborhood that they would identify as safe havens.

2. Students will discuss behaviors associated with physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. (PS)

Teacher Note: Through puppet play students can work out constructive ways to respond to abusive situations. In the following activity, students may identify situations that indicate possible abuse or risk. Make sure the puppet play features a child telling a trustworthy adult about any form of abuse. Students describing positive, nonabusive situations help to create a norm against which students living in abusive settings can evaluate their experiences.

Activity

- Have students identify best/worst scenarios using one or more of the following examples:
 - My best day at home / My worst day at home
 - Things that happen at home that make me feel good / That make me feel bad
 - When I like to go home / When I don’t want to go home
 - Hooray, my favorite relative is staying over / Oh no, my least favorite relative is staying over.
- Obtain hand puppets or make adult and child stick-puppets (cut-outs of figures glued or taped to sticks). Have students role-play scenarios that were listed during the discussion. Elicit suggestions. For example, one child’s “least favorite relative” wears too much perfume and never stops talking; another child’s hugs too much or says hurtful things. Emphasize that physical harm, inappropriate touching, and deliberately hurting people’s feelings are serious problems. Children should talk to a trustworthy adult if these things happen to them.

3. Students will discuss the importance of being prepared in case of an emergency. (PS)

Teacher Note: In a number of ways, students learn that it is valuable to do advance planning about how to cope with an emergency situation. School fire drills are one example. The Emergency Plan Card gives students and their families an opportunity to think ahead; to discuss their network of family, friends, neighbors, and community supports; and to provide students with a personal resource list. Students are likely to find such a list comforting and reassuring.

Activity

- Tell students that although no one wants emergencies to happen, it's important to anticipate possibilities and be prepared. That's why, for example, people have smoke alarms in their homes and locks on their doors—because sometimes fires ignite and robbers approach. Ask students whether their family has discussed emergency plans at home, e.g., exit plans in case of fire. Encourage students to discuss such plans with their parents or guardians.
- Have each child make a “safety kit” of a “**NO—GO—TELL**” reminder card, a whistle or other noise-maker, safety brochures provided by police, firefighters, transit authority, etc.
- For homework, have each student take home a blank Emergency Plan Card (see Resources section, page 17) and ask parents or guardians to help them fill it out. In class, have students brainstorm school personnel whom they can ask for help. Help them fill in that section of the card. Have students keep the Card in their bookbags, use a three-hole punch and keep it in their binder or notebook, or fold and keep the Card in a wallet or pocket. Keep a copy for your own files, to make available in case students lose or misplace their Card. If possible, make a copy for students to take home and give to their parents or guardians. They may also want to keep a copy in a safe place such as their rooms at home.

4. Students will practice strategies to resist and report situations that make students feel uncomfortable or unsafe. (PS)

Teacher Note: Emphasize that students should trust their feelings. Discuss the “uh-oh” feeling, a funny, uncomfortable sensation that tells us to be careful. It can be a valuable warning signal.

Activity

- Have students sit in a circle, if possible. If not, arrange chairs so students can see and interact with one another easily. Show the class a series of drawings or pictures that represent potentially threatening situations for a child, such as a child approaching a car with a passenger's arm outstretched to the child. Have students describe what might be happening in the picture, both positive and negative. Have them brainstorm and practice resistance skills. For example:
 1. *A driver stops the car and asks a child for directions, or asks the child to mail some letters.*

Elicit: Children should not give directions, mail letters, or otherwise comply with such requests without a parent's permission. They should never get close to the car.

Have students practice saying, “I can't help you. Ask a grown-up for help,” and then walking away and telling a parent or guardian or other trustworthy adult.

Have students brainstorm how to respond to “lures”—pretexts that adults might use to persuade children to come closer. (See “An Abuser's Lures,” page 39.)

2. *A stranger in a playground offers a child a piece of candy or some valuable baseball cards, or asks a child to help him or her find a lost dog.*

Elicit: Children should never take food, toys, money, or anything else from someone they don't know well, unless they have a parent's permission. Though children may like being helpful, it is potentially dangerous to do so.

Have children practice saying, "No, thank you" and then walking away and telling a parent or guardian or other trustworthy adult.

Note that people who want to harm a child are often very good at knowing what will tempt children most. Even if you think someone just wants to be nice, it's not worth taking the chance.

3. *An older cousin takes a child for a walk in the park, and hugs the child for such a long time that the child feels uncomfortable.*

Elicit: Children have the right to say no to uncomfortable touches.

Have children practice saying, "Stop! Back off! I don't want you to hug me. Take me home," then telling a parent or guardian or other trustworthy adult.

Note that sometimes people are not aware that their hugs are too long or uncomfortable. Children have the right to tell them to stop.

4. *A child has a painful rash, but every time he or she asks Mom or Dad to take him or her to the doctor, they say no. They say the rash will go away, or that it's "nothing." The rash doesn't go away, and becomes increasingly uncomfortable.*

Elicit: Children have the right to speak up if they are being neglected.

Have children practice saying to a teacher, "I need help. I have a rash that hurts. My parents won't take me to the doctor."

Note that some parents may not recognize how uncomfortable a child's rash or other illness is. Or they may not know where to take the child for help. The teacher can get in touch with someone who can contact the parents and help them get appropriate care for their child. *It is illegal for parents to neglect their children's health.*

5. *A child is with Mom and Dad in the kitchen. The parents are arguing. Dad picks up some dishes and throws them to the floor, shattering them. Mom bursts into tears and Dad storms out of the room. The child doesn't know what to do.*

Elicit: It wasn't right for Dad to throw the dishes. Also, the parents' argument was not the child's fault, even if they were arguing about something concerning the child.

Have children practice expressing their feelings: "I'm scared/sad/worried."

Note that parents' fighting is never a child's fault. Witnessing a fight can upset a child. Talking about it can help; staying silent may only make the distress worse. If possible, children should tell their parents how they feel about the fighting. However, children may not always feel comfortable doing so, and may prefer to speak to another trustworthy adult instead.

An Abuser's Lures

To "Hook" a Kid Into Coming Closer or Cooperating, an Abuser Might:

- PRETEND NOT TO HEAR: "MY HEARING'S BAD, COME CLOSER."
- PRETEND TO BE INSULTED: "I'M NOT A CRIMINAL! JUST COME OVER HERE."
- OFFER TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING: "LET ME SHOW YOU MY PET SNAKE."
- OFFER TO GIVE YOU SOMETHING: "I HAVE SOME KITTENS TO GIVE AWAY."
- ACCUSE YOU OF DISRESPECT: "STOP BEING RUDE!"
- RIDICULE YOU: "YOU'RE A BIG KID, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID."
- APPEAL TO YOUR SYMPATHY: "PLEASE, I'M LOST/IN TROUBLE/SICK/LONELY."

Don't Take the Bait!

- REFUSE TO APPROACH THE CAR OR PERSON.
- RESIST ANY DISCUSSION.
- WALK OR RUN AWAY.
- TELL A TRUSTWORTHY ADULT.

Most adults are not dangerous, but *IT'S NOT WORTH TAKING A CHANCE*. You can't tell from the way someone looks or speaks whether he or she is a "safe stranger" or a "danger stranger."

GRADE 4

ABUSE PREVENTION: COMMUNICATION

5. Students will identify safety rules and trustworthy adults to whom children may go when they have problems at home. (C)

Teacher Note: Many children are unsupervised after school or at other times. Parents and guardians should review safety rules and provide their children with lists of trustworthy adults whom they can contact in emergencies. If parents do not do so, children should be aware that they should ask for the names and phone numbers. (See Emergency Plan Card activity, page 37.)

Activity

- Brainstorm safety rules for times when students are home alone. For example:
 - Never open the door or allow someone in unless parents or guardians have given permission in advance.
 - Never say you're alone when answering the phone. Instead of saying, "Mom isn't home," say "Mom asked me to take a message."
 - Never use the stove, microwave, sharp knives, or other appliances or tools for which you need adult supervision.
 - Make sure to have the phone number where your parent or guardian can be reached.
 - Ask for names of people to call in case of emergency.
 - Know how to call 911 in case of fire or other emergency.
- Have children do "safety role-plays" to reinforce these and other rules. Scenarios might include:
 - *"Someone from the electricity company knocks on the door. He asks you to let him in to read the meter. You refuse to let him in, but he insists that he must read the meter or your family may have to pay extra money."*

Elicit: A legitimate utility company representative will not pressure a child to admit him or her into the house. Children must stick to the rule—no one allowed in the house—and resist pressure.
 - *"Someone calls on the phone and asks for Mom. You offer to take a message, but the person pressures you to put her on the phone or to tell when she'll be home and where she is."*

Elicit: People have no right to pressure you for such information. Children are not obligated to give out personal information. The best way to deal with such pressure is the "broken record" technique. Just keep saying, "I can't answer questions, but I'd be glad to take a message."

6. Students will develop constructive communication strategies for uncomfortable or potentially abusive situations. (C)

Teacher Note: Role-play and discussion of the following scenarios may take more than one class period. One way to maximize the scenarios' impact is to divide the class into small groups. Assign the same scenario to two groups, but with different directions to each. For example, in the first scenario, direct one group to have the child lie about the report card and then get found out. Direct the second group to have the child acknowledge the problems with the report card and present a plan for improving his or her grades.

Activity

- Have students role-play the following scenarios. After each role-play, have them respond to the discussion questions.
 - *A child brings home a report card that is sure to anger Mom and Dad.*
 - *A child walks a dog without a leash, and the dog destroys a neighbor's flower garden. The child is caught.*
 - *A parent is upset that there is not enough money. He or she takes out those feelings on the children by screaming at them and calling them names.*
 - *A sister and brother disagree about what TV show to watch, and Mom or Dad are about to punish them for fighting.*
 - *A neighbor asks a child for a hug, then touches the child in ways that feel uncomfortable and inappropriate.*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- How did it feel to be the mother, father, child, other character?
- How did you feel as the child when the parents said that to you?
- Have you ever been in this situation?
- How would this situation be handled in your family?
- Could the situation be prevented from occurring again? If so, how?

GRADE 4

ABUSE PREVENTION: SELF-AWARENESS

7. Students will distinguish among appropriate, inappropriate, and confusing touches. (SA)

Teacher Note: Children need to recognize which touches are and are not appropriate, depending on the type of touch and who is doing the touching.

Activity

- Have children draw pictures involving touches by parents or guardians and other caregivers, as well as by strangers and acquaintances. Elicit cases that are confusing or unclear. Emphasize that whenever children experience inappropriate and confusing touches, they need to tell a parent or guardian, caregiver, teacher, clergy member, or other trustworthy adult.

8. Students will discuss “family styles” of expressing such feelings as love, anger, and disappointment. (SA)

Teacher Note: Families express a wide range of feelings, not always in constructive ways. By identifying the many ways people express their feelings, children can recognize the range of possibilities. Children in abusive families may realize that their family model is not “standard.” Children who witness domestic violence need to learn that many parents can and do resolve their disputes nonviolently.

Activity

(Note: You may wish to have the children read one or two poems before doing this activity.)

- Have children write and share poems depicting how their families express emotions. In the discussion, elicit how families differ, and how they are the same. How do the students feel about their poems? If they become parents themselves someday, in what ways will they choose to be the same as or different from their own parents?

9. Students will recognize their range of feelings and identify which events cause them to feel a particular way. (SA)

Teacher Note: “Emotional literacy” is the ability to identify and articulate what one is feeling. These skills improve with practice. This activity reinforces the idea that feelings are important, a rich part of each individual’s life. Uncomfortable, upset, or confused feelings are sometimes a signal of potential abuse. Children should discuss these feelings with a trustworthy adult.

Activity

- Have children brainstorm a list of feelings. Write their responses on the chalkboard. Then divide them into small groups. Have them write sentences about each feeling. For example:
 - “I feel **happy** when... (my Mom tucks me in at night).”
 - “I feel **uncomfortable** when... (Grandpa comes over).”
 - “I feel **angry** when... (people call me names).”
 - “I feel **confused** when... (Dad says, ‘Don’t be careless when you’re taking care of your brother.’)”
 - “I feel **worried** when... (my mom cries a lot).”
 - “I feel **afraid** when... (I’m home alone).”
- Alternatively, have children complete the sentences in the following worksheet, “This Is How I Feel.”
- Have children share their sentences. Notice similarities and differences within the class. Then have each group develop role-plays based on one of their sentences. Each role-play should lead to a constructive way to handle difficult situations. For example, a role-play about Grandpa might conclude with the child telling a parent about what Grandpa does that makes him or her uncomfortable, and making a plan about how to handle the situation. A role-play about Dad might conclude with the child asking Dad for a clear explanation of what’s expected when he or she is in charge of the brother—perhaps even writing a list of responsibilities.

NAME _____ CLASS _____ DATE _____

This Is How I Feel

1. I feel happy when _____ .
2. I feel sad when _____ .
3. I wish I could _____ .
4. It's not fair that _____ .
5. I get angry when _____ .
6. My favorite thing to do is _____ .
7. My best friends are _____ .
8. I am proud that I _____ .
9. The time of day I like best is _____ .
10. I admire _____ because _____ .
11. On my birthday I want to _____ .
12. When I'm upset, I _____ .
13. A movie about my life should be called _____ .
14. When I have a problem, I can talk to _____ .
15. I get scared when _____ .
16. I feel relieved when _____ .
17. I am confused about _____ .
18. I laugh when _____ .

GRADE 5

ABUSE PREVENTION: PERSONAL SAFETY

1. Students will use creative thinking to identify ways to avoid dangerous situations or improve hurtful ones. (PS)

Teacher Note: The following “Get Real” Fairy Tales activity helps students identify constructive alternative approaches to a dangerous or hurtful situation. Students can imagine how well known fairy tale characters could have done things differently to help themselves.

The following story discussions:

- (a) show how each protagonist might have improved her situation if she had been aware of important safety rules;
- (b) point out each protagonist’s positive qualities and the things she did *right*. This approach enables you to reinforce such positive qualities as curiosity, courage, and helpfulness; and
- (c) cite ways that the fairy tales relate to children’s lives today.

Do not assume that all students know these fairy tales. Review the plots, or have the students read the stories, or tell the stories aloud. You may also wish to use or ask students to bring in examples of fairy tales from other cultures. While each of the following protagonists is female, you may wish to ask students to find—or write—other fairy tales that feature male protagonists or other cultures.

Activity

- Review each fairy tale with the students, then have them discuss:
 - the protagonist’s positive traits;
 - the safety rules she needed to know;
 - how the rules could have helped;
 - how these tales are similar to things that could happen today.

“Get Real” Fairy Tales: Rethinking Goldilocks, Little Red Riding Hood, & Cinderella

<i>Tale</i>	<i>Positive Traits</i>	<i>Safety Rules She Needed to Know</i>	<i>How Safety Rules Could Help</i>	<i>Parallel to Today</i>
<p>GOLDILOCKS walked into a strange house alone. She could have been hurt by the bears. The longer she remained in the house, checking out rocking chairs, porridge bowls, and beds, the higher her risk.</p>	<p>It's good that Goldilocks is curious and likes to explore.</p>	<p>Always ask a parent's permission before entering someone's home. Do not go anywhere without a parent's permission.</p>	<p>Maybe Goldilocks' parents could have helped her meet and befriend the bears, or to find safer ways to explore and satisfy her curiosity.</p>	<p>Have the students link Goldilocks' experience with their own by giving examples of places they need parents' permission to visit. What are some places they would like to explore?</p>
<p>LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD told personal information to the Big Bad Wolf. He then went to her grandmother's house and threatened the grandmother and Little Red Riding Hood.</p>	<p>It's good that Little Red Riding Hood was being helpful and compassionate by taking food to her ailing grandmother.</p>	<p>Don't speak with strangers or trust them with private family information.</p>	<p>Little Red Riding Hood needed to realize that children are not obliged to answer a stranger's questions. Children should ask a trustworthy adult for help and advice.</p>	<p>Have the students link Little Red Riding Hood's experience with their own by brainstorming what they would do if a stranger asked them personal questions. Has that ever happened to them? Whom would they tell?</p>
<p>CINDERELLA was treated meanly – was demeaned – by her stepmother and stepsisters. They insulted her, dressed her in rags, forced her to do all the housework, and wouldn't allow her to go to out. The fairy godmother (a very trustworthy adult) helped her. However, most people don't have fairy godmothers. They have to figure out ways to help themselves.</p>	<p>It's good that Cinderella tried to be patient and hopeful.</p>	<p>If a child is mistreated, upset, or lonely, she should tell a trustworthy adult and ask for help.</p>	<p>A trustworthy adult might have told the stepmother and stepsisters that they were wrong to mistreat Cinderella. If they didn't change, the adult might have helped Cinderella find a nicer place to live – even if it wasn't the castle. Cinderella needed to recognize that the way she was being treated was wrong. By dressing her in rags, her stepmother was neglectful. By demeaning Cinderella, her stepmother and stepsisters were verbally abusing her, deliberately making her feel bad about herself. Cinderella would have to be careful not to treat others as she was treated. Sometimes children who are spoken to harshly grow up to “repeat the cycle,” mistreating others as they were mistreated themselves. Have students discuss the Golden Rule: <i>Treat others as you would like to be treated.</i></p>	<p>Have the students link Cinderella's experience with their own by citing examples of “demeaning talk” and “kind talk.” Also discuss the topic of neglect. Make sure students understand that any student who lacks adequate food, clothing, shelter, or supervision should tell a trustworthy adult (e.g., parent, guardian, teacher) and ask for help.</p>

2. Students will develop strategies to assist and support someone who may be experiencing abusive behaviors or witnessing domestic violence. (PS)

Teacher Note: Students need to be made aware of the types of abuse and neglect: (a) physical abuse, (b) sexual abuse, (c) emotional abuse, (d) physical neglect, and (e) educational neglect. Additionally, they should know that witnessing domestic violence can also harm a child. (See the Resources section of this document or Chancellor’s Regulation A-750.)

Urge students to tell and obtain help from responsible, trustworthy adults, such as parents, guardians, neighbors, school staff, police officers, and clergy. Have students complete the Emergency Plan Card (see Resources section, page 17), taking it home so parents can help them fill it in. Keep a copy in your files, then return the Card to students to keep in their notebooks or bookbag or fold and keep in a wallet or pocket. They may also want to keep a copy in a safe place such as their rooms at home.

Activity

- Have students define the five types of abuse and neglect listed above. Divide students into five groups, one for each type of abuse or neglect.
- Have each group of students draw a “story board,” a sequence of pictures that tell a story (such as a cartoon strip). The story board should depict an episode of abuse or neglect, the child’s attempt to resist or cope, and finally the child succeeding in getting help. Have the class share and discuss the storyboards. Expand the discussion by eliciting what the students would do in that situation. Whom do they identify as trustworthy adults in their lives?
- Have students complete the Emergency Plan Card (page 17).

3. Students will distinguish between helpful and hurtful behaviors, and find alternatives to the latter. (PS)

Teacher Note: Children learn how to behave by observing the adults and children in their lives: family members and people in the neighborhood, school, and community. They also pay close attention to fictional people on television, the “electronic community.” Children often mimic TV characters and compare TV families with their own. In this activity, students assess TV characters’ behaviors and identify alternative behaviors. This activity provides a safe way to broach topics of emotional abuse, since many TV families use insults and put-downs. Exemplary TV families (such as in the “Cosby Show”) are notable for the lack of them.

Activity

- Discuss how people in “TV families” treat one another. Use the following questions as a guide for class discussion, or distribute them as a worksheet for individual reports or group discussions. Have students evaluate one or more TV shows. Assign shows or let students choose their own.

Checking Out TV

WHAT DO TV SHOWS REALLY TELL US ABOUT FAMILIES?

- Are the TV families kind?
- Do characters tease or hurt people's feelings?
- How do the dads treat the moms?
- How do the moms treat the dads?
- Are there differences in the ways moms and dads are portrayed?
- How do girls behave?
- How do boys behave?
- Are there differences in the ways boys and girls are portrayed?
- How are teenagers portrayed?
- Are there differences in the ways male and female teens are portrayed?
- How could TV characters change their behavior to benefit themselves and others?
- If characters do not change negative behaviors, what are some effective ways that other characters can respond or cope? How are these different from the ways they are usually shown behaving?

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF THE DECISIONS MADE BY SCRIPTWRITERS, DIRECTORS, AND ACTORS?

- How do they choose to depict family and dating relationships?
- What are some moments or comments they present as humorous?
- How do they use laugh tracks to underscore humor?
- If there were no laugh tracks, would viewers still consider the shows funny?
- Do they make put-downs seem funny? If so, is that consistent with our experience of put-downs in real life?
- Do TV shows employ stereotypes? For example, dominant males or gossipy females?
- Do TV shows depict emotional abuse? How do characters speak to one another?
- Which TV shows depict positive, healthy approaches to family living?
- Which TV show makes you feel happiest?
- Which TV characters...
 - would you like to get to know?
 - do you respect the most?
 - would you rather avoid?
 - do you admire?
 - would you like to be friends with?
 - remind you of someone you know?
 - is a role model for you?

4. Students will identify when it is better to avoid conflict with adults. (PS)

Teacher Note: Abuse often occurs when children are in the wrong place at the wrong time. *Children are not responsible for abuse.* However, in some instances they may be able to avoid it by “reading the signals” of parents or others who have been physically or emotionally abusive. For example, one child of an alcoholic mother could tell by the sound of her footsteps whether she had been drinking, and knew that keeping out of the mother’s way at those times was the best way to keep from being hit. A child should not have to cultivate defensive radar or practice self-protective strategies with a parent, guardian, or other family member. Nevertheless, there is value in addressing how children can minimize the risk of abuse by evaluating the wisdom of initiating conversation or presenting a difficult topic at a particular time.

Activity

- Write on the chalkboard: “Children should be seen and not heard.” Ask students if they agree or disagree with this statement.
- Draw a line down the middle of the chalkboard. On one side write “Positive Consequences.” On the other write “Negative Consequences.”
- Have students brainstorm answers to the question, “What are the consequences of being seen and heard around adults?” Answers may include:

Positive Consequences:

- get heard and appreciated.
- get noticed.
- get attention.
- get a chance to express ideas.
- get adults to listen.
- get what we want.

Negative Consequences:

- get yelled at.
- make adults angry.
- make adults worry.
- make adults notice you and take out their troubles on you.
- get hurt.

- Discuss the “negative consequences.” Note that sometimes children have to weigh the risks of behavior that may cause conflicts. However, also note that although sometimes children can avoid an adult’s abusive behavior, *children cannot control what adults do.* Abuse is not a child’s fault. Children always have the right to tell a trustworthy adult and get help if they are abused, or if another family member is being abused.

GRADE 5

ABUSE PREVENTION: COMMUNICATION

5. Students will recognize the variety of ways that families communicate physically and verbally. (C)

Teacher Note: This activity highlights how touch and speech can have a positive, negative, or confusing impact. For a discussion of the role of confusion in emotional abuse, see *Mixed Signals May Indicate Emotional Abuse* in the Resources section.

Give students the option of drawing their own family *or another real or imaginary family*. Either way, their drawing will reveal what's on their mind, while drawing another family lets them protect their privacy.

Activity

- Have students draw a vertical line down the center of a piece of paper. On one half, draw a positive way that their own or another family communicates physically and verbally; on the other half, a negative way. Students can use “cartoon balloons” to show what the people in the drawing are saying, “thought balloons” to show what the people are thinking, and/or captions that describe the picture.
- Discuss what makes family experiences happy or unhappy. How do family members show that they empathize with and enjoy each other? How do they show that they feel distant or alienated from each other?
- To encourage an atmosphere of trust and sharing, point out what students' drawings have in common. For example, point out shared colors, themes, chaos, stick figures, indoor or outdoor settings, situations.
- The following are examples of behaviors students might draw.

Communication: Positive... Negative... or Confusing

<i>Examples of</i>			
	POSITIVE COMMUNICATION	NEGATIVE COMMUNICATION	CONFUSING COMMUNICATION
PHYSICAL	Hugging; walking arm-in-arm; relaxing around a dinner table; a parent carrying a child on his or her shoulders; holding hands; good-night kiss; a parent supportively teaching a child a skill, such as how to hold a baseball bat, knit, sew, cook, play chess, or repair something.	Hitting, punching, kicking, turning away, a parent hiding a newspaper in front of his or her face when a child is trying to speak, slamming a door in a child's face, locking a child in a room, pushing, shoving.	Being beaten, then hugged and kissed; being hurt while being told "I love you."
VERBAL	Compliments, affectionate statements ("I love you"), supportive statements ("You can do it"), expressions of sympathy ("I'm sorry you had to experience that") or compassion ("I know just how you feel").	Put-downs, insults, sarcasm, shouting, hissing, threatening, mocking, screaming, scaring, name-calling ("You're worthless, stupid, will never amount to anything").	A parent's moodiness (being unsure whether it's your fault"; a parent being kind one moment, angry the next, a parent's overreactions to minor problems (e.g., blowing up when a child spills milk;; a parent threatening verbally while caressing or kissing you at the same time; a parent withholding affection then giving affection, with no explanation; a parent staying silent without stating what's wrong or permitting discussions.

6. Students will recognize how parents' communication styles affect their children. (C)

Teacher Note: This activity addresses emotional abuse. The two poems depict two parents who express their anger quite differently when their children misbehave. Have students describe each parent's communication styles and how they affect their children.

In the first poem, "Knocking on the Silence," the mother uses silence to punish her child. Her silence is a form of emotional abuse. She ignores the child's apologies, won't discuss the problem, and seems to overreact to minor infractions. She withholds forgiveness and affection. By maintaining silence over a prolonged period of time, she perpetuates a purgatory of isolation. The child is in suspense, having no idea how long the mother's silence will last. Finally the mother decides to end the silence. But by then, the child is frustrated, enraged, and alienated, and retaliates by refusing the mother's overture of reconciliation. Thus the mother's behavior not only distresses the child; it also teaches the child a dysfunctional way of approaching conflict.

In the second poem, "Booming Mad," the father shouts so loudly that his voice "booms" through the child's head. Yelling can be a form of emotional abuse. Like the mother in the first poem, the father uses isolation to punish: he sends the child to his or her room. However, the father does not allow the episode to become prolonged. He uses the "time out" as a cooling-off period, then initiates a calmer discussion, listens to the child's apology, and brings the episode to a timely resolution.

Activity

- Have students read and discuss the poems "Knocking on the Silence" and "Booming Mad." Have them describe what's happening in each poem, how each parent communicates anger, and the effect on the child.
- Ask students to describe their own parents' communication styles through prose or poetry. How do their parents react when they misbehave? Are their parents quick or slow to forgive? Do their parents like to talk things through? How do parents' moods or other factors affect how they react? How do students feel parents should react to a child's misbehavior? If the students have families of their own when they grow up, how will they want to raise their children?
- Acknowledge that no person, no parent, is perfect. Someone can be an excellent parent but still lose his or her temper on occasion. Nevertheless, violence is never acceptable, and abuse is never a child's fault.

KNOCKING ON THE SILENCE

by Betty Rothbart

When Mom is mad she gets silent.
She doesn't say a word.
I keep saying I'm sorry.
She pretends she hasn't heard.
All I've done is one dumb thing,
And she treats it like a sin.
I knock on the wall of her silence,
But she won't let me in.
Days and days and days go by
Before Mom gives me a grin.
She knocks down the wall of her silence,
But now I refuse to go in.

BOOMING MAD

by Betty Rothbart

You should hear my father holler!
His voice booms through my head.
"How could you? I'm furious!
Go to your room! Get into bed!"
I lay my head on the pillow.
I'm hot and achy with tears.
Dad comes in and holds my hand
And soothes away my fears.
In the darkening room I feel cozy.
He tells he has calmed down.
I say I'm sorry and will try to behave,
And a smile takes the place of his frown.

GRADE 5

ABUSE PREVENTION: SELF-AWARENESS

7. Students will distinguish among types of abuse and neglect—physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, and physical and educational neglect—as well as the abusive effect of witnessing domestic violence. (SA)

Teacher Note: Students often assume that “abuse” refers to “*physical* abuse.” They need to recognize that there are several types of abuse and neglect, and that witnessing domestic violence can also have an abusive effect. In each of these situations, a student always has the right to tell a trustworthy adult and seek help.

Activity

- Review the types of abuse and neglect. (See the Resources section for definitions of types of abuse and neglect.) Have students draw sketches that depict one or more. Have students discuss the abuse or neglect the drawings show, and how the drawings make them feel. Acknowledge that types of abuse and neglect frequently “overlap.” For example, sexual abuse is also a form of emotional abuse (not only abusing the child, but also burdening him or her with the “secret”).
- Discuss domestic violence: family fights in which one partner exerts control over the other through physical, verbal, emotional, or financial means. Discuss how painful it can be for children to witness such abuse of a parent, grandparent, or other family member(s).
- Have students brainstorm appropriate responses to abuse, neglect, or domestic violence situations. Have them plan and practice how they would inform a parent or other trustworthy adult if these situations arise.

8. Students will understand the importance of expressing needs and feelings. (SA)

Teacher Note: The scenarios in this activity reinforce students’ awareness that they may need to take action and speak up in order to cope with abuse, neglect, or domestic violence.

In the last scenario on domestic violence, students need to understand that they have the right to speak to someone, but this may not result in the parents changing. In this scenario, it has to be Mom’s decision to get help or to leave. Christopher can’t make his parents’ decisions. But he does need to cope with his feelings of distress and helplessness.

Activity

- Sit with students in a circle and play the game, “Finish the Story.” Use the following scenarios (or create your own) to begin a story. Each story should include an abusive situation, and lead to the abused individual expressing feelings to a trustworthy adult.
- Have each student contribute one sentence to the story until you feel a satisfactory conclusion has been reached. Occasionally you may need to refocus the students by inserting dialogue as needed during the story development.
- If the class is large, students can write the endings individually and then share, or can develop them in small groups.

- After each story, elicit how the students believe that expressing feelings affected the outcome for the abused person. Discuss how the outcome of the story might have been different if feelings had not been expressed.

Scenarios:

- *Johnny's mother often hit him with a belt. She hit him in places that were covered by his clothes, so his bruises did not show. Sometimes she hit him so hard that it hurt him to sit in a chair. One day, Johnny's favorite teacher noticed that he was very sad, and asked why. Johnny decided to tell his teacher what was happening to him at home. He said to his teacher...*
- *Marika's uncle was always yelling at her. He put her down and called her bad names like "stupid" whenever she stayed at his house. He did this in front of her cousins and friends. One day, her mother noticed she was very upset, and asked why. Marika decided to tell her mother what was happening to her. She said to her mother...*
- *Anna's parents often made her stay home from school in order to watch the youngest children, clean the house, and make dinner. Anna wanted to go to school. She was upset about missing so many days. She knew she could do well in school if her attendance was better. One day, she decided to tell the school guidance counselor what was happening. She said to the guidance counselor...*
- *Christopher's dad constantly insulted his mom: "You never do anything right. You don't get this house clean enough. You're fat and lazy. Our two-year-old could cook better than you. You don't try hard enough to please me." One day Dad yelled so loud, Mom had to put her hands over her ears. Dad smacked her hands away. Mom started to weep. Christopher tried to comfort her. He patted her shoulder, kissed her cheek, and brought her a glass of water. Nothing seemed to help. He felt like his insides were all tied up in knots. When Christopher's favorite aunt came for a visit, he decided to tell her what was going on. He said...*

9. Students will distinguish between adult behaviors they can and cannot influence. (SA)

Teacher Note: In some dysfunctional families, children react to their parents' hostile relationship by assuming the burden for running an orderly home or by "running interference" between the parents. Children may become exhausted and overwhelmed. They may lose sight of which roles for children are considered normal and reasonable, and which are excessive. When there is domestic violence, such as a man beating his wife, children may feel responsible for appeasing his anger and keeping him in a good mood so he won't hurt their mother, as shown in the following poem, "Shush."

This activity can illuminate a child's "role" in the family. Acknowledge the importance of contributing to the household work and family functioning, but also have children address which responsibilities properly belong to adults, and which are appropriate for children.

Activity

- Ask the class to generate a list of things for which they are responsible. For example, doing homework, taking a brother or sister to school, babysitting, preparing dinner, carrying money for purchasing groceries, keeping siblings quiet so parents can sleep, maintaining peace between parents.
- Have students distinguish between responsibilities that are appropriate for their age (e.g., household chores) and those that are the responsibilities of adults (e.g., having to defend, protect, or comfort an abused parent or relative).
- Have the students read and discuss the poem "Shush." Make sure they understand that although it is certainly appropriate for children to be considerate of someone who is sleeping, adults are responsible for their own behavior. No child can "make" an adult yell, curse, or hit. Adults are in charge of their own behavior. Part of being a responsible, mature adult is knowing how to control one's impulses to yell, curse, and hit, choosing instead to cope with difficulties in a calm and rational way.

SHUSH!

by John Fitzgerald

My mother put her finger to her lips, *Shush!*

HE'S asleep!

I was afraid of the power I had. *Shush!*

I could control this adult. *Shush!*

I could make him so angry that he would yell. *Shush!*

So angry that he would curse. *Shush!*

So angry that he would hit. *Shush!*

I was five when I learned to put my finger to my mouth, *Shush!*

HE'S asleep!

GRADE 6

ABUSE PREVENTION: PERSONAL SAFETY

1. Students will describe how students sometimes repeat abusive behaviors of which they have been victims themselves. (PS)

Teacher Note: Some abused children become abusers themselves during childhood, adolescence, or adulthood. They use abuse as a means of exerting power and control, of acting out their own pain, or of expressing anger or frustration because they haven't learned more constructive alternatives.

Dating often marks a young person's first experience with behaving like or coping with an abuser—acting possessive, or verbally or physically controlling someone. Although this is more common with older students, it's beneficial to have sixth graders discuss their assumptions and expectations about dating relationships and gender roles. With insight, support, and practice of positive alternatives, students can learn to stop the cycle of abuse and domestic violence.

Activity

- Discuss the topic of “influence.” Who influences us? What does it mean to be influenced? How do parents, teachers, and other significant adults' behaviors serve as models for children?
- Establish the analogy of language:
 - Children grow up speaking the language used by the people around them. English is most Americans' “native language,” but some people speak other languages in their homes.
 - Children learn not only a language of words, but also a language of *behaviors*. They are likely to pass these behaviors on to their own children. Children raised by gentle, calm parents are likely to emulate their example. Those whose parents yell, are sarcastic, and put kids down are more likely to treat their own children that way.
- Have students make a list of positive and negative ways they have been influenced by the adults in their lives. Ask what they would do the same or differently if they become parents themselves someday.
- Tell students that studies show that most child abusers were abused themselves when they were growing up. Point out that awareness of an “abusive legacy” is an important step in (a) helping one cope with and recover from abuse, (b) making sure that one does not behave abusively with one's peers or siblings, (c) preventing “dating abuse,” and (d) preventing abuse toward one's own children someday. People need to make a concrete decision not to perpetuate the cycle of abuse—not to treat others hurtfully even if they were treated hurtfully themselves.

2. Students will identify constructive ways to react to stressful family situations. (PS)

Teacher Note: Students need to identify a repertoire of “coping mechanisms” they can use when life gets rough. For example, some children become so attuned to their parents’ moods that they develop a constructive sense of timing. They realize that when parents are angry or drunk they should stay out of their way; when parents are in a good mood and sober, they are “safe.” Of course, some adults are so volatile that children cannot possibly “read” their moods accurately.

Discuss *observing* the people in one’s family, developing a *repertoire* of coping mechanisms, and thinking in advance of whom to *tell and ask for help* when necessary.

Activity

- Have students tell “round-table stories.” One student starts a story and leaves a character in a stressful situation, then other students brainstorm how the character can respond to the problem. This activity can be done as a whole class or in small groups.

Example Scenario:

When Suzie comes home from school, she hears Mom and Dad arguing. They are shouting at each other in loud voices and don’t hear Suzie come in. Dad leaves and slams the door. What does Suzie do or say?

- Ask the students, “How does Suzie feel? How can she deal with her feelings?” Ideas may include:
 - Suzie can talk with her mother right away.
 - She can wait for her mother to calm down and speak with her later.
 - She can talk with another family member.
 - She can call a friend or relative on the phone.
 - She can write in a diary.
 - She can draw a picture.
 - She can take a walk, play ball, or get some other exercise.
- Ask: “How does Suzie choose among these ideas?” Ideas may include:
 - She can think about past experiences. For example, some parents need calming down time, and some don’t. Some parents take out their anger on their children, and kids are wise to stay out of the way. Others are careful not to let their angry feelings spill over onto their kids.
 - She can evaluate the level of danger in the situation. If verbal abuse escalates into physical abuse, she may need to ask a neighbor or other trustworthy adult for help. She can also call the New York City Youthline for guidance (1-800-246-4646).
 - She can think about people who help her feel better when she’s upset, such as grand-parents, neighbors, or a friend who can make her laugh even when she’s feeling down.
 - She can consider how drawing or writing make her feel. Sometimes it’s a relief to get feelings “out” and onto paper.
 - She can think about how a change of scenery may make her feel. Getting out of the house may give her a “breather”—i.e., let her take some deep breaths and calm down.

3. Students will distinguish among discipline, punishment, and child abuse. (PS)

Teacher Note: Parental guidance involves teaching children how to make good decisions, and helping children grasp the concept that decisions have consequences. Ideally, parents convey this concept in an effective, non-abusive way. For example, if a child spray-paints graffiti on a wall, a constructive way to discipline the child is to have him or her clean or paint over the wall. A reasonable punishment may be to “ground” the child for a week. An abusive response would be to physically harm the child. This activity may be especially meaningful for students who are being abused. Hearing other students describe nonabusive discipline may raise the abused students’ awareness that abusive child rearing is not the norm, and that they should seek help. If a student discloses abuse, follow the policies on mandated reporting.

Activity

- Have students give examples of reasons parents may need to discipline their children.
- Ask: “What are the goals of discipline?” (Answer: Teaching children to know right from wrong, and how to behave in society.) “Which methods of discipline do the students believe are appropriate? Which are inappropriate or excessive?”
- Divide students into small groups. Give them a sheet of paper and crayons or markers. Have them draw a line down the middle of the paper. On one side, have them draw a picture of how they are disciplined at home; on the other side, how it makes them feel. Have students discuss the drawings. If time permits, give them a second piece of paper. On one side, have them draw how they would prefer to be disciplined, on the other side, how it would make them feel.
- Discuss the rationale for child protective services. Refer to newspaper articles regarding specific child abuse cases.
- On the chalkboard or newsprint, make two columns indicating Discipline and Child Abuse. Elicit examples of each. Ask how they are different: ***Reasonable discipline teaches a child; abuse harms a child.*** Make sure to discuss how students can obtain assistance.
- *Emphasize* that children are not responsible for determining whether an experience “qualifies” as abuse. If they think an adult’s actions are out of line, they should tell a trustworthy adult and ask for help.

4. Students will identify no-win situations and how to handle them. (PS)

Teacher Note: Students need to learn how to assess stressful situations. “No-win” situations present “no way out,” times when it may be better to give in than to fight.

The “Fish Bowl Technique” enables you to create a small group experience within a whole-class context. All students have an opportunity to get involved, have their say, hear how others perceive a situation, and decide on a mutually acceptable solution in an orderly, democratic fashion.

The Fish Bowl is done as follows:

1. Ask for six volunteers to sit in a circle in the center of the classroom.
2. Place a seventh chair within the circle.
3. Have the rest of the students stand or sit around the outside of the circle and chair.
4. Have the six volunteers discuss the problem and say whatever they want to say, while the rest of the class listens.
5. A student on the outside who wishes to say something must sit in the empty chair and wait to be recognized by one of the others in the Fish Bowl. Once recognized, this student can briefly state whatever he or she wants to add, clarify, or question, then must vacate the chair for someone else.*

Activity

- Give students the following scenarios as examples of no-win situations:
 1. *It's report card day, but the teacher can't find yours. You go home without a report card, and no letter of explanation. Your father does not believe your story. He thinks you hid the report card because you got bad grades.*
 2. *One evening you need to study a lot in order to pass a test the following morning. Your parents won't let you stay home and study. They tell you that you must go out with them. They will not take no for an answer, and the teacher will not postpone the test.*
- Use the “Fish Bowl Technique” to discuss how to handle the situations.
 - Point out negative thoughts that can lead to rash actions (negative self-talk). For example: “My parents are unfair and I'm going to argue with them until I get my way.” In an abusive family, the student may indeed win the right to stay home and study, but may also end up nursing a black eye.
 - Point out *positive* thoughts that can help avoid abuse (positive self-talk). For example: “This is a situation when I just can't win. If I don't study I will fail the test, but if I don't go with my parents, they'll be furious. I need to come up with some ideas that might work out.”
- Have students suggest ideas. For example, in the latter situation:
 - The student can take the homework along and study in the car.
 - The student can offer to go out with parents a different night, or request that they return home early.
 - The student can improve study habits, keeping up with the material instead of relying on last-minute studying.
 - Even if the student fails this test, it may be possible to boost the overall grade with good grades on subsequent tests.
 - The student can ask a parent to write a note to the teacher explaining the situation (e.g., explaining that the student needed to visit a sick grandparent and could not study).

* The description of the “Fish Bowl Technique” reprinted from the *Family Living Including Sex Education (FLISE)* curriculum, © New York City Department of Education.

GRADE 6

ABUSE PREVENTION: COMMUNICATION

5. Students will discuss appropriate behaviors in social activities and how these change as one matures. (C)

Teacher Note: As children grow, they utilize increasingly complex means of decision making and communication. Babies cry, toddlers have tantrums, and young children act out when they're upset. But older children can and should express their feelings and address problems more constructively. This activity can help students reflect on the skills they have developed, and the skills they need to improve.

Activity

- Give students magazines and have them cut out pictures of children at different ages. Arrange the pictures in an increasing progression according to age. Ask students to describe the behaviors they observe in each age group. Discuss how behaviors change over the years.

For example, one picture might show a young child crying because ice cream fell out of the cone onto the floor. The child *reacts* with tears because he or she may not know any other way to *act* to remedy the situation. Sixth graders can identify other ways to deal with the situation. For example, they might explain the situation to the sales clerk and request another scoop of ice cream. They could buy another cone. They could share a friend's ice cream. They could shrug it off as a learning experience (next time they'll be careful of the bumps in the sidewalk when eating ice cream while on their in-line skates).

- Explain that when the students have a problem, they can remember this example. Crying can be a valid response but there may also be other *options for action*. They can think, "I'm not a little kid any more. I can come up with some ideas, get some help, and try to make things better."
- Emphasize that getting help should be a universal option for people of all ages. ***Asking for help doesn't mean one isn't capable of helping oneself; rather, it is one way to help oneself.***

6. Students will understand how body language, tone of voice, and eye contact can reinforce or conflict with one's words. (C)

Teacher Note: To communicate most effectively, one's verbal and nonverbal messages should convey the same thing. Often, however, that is not the case. Words may say one thing ("Go away"), behavior something else (a smile). Conflicted cues reflect conflicted feelings. They may confuse, dilute, or what one is saying. This activity explores the uses and misuses of body language: gestures, facial expressions, physical stance, and other nonverbal means of communication. Temporarily keeping students from speaking helps them focus on wordless ways to communicate information and feelings.

Activity

- Have two students at a time role-play people having a conflict. Vary the role-plays by varying the instructions for one or both of the students in the role-play:

Role-play 1: Speaking Wordlessly

Instructions: Convey facts and feelings through body language alone.

Role-play 2: Conflicting Subtext

Instructions: Say one thing verbally and the opposite non-verbally. (Explain that “subtext” is an underlying meaning that differs from the explicitly stated one. For example, a person might say “I’m pleased to meet you” in such an icy tone that the subtext is, “I’m *not* pleased to meet you.”)

Role-play 3: The Impact of Eye Contact

Instructions: Communicate with and without making eye contact; explore how this affects the communication.

At the end of each role-play, ask the class what they think was happening in the scene, and how they knew. What were the cues? What did they notice? Did everyone in the class get the same messages from the non-verbal communication? What was especially effective? How could body language be used more effectively?

7. Students will practice handling a stressful conversation with an adult. (C)

Teacher Note: Students often feel intimidated by adults, and inclined to panic, freeze, or flee when they get into trouble. This activity gives students an opportunity to practice thinking through a difficult situation, making a plan, and carrying it through. They should conclude that taking responsibility for one’s actions is ultimately more rewarding than passively waiting to see if they get “caught.”

Activity

- Present the following scenario to the class:

You and your friends are playing baseball in the street. You accidentally hit the ball into a parked car, breaking the window. The owner sees the incident. He knows who you are. He tells you that he expects you to pay the \$150 needed to fix the window. He also says he will call your parents to tell them what happened unless you tell them.

- Ask, “Would you choose to have the man tell your parents, or to tell them yourself? Why?”
- Select three volunteers to role-play the student and the parents or guardians. Have the student explain what happened, what he or she expects them to do, and what he or she is offering to do. Have students depict the parents’ or guardians’ response and discussion.
- If time permits, vary the role-play to show the different ways parents might react. For example, parents may be:
 - sympathetic and understanding
 - enraged and punitive
 - supportive, offering to pay or to help the child find a way to earn the money
 - distant, telling the child it’s entirely up to him or her to pay.
- Have students discuss the following idea:

Children cannot change who their parents are or how their parents choose to act. Children can only control their own behavior and seek out the most constructive approach possible.

GRADE 6

ABUSE PREVENTION: SELF-AWARENESS

8. Students will understand how emotional needs change as one develops and matures. (SA)

Teacher Note: Sixth graders are making the transition from childhood to adolescence. This activity gives them an opportunity to step back and reflect on where they were, where they are, and where they're going. It can be helpful for them to think of adolescence as a bridge. On the journey toward adulthood, some childhood traits are sustained, others outgrown. Increased independence brings more responsibility. Privileges are more substantial but risks are greater, too. Growing up isn't one smooth step after another; sometimes young people feel eager to grow up, sometimes they long to regress. For young people who have been abused, growing up may present issues different from those faced by children who have been protected and nurtured.

Activity

- As a whole class or as individual projects, have students make a "Growing Up Time Chart" describing how children look, feel, and learn as babies, toddlers, kindergartners, and third, fourth, and sixth graders. Students can use general observations or describe specific memories. Do they have a favorite age? Next, have students look ahead. In the next few years, what further physical, emotional, and intellectual changes and growth do they foresee?

9. Students will identify their role in solving family problems. (SA)

Teacher Note: Students must distinguish between appropriate roles (participating in family discussions and decision making) versus inappropriate roles (feeling—or being asked to be—responsible for solving adult problems). Emphasize that children always have the right to seek help in understanding and coping with family life.

Have students complete the Emergency Plan Card (see Resources section, page 17), taking it home so parents can help them complete it. Keep a copy, then return the Card to students, so that they can keep it in their notebooks or bookbag or fold it and keep it in a wallet or pocket. They may also want to keep a copy in a safe place such as their rooms at home.

Activity

- Ask students to identify common problems in families, e.g., stress associated with illness, caring for a new baby, financial strain, or disagreements about TV, food, music, or leisure activities. Discuss ways students can help, as well as problems they cannot be expected to solve. For example, marital problems or domestic violence are neither children's fault nor in their power to solve, though children have the right to seek a trustworthy adult to talk to and ask for help. When students fear that someone is in danger, they may need to call for emergency help, perhaps from a neighbor, relative, or adult friend. Have students complete the Emergency Plan Card. (See Resources section, page 17.)
- In some families suffering from domestic violence, an abused parent (most often the mother) establishes a code word to convey to her children that she wants them to call the police. Have students identify a code word should their own family need to establish one.
- Also discuss other possibilities for seeking help: Calling a local agency, 911, or a hotline, such as the New York City Youthline at 1-800-246-4646.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ABUSE PREVENTION: PERSONAL SAFETY

1. Students will identify “safe havens” within the family, school, and community. (PS)

Teacher Note: Students need to identify family, neighborhood, school, and community-based organizations they can turn to for help if needed. Have students complete the Emergency Plan Card (see Resources section, page 17). Keep a copy, then give it back to students to keep in their notebooks or bookbags, or fold and keep in a wallet or pocket. They may also want to keep a copy in a safe place such as their rooms at home.

Activity

- Have students brainstorm about people in their lives they can turn to for help. For example: parents, siblings, godparents, relatives, neighbors, teachers, clergy, friends.
- Distribute paper and have each student write a “Personal Resources” list, listing at least three people who are “safe havens” in their lives. Ask if some students would like to volunteer examples of people they listed.
- Say, “Some people have lots of ‘personal resources.’ Some feel that they have few or none. However, help is available to everyone, regardless of whom they know. In this school and community there are people who can help. We are going to develop a master list of school/community resources.”
- Divide the class into small groups for the following assignments:
 - Group 1:* Identify the resources in this school. Speak to a guidance counselor, a SAPIS (Substance Abuse Prevention Intervention Specialist), an assistant principal, a dean, and/or the school librarian.
 - Group 2:* Using the Yellow Pages, make a list of local organizations that help students who have been abused, experienced dating violence, or witnessed domestic violence. Call the organizations for a brief description of what they do.
 - Group 3:* Go to the library, call the library telephone reference number, or use the Internet to make a list of national child abuse prevention organizations.
- Have each group report back to the class, then collaborate with other groups to create a master list for distribution to the students.
- Have students complete the Emergency Plan Card (see Resources section, page 17).

2. Students will discuss how media reports or depictions of violence affect one’s sense of personal safety. (PS)

Teacher Note: Reading about violence in our society can be disturbing. But such reports can alert students to what can go wrong. Encourage students to think ahead: What would they do in dangerous situations?

Activity

- Distribute newspapers and magazines to students. Divide students into small groups. Charge each group with clipping articles and ads that depict violence. Reconvene the whole class and have each small group present the examples they found. Have the students discuss how these articles and ads affect their sense of personal safety.
- Have them brainstorm ways to cope with danger and find help. Have them discuss verbal and nonverbal ways to respond to specific scenarios. For example:

Scenario: A stranger comes up to you and says that she is a TV show producer and will give you an audition if you will come with her now to her studio.

Verbal response: Say “NO THANKS” in a loud voice. Tell a parent or other trustworthy adult.

Nonverbal response: Run away.

What to keep in mind: Abusers try to think up enticing ways to get children to cooperate with them. Use your common sense. Genuine TV producers audition children after obtaining their parents’ permission. They do not ask children to audition secretly.

3. Students will discuss alternatives to confrontations with adults and each other. (PS)

Teacher Note: Students can often “de-escalate” confrontations by “stepping away.” This breaks the adversaries’ momentum and gives everyone an opportunity to calm down and restore a sense of perspective.

To maximize the benefits of “stepping away,” students should think in advance about constructive ways to cope with stress. In the list of possible responses below, please note that four are marked with an asterisk (*). These are common yet ill-advised responses to stress: Fighting can harm oneself and others; banging on a wall can break one’s hand; smoking is unhealthy and illegal for minors; and stress-related eating may lead to obesity or other eating disorders. Allow students to brainstorm freely, but point out that any response that is destructive to oneself or others is not constructive.

Activity

- Ask: “What *physical* cues indicate that you are afraid or stressed?” (For example, sweaty palms, tight chest, butterflies in stomach, rapid heartbeat.)
- Ask: “What kinds of situations trigger these feelings?” (Confrontations, being unprepared for a test or report, walking in a dangerous neighborhood, facing a parent or guardian’s anger, etc.)
- On the chalkboard, brainstorm a list of “What We Can Do to Reduce Feelings of Stress.” Allow students to name both positive and negative reactions to stress. Discuss the consequences of each and have them rank the options. Examples of possible student responses are listed below. [*An asterisk (*) indicates a negative reaction to stress.*]

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| — have a fight* | — play ball | — read |
| — bang on a wall* | — dance | — draw |
| — have a smoke* | — clean your room | — play or listen to music |
| — eat* | — take a walk | — talk to a friend |
| — write in your diary | — knit or sew | — jog |

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ABUSE PREVENTION: COMMUNICATION

4. Students will identify the importance of support resources that strengthen relationships at home, at school, and in the community. (C)

Teacher Note: Paradoxically, one indication of maturity and independence is whether a person has developed good judgment about whether, when, and how to seek help from others. *It can be a sign of strength, not weakness, to say, "I can't handle this alone."*

This activity helps students to recognize when a need for help exists, and to identify appropriate resources.

Activity

- Have students plan and go on a field trip to a local counseling, community mental health, rape crisis, or other center where they could go for help. Alternatively, students can invite counselors or psychotherapists to visit the school and speak to the class. Preview guest speakers and any materials they will be distributing. Have students develop questions in advance, take notes when questions are asked, and discuss the answers. Questions may include:
 - What services does your agency provide?
 - How do people contact you? What do they say when they ask for help?
 - Are services confidential? Private? Individual, group, and/or family?
 - How much do services cost?
 - How would someone get help with such situations as...? (Have students give examples of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse; physical and educational neglect; dating violence; and domestic violence.)
 - What are the staff's qualifications?
 - Which staff members are available?
- Have students pair up and role-play requesting help for situations involving physical, sexual, and emotional abuse; physical and educational neglect; dating violence; and domestic violence. Follow role-plays with whole-class discussion.

5. Students will investigate “active listening” as an effective communication technique. (C)

Teacher Note: Students can feel more in control and self-confident when they have learned a variety of communication techniques. “Active listening” helps them to improve their relationships with others, and to recognize when others are and are not responding appropriately.

Activity

- Ask two volunteers to do a role-play in front of the class. Instruct A to tell B about something that made A angry. Instruct B to demonstrate behaviors that show he or she is not listening. For example, B can get distracted, interrupt A to ask about irrelevant details (“How do you like this shirt?”), fidget with papers, fail to maintain eye contact, or dismiss A’s feelings (“Just don’t let it bother you.”). When A appears frustrated, stop the role-play and ask the class how they would feel if they were A. Their responses may include: *angry, betrayed, disrespected, frustrated, upset.*
- Have students list behaviors that show that someone is or is *not* listening well. Have them distinguish between verbal and nonverbal behaviors. The list may include:

A poor listener:	A good listener:
— <i>appears distracted.</i>	— <i>pays close attention.</i>
— <i>doesn’t look at you.</i>	— <i>maintains eye contact.</i>
— <i>doesn’t stop what he or she is doing.</i>	— <i>doesn’t interrupt.</i>
— <i>interrupts.</i>	— <i>asks clarifying questions.</i>
— <i>changes the subject.</i>	— <i>observes what you’re feeling.</i>
— <i>offers solutions too quickly.</i>	— <i>summarizes what you’re saying.</i>
- Tell students that “good listener” behaviors in the right hand column are known as “Active Listening.” Discuss how active listening can enhance relationships and promote mutual understanding.
- Have two other volunteers repeat the role-play, except this time Student B demonstrates good listening skills.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ABUSE PREVENTION: SELF-AWARENESS

6. Students will develop an awareness of their increasing independence, as well as of those situations with which they continue to need adult help and guidance. (SA)

Teacher Note: Adolescents sometimes get carried away with the bravado of puberty, while at other times realizing that they have a long way to go before they are truly mature. A journal can give them a safe place to explore their feelings, vent frustrations, and admit uncertainties.

Activity

- Have the class brainstorm new types of responsibilities that some students their age have. For example, babysitting, caring for younger siblings, taking more demanding classes in school. Ask them to brainstorm when a young person may need adult help, guidance, and support. For example, a babysitter might have to cope with an attempted robbery. Younger siblings might repeatedly give the adolescent a hard time and refuse to listen. A harder class may require a student to improve study habits or learn new research skills.
- Ask them why some adolescents may be reluctant to ask for help. For example, they may want to handle situations themselves, not appear to be a “baby,” or not want to risk an adult’s condescension or ridicule. Emphasize that it is a sign of maturity to ask for help—not a sign of immaturity. Have students discuss times they or someone else needed help, and brainstorm how to get help. Discuss how keeping a journal can help them think through difficult situations and express their feelings.
- Note that students sometimes need help with changing peer relationships. Discuss dating violence. If one person coerces, threatens, physically hurts, or otherwise tries to control his or her partner, the abused partner may need help in identifying what’s wrong, in deciding what to do, and in realizing that no one deserves or must tolerate such treatment.

7. Students will recognize instances of sexual stereotyping, sexual bias, and sexual discrimination in advertising, TV, movies, and lyrics. (SA)

Teacher Note: This activity can help students recognize the influence of society’s gender-based expectations and assess how these expectations affect their own self-image and decision making.

Activity

- Provide magazines and newspapers. Divide the class into two teams. Ask each team to find examples of sexual stereotyping, bias, and discrimination in newspaper and magazine ads. Have each team presents its findings to the large group. Infuse a discussion of feelings associated with the examples they found. Discuss how sexual bias, discrimination, and stereotyping can lead to abusive behaviors in some people.

8. Students will identify feelings that may result from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, dating violence, or witnessing domestic violence. (SA)

Teacher Note: Make sure the role-plays in this activity reflect common reactions: shame, guilt, depression, anxiety, distress about betraying the family or others.

Activity

- Discuss tactics that abusers often use to exploit victims' feelings and to *exert control* (see below). Have students role-play the following (or their own) scenarios, in which one student confides in the other, then both discuss what to do. After each role-play, have the class discuss the characters' feelings and options.

TACTICS ABUSERS MAY USE

Claiming complicity: An abuser says, "This is our secret" or "You know you get pleasure from what we do together."

Manipulation: An abuser says, "You made me do this because you're so attractive" (or out-of-line, or worthless)—making the victim seem responsible for the abuse.

Distortion: An abuser will say, "I'm doing this because I love you"—confusing and betraying the victim.

Threatening: An abuser will say, "You can't tell anyone for they (legal authorities such as police, social workers) would then hurt our family"—again, blaming the victim.

SAMPLE ROLE-PLAY SCENARIOS

Physical abuse: A student tells a friend that after bringing home a failing grade on a test, he or she was beaten and injured by parents.

Sexual abuse: A student tells her friend that her stepfather has been visiting her room at night, touching her breasts, and ordering her not to tell anyone.

Emotional abuse: A student tells a friend that for months he or she has been locked in a room from after school until leaving for school the next morning, not even allowed to have dinner with the rest of the family.

Physical neglect: A student tells a friend that his or her parent refuses to provide medical care the student needs.

Educational neglect: A student tells a friend that parents insist that he or she frequently stay home from school to take care of younger siblings and to do cooking and housework.

Dating violence: A student tells a friend that her boyfriend won't allow her to see any of her friends any more, and insists that she check with him about anything she wants to do.

Domestic violence: A student tells a friend that her father often screams at and strikes her mother.

9. Students will demonstrate an awareness of family and cultural differences regarding appropriate and excessive or inappropriate punishment. (SA)

Teacher Note: While concepts of appropriate parental discipline vary among cultural groups, students need to be aware of the prevailing norms and laws of the United States. Emphasize that all young people have the right to say no or seek help with treatment that they feel causes them emotional or bodily harm.

Activity

- Have students divide into pairs, and discuss ways that parents discipline children. Which methods seem appropriate? Which seem excessive or inappropriate? Reconvene the group. Ask students to share their thoughts and experiences.

HIGH SCHOOL

ABUSE PREVENTION: PERSONAL SAFETY

1. Students will demonstrate ways to respond to abusive situations. (PS)

Teacher Note: Abusive behaviors, especially within families, are often complex. For example, a student may feel angry and betrayed by abuse, yet conflicted about getting help. A young person who is being sexually abused may feel guilty about seeking help if he or she experiences sexual pleasure or stimulation and may be especially vulnerable to being emotionally manipulated (e.g., blamed) by the abuser. This activity encourages students to take positive action and seek support.

Activity

- Have two students role-play a scene in which a young woman discloses her uncle’s seductive behavior. Make sure the actors include the following points:

Niece

- feels confused; wonders if she should “go along” with the behavior since she “likes” her uncle and doesn’t want to cause him harm.
- feels ashamed; has been keeping silent about her uncle’s behavior.
- feels afraid; wants to tell her family but is worried that they won’t believe her or will accuse her of “provoking” the uncle’s behavior.
- feels angry; wants to tell her uncle to stop his behavior.
- feels conflicted; she feels flattered and aroused by her uncle yet knows his behavior is wrong.

Niece’s Friend

- warns that “going along” may *increase* the risk of future abuse. She doesn’t have to tolerate her uncle’s inappropriate behavior just because he’s likable when he wants to be. He is exploiting her feelings.
- praises her for having the courage to talk about it; reminds her that the uncle (not she) should feel ashamed. Abuse is not the victim’s fault.
- reassures her that she has a right to speak out. If the family doesn’t believe her, she should tell another adult until someone does believe and help her.
- supports her; helps her practice telling her parents, and telling the uncle that she will not be alone with him or keep his “secret.”

- Before beginning the class discussion, have the actors “shake off” their roles by shaking their hands and legs. Make it clear that they were actors in the role-play, and are now returning to their own identities. Do not allow other students to call the actors by their characters’ names.
- Ask students to explain why a person may find it difficult to take steps to prevent abuse. Have students brainstorm strategies and resources that abused people can use to get the advice and support they need.
- If time permits, have students do a second role-play regarding dating violence: A girl confides that her boyfriend has been coercing, threatening, and hitting her. In discussion afterwards, have the class compare and contrast the issues in the two role-plays. For example, the niece knows that the uncle’s behavior is out of line; does the girlfriend understand that her boyfriend is out of line, too? Does she confuse love with possessiveness? Does she put up with his behavior because she is afraid of losing him if she speaks up?

2. Students will demonstrate how to use the decision-making model to make healthy decisions and increase personal safety. (PS)

Teacher Note: Abused individuals may feel too upset and vulnerable to “think straight” about what to do. The decision-making model offers students a neutral framework for considering their problems and options. Students may feel empowered—less trapped—when they name their problem and identify possible solutions. However, throughout this activity it is important to emphasize that no one should have to feel alone in approaching a major problem. Students should consider consulting relatives, friends, counselors, and other people they trust when making a decision about how to cope with abuse.

Activity

- Explain the steps of the decision-making model. (See next page.) Divide the class into small groups. Have each group address one of the following: physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; physical or educational neglect; dating or domestic violence. Charge each group with developing and presenting a role-play of a student who increases his or her personal safety through the use of the model. After each role-play, have the students discuss how the process was effectively utilized to defuse potentially abusive situations.

3. Students will identify trustworthy adults they can turn to for help and advice. (PS)

Teacher Note: Students can feel safer and more secure if they identify adults to whom they can turn for help in an emergency—or just for advice, a shoulder to cry on, someone to listen. While many students may cite family members, neighbors, or other close adults, others may not be able to identify any such adults. Such students should not, however, feel alone or without resources. Emphasize that there are school and community resources available. For the Emergency Plan Card referred to below, see the Resources section, page 17.

Activity

- Tell students that it is good to think in advance about trustworthy adults they can turn to for advice or help. Ask, “Whom do you trust? Why do you trust him or her?”
- Have students list the characteristics of a *trustworthy adult*. For example:
 - You expect the adult to do the right thing.
 - The adult typically gives you (or others) good, thoughtful advice.
 - The adult is dependable; you can count on this person.
 - The adult likes you.
 - The adult lets you feel what you feel.
 - The adult lets you say what you want to say.
- Point out that an adult doesn’t have to be “perfect” in order to be a trustworthy person to go to when you need help. Even if an adult has disappointed you (for example, by cancelling a plan) he or she might still come through for you in an emergency.
- Ask students to brainstorm other resources. Students may list: youth hotlines, school counselor, teacher, community center workers, clergy, a friend’s parent, etc.
- Have students complete the Emergency Plan Card (see Resources section, page 17). Keep a copy, then give it back to students to keep in their notebooks or bookbags, or fold and keep in a wallet or pocket. They may also want to keep a copy in a safe place such as their rooms at home.

Decision-Making Model

- Step 1. Identify the problem.
- Step 2. Identify important facts and your feelings about the situation.
- Step 3. Brainstorm all possible solutions.
- Step 4. Examine possible consequences, both positive and negative.
- Step 5. Consider short-term and long-term outcomes.
- Step 6. Plan action (identify resources and help).
- Step 7. Select the best choice.
- Step 8. Evaluate.

HIGH SCHOOL

ABUSE PREVENTION: COMMUNICATION

4. Students will discuss factors that deter victims of abuse from obtaining assistance. (C)

Teacher Note: Abused young people are often reluctant to discuss the abuse with anyone, particularly if the abuser is a family member or a boyfriend or girlfriend. Being aware of this may assist students in recognizing the signs and helping friends or siblings who may be experiencing abuse.

Activity

- Show or describe scenes of a victim and a perpetrator. Ask why some victims do not say or do anything about their problem. Class discussion should elicit that:
 - The victim may feel guilty, ashamed, confused, or reluctant to hurt the perpetrator.
 - The victim may want to tolerate the behavior in order to keep an abusive boyfriend or girlfriend.
 - The victim may fear that people won't believe her or him.
- Emphasize that abusers often count on victims to feel so guilty or ashamed that they'll stay silent, thereby allowing the abuser to get away with it. Perpetrators, not victims, are to blame.
- Have students write and/or role-play scenes in which a victim reports abuse to a friend, who supports the victim in confronting the abuser. Role-plays should cover different types of abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional abuse; physical and educational neglect; dating violence; and domestic violence.

5. Students will contrast speaking alone with speaking as part of a group. (C)

Teacher Note: Students may feel overwhelmed at the thought of speaking up for themselves. It may not occur to them to “marshal their forces” and bring others to speak with them. This activity explores the concept that “in unity there is strength.”

Activity

- Ask students to develop a list of unsafe conditions that they might have to deal with at school. Ask how they would communicate their feelings to their teacher, counselor, dean, assistant principal, or principal. Have them decide what they would say and predict how effective they would expect to be in communicating.
- Have two students do a role-play. Have one play a student who is using the list, and the other a teacher or administrator.
- In another role-play, have a group of students discuss their shared problems, plan how they will communicate their feelings to the teacher or administrator, and then carry out their plan.
- Have the class compare the two role-plays. In which situation do the participants feel more empowered and supported? What have they learned about communication from this experience?

- How does the concept of “in unity there is strength” apply in coping with abusive relationships? Have students write, role-play, and discuss scenarios in which an abused person asks others for support in reporting abuse or confronting an abuser.

6. Students will practice asking for help in coping with parental neglect or domestic violence. (C)

Teacher Note: Many students do not realize that parental neglect is a form of abuse. Make sure they understand what parental neglect is. For example: neglecting to register a student for school and ensure that he or she has the means to get there, or neglecting to obtain necessary food, clothing, shelter, or medical care for a child. While children of every age have the right to report neglect and ask for help, high school students may be old enough to take more concrete steps to cope with parental neglect.

Activity

- Ask students to define “child abuse.” They are most likely to cite physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Tell them that “educational and physical neglect” are also forms of child abuse. Cite the following examples:

Educational neglect: Parents fail to register a student in a new school after they’ve moved, or the parent keeps the student home cooking, babysitting, or running errands instead of sending him or her to school.

Physical neglect: School personnel have notified parents that their child needs glasses, but the parents neither take the child for an eye exam nor buy corrective lenses.

- Divide the class into two groups and have them brainstorm what the students in these families can do. For example, they can call a resource hotline for advice (the toll-free phone number for the New York City Youthline is 1-800-246-4646). They can ask other relatives or friends for help. They can contact the Board of Education for advice about school enrollment and attendance. They can contact a school-based or public clinic or hospital about medical aid/eye care programs for which they might be eligible.

HIGH SCHOOL

ABUSE PREVENTION: SELF-AWARENESS

7. Students will discuss personal factors that may deter victims of abusive behaviors from obtaining assistance. (SA)

Teacher Note: Many abuse victims are reluctant to get help because they:

- feel guilt, shame, and embarrassment;
- are reluctant to confront a family member or get him or her in trouble with the law; or
- fear losing or hurting a boyfriend or girlfriend.

Students need to identify these obstacles to action, and explore how young people can cultivate the self-esteem and self-confidence that will enable them to seek the help they need.

Activity

- Have students sit in a circle and discuss times when they or someone they knew of were “victims” and needed to decide whether and how to obtain assistance. Discuss why some people obtain assistance and others do not. Students are likely to share such reasons as guilt, shame, “liking” the perpetrator and not wanting to hurt him or her, and fear of not being believed. Discuss the value of keeping a journal to express feelings and to document instances of abuse.
- Have students role-play giving encouragement and advice to someone who is reluctant to seek help.

8. Students will discuss the negative impact of abusive behaviors on an individual’s sense of self-esteem and self-worth. (SA)

Teacher Note: This activity enables students to address types of abuse from the “safe distance” of fiction. Paradoxically, the distance may enable them to make connections with experiences in their own lives.

Activity

- Write on the chalkboard: *physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical neglect, educational neglect*. Elicit from the class examples of abuse or neglect behaviors for each category from recent TV shows, movies, or books. Discuss the factors and events that led to each behavior and how each participant’s point of view was different.

9. Students will discuss dating violence, and identify abusers' control tactics and ways that an abused person can cope. (SA)

Teacher Note: Through this activity students can identify patterns of control common to dating violence, also known as intimate violence. Explain that dating violence is similar to domestic violence: a relationship in which one partner exerts control over the other through such tactics as verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, financial, or other abuse. The story “In the Beginning” traces the development of a dating violence situation. Vicky, the protagonist, is initially attracted by Jason’s smile, attentiveness, compliments, gifts, and flattery. Before long, however, she falls under his control.

Activity

- Distribute the story, “In the Beginning.” After students read it *and before there is any class discussion*, have them write down what they think happens next, and their reactions to the story. Then divide students into groups. Give each group a question to discuss:
 - What does Vicky find attractive about Jason?
 - How is Vicky’s relationship with her friends and family affected by her relationship with Jason?
 - What methods does Jason use to gain control?
 - What changes does Vicky go through?
 - Why doesn’t Vicky ask for help from her family and friends?
 - Did Vicky’s mother and her friends Carolyn and Laura do all they could to help her? Did they understand what was happening to her? Should they have acted differently?
- Reconvene the whole class. Have each group report its discussion and invite others to comment. Ask students whether they know of relationships like this, and how people should handle them. Point out that although most dating violence resembles Vicky and Jason’s relationship, there are instances in which a female will control a male.
- In a discussion of Jason’s control tactics, elicit from the students that:
 - Jason tries—and Vicky permits him—to isolate her from her friends and family.
 - He manipulates her into giving him money.
 - He makes her ask his permission for what she wants to do.
 - He forces her to abandon her own dreams and interests, such as buying a guitar and auditioning for the class play.
 - He uses physical force to intimidate her.
 - He erodes her self-esteem by putting her down.
 - He puts her on the defensive by acting jealous, hurt, or insulted.
 - He plays on her sympathies, manipulating her into “rescuing” him.
 - He twists the facts in order to confuse her. For example, he takes her money but insults her for having the initiative to have a job. He depicts himself as the ambitious one (“I’m going to make it big”), although it’s Vicky who tries to act on her ambitions to play music and to act.
- Make sure that class discussion addresses the fact that dating violence encompasses verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, financial, or other abuse. Some, but by no means all, of abusive dating relationships include physical or sexual abuse. *Even if Jason had never used physical force with Vicky, he would still be considered abusive*, and Vicky would still be considered the victim of dating violence.

- If time permits, have students role-play scenes from the story. Have them experiment with having characters respond differently. Have them explore what happens after this story leaves off. How would they write subsequent scenes? Students may also want to write their own scenarios, stories, or plays about dating violence.

In the Beginning

by *Betty Rothbart*

In the beginning was his smile. So bright and sly, the sidelong way he grinned at her.

“You’re special,” Jason said. “You’re beautiful. You fascinate me.”

He fascinated her. Vicky studied him more closely than her homework. She mentally replayed their conversations so often, she felt like a VCR on constant rewind. When he asked her out, she spent five days planning what to wear, and five hours that Saturday changing her mind.

Jason urged her to talk about her feelings and ideas. Vicky couldn’t remember the last time anyone listened so attentively. He gave her little gifts. A plant. A shimmery scarf. A book of poems.

“I miss you when we’re not together,” said Jason. “You’re my good luck charm. You make everything better.”

He confided that his parents were rough on him, his teachers resented him, his ex-girlfriend had been cold and unfeeling. Vicky’s heart went out to him. She would try to make up for the hard times.

They ate lunch together in the high school cafeteria. He walked her to her after-school job at the burger place, and home at the end of her shift. They spent every weekend together. Vicky’s friends complained that they never saw her any more.

“I’m with Jason now,” Vicky explained. Someday they would fall in love, too. Then they would understand.

“Come shopping with us this Saturday,” Carolyn urged.

“Oh, I don’t know. I have to ask Jason.”

“Why ask him?” Laura shrugged. “Can’t you make your own decisions?”

“You don’t understand,” Vicky said. “Jason and I are very close.”

When she asked Jason, his smile vanished and he gripped her arm.

“Suddenly you don’t want to be with me? I was counting on you this weekend.”

“It’s just for the afternoon. Laura’s grandmother just sent her a gift certificate, and Carolyn told me about a sale at—”

“What am I supposed to do all day? Look, I’ll go shopping with you. I know what looks good on you. Let me do this for you.”

He released her arm and kissed her. Vicky was confused. Her arm hurt, but his kiss was so tender.

“I can’t go,” she told her friends.

“Another time?” asked Carolyn.

“I’m sorry. Jason doesn’t like us to be apart.”

(continued)

In the Beginning *(continued)*

One evening Vicky's mother said, "Seems like we haven't talked for ages. Come to Aunt Julia's for dinner with me this Sunday."

"I'll have to ask Jason, Mom."

Jason told her not to go. Vicky loved visiting Aunt Julia. But she was afraid to go against Jason's wishes.

"Vicky, family comes first. Tell Jason you'll see him another time."

"Oh, Mom. You don't understand."

Jason was low on cash. Winter was coming, he brooded, and he needed a leather jacket and boots. He looked so unhappy, Vicky offered to buy them.

"I can't let you do that," he said. "You've been saving your money for so long."

"I want to help you," she said.

"You're the best," he said. "You're the only person who really cares about me."

Vicky had mixed feelings when she handed over the money. She wanted to help Jason, but she had planned to buy a guitar. Now she had to save up all over again.

"Jason, do you want me to ask my boss if he has any job openings?"

He exploded.

"Take back your money, Vicky! What's wrong with you? I'm no burger-flipper. I'm going to make it big someday—and not because of my talent for french fries!"

"Well, I just thought—"

"Don't think, Vicky, okay? I'll do the thinking for both of us."

Vicky felt guilty and selfish. She hadn't meant to offend him. Jason wouldn't fit in at the burger place. She didn't mind working there, but he was a more ambitious, sensitive person.

"I'm sorry, Jason. Please, take the money."

Vicky saw a flyer announcing auditions for a school play. She showed it to Jason.

"I'd have to cut back my work hours, but this would be so much fun, Jason!"

Jason pushed her against a locker so forcefully that her head snapped back against the metal. He yanked her toward him, then pushed her head into the locker again and pressed his hand against her throat, pinning her to the wall.

"Don't I mean anything to you, Vicky?" Jason shouted. His voice echoed in the empty hallway.

"What?"

"I know Peter's the assistant director. I see how he looks at you."

(continued)

In the Beginning (*continued*)

“No he—”

“Don’t lie to me, Vicky! I know you like him. That’s what this is about, isn’t it?”

“No I just—”

“Then prove it! Forget about the play!”

“But Jason—”

“Either be in the play, or be with me. You can’t have it both ways.”

Vicky felt dizzy. Why was he making her choose?

Jason relaxed the pressure on her throat.

“You don’t need to be up on some stage, Vicky,” he said softly. “You’re the star of my life. Isn’t that enough for you? Don’t you love me?”

“Of course I do, Jason.”

He stroked her head where it had banged into the locker.

“Don’t make me hurt you, Vicky. Don’t test me. Everyone in my life has let me down, everyone but you. I’ll die if you turn away from me. I need you, baby.”

Jason wrapped his arms around her, gently pulling her head onto his shoulder. His embrace usually made her feel protected. But it suddenly occurred to Vicky that jail cells keep prisoners protected, too. Protected, isolated, confined.

Jason had become her warden. But what was her crime?

Jason tore the audition notice into tiny pieces, tossing them into the air like confetti. Vicky sank to the floor, her hand on her throat.

“Let’s go home now, Vicky,” Jason said, as if she were a child. He grasped her wrists and pulled her to her feet. She was wobbly, and her head ached.

They heard footsteps. Someone was coming. Carolyn and Laura rounded the corner.

Jason put his arm around Vicky. His arm felt heavy, like a snake.

The arm of the law, thought Vicky.

“How are you doing?” Jason greeted them cheerfully.

“Vicky, are you okay?” Carolyn asked.

Jason dug his fingers into her arm, warning her.

“I’m fine,” Vicky whispered.

“You don’t look so good. Why are you whispering?” Laura demanded.

“Vicky’s not feeling well. I’m taking her home,” said Jason.

“Well, okay,” said Carolyn slowly. “I hope you feel better, Vicky.”

Carolyn and Laura turned to leave. Laura looked back at Vicky uncertainly. Vicky couldn’t meet her eyes.

(continued)

In the Beginning (*continued*)

Help me, she thought. Take me with you. But she couldn't speak, and her friends kept walking.

It's my own fault, Vicky thought. I turned away from them, and now they're turning away from me.

"Come on, baby," Jason said. "Let's go."

I want my mother. I want my friends. I want my life back.

Jason waited while Vicky went to the bathroom and washed her face. For a few minutes she stared at herself in the mirror. She saw the marks of Jason's fingers on her neck. She leaned against the sink, trying to catch her breath. Jason knocked on the door.

"What's taking you so long?"

Vicky opened the door. Jason smiled at her as he helped her into her coat.

Jason steered Vicky into the autumn wind. Pinpricks of icy rain stung their eyes, and leaves blew into their faces. Jason turned up the collar of his new leather jacket. Vicky clutched her collar to her throat. At last they reached Vicky's house. Jason kissed her goodbye. Her lips were numb and she didn't kiss him back.

Vicky stepped inside, shutting the door against the icy wind. She hung up her coat, threw down her bookbag, then stepped into the living room and stopped short. There, sitting next to Vicky's mother on the couch, were Carolyn and Laura.

"Honey, are you all right?" asked her mother.

Vicky took a deep breath. She cleared her throat, searching for her voice again.

"Oh, Mommy," said Vicky. "I'm so glad to be out of the cold."

10. Students will discuss the cycle of abuse within families, and the power of an individual to break that cycle. (SA)

Teacher Note: Researchers have found that children who are abused are more likely to become abusers of their own children. Some abused children grow up to be so fearful of inflicting abuse that they avoid becoming parents at all. It is important to convey to students that the first step in breaking the cycle of abuse is becoming aware that it exists.

The sonnet “Seasons of Peace” depicts the power of the individual to change dysfunctional family traditions. One need not renounce one’s family in order to create a happier home for oneself. One does not need to feel stuck in family history.

Note that some students may be unfamiliar with the expression “eye of the storm,” which is alluded to in the first line of the poem. Explain that the eye of the storm is the period of calm that punctuates hurricanes and cyclones. The eye can delude people into thinking that the storm is over. Point out that many “stormy” families have periods of calm, but that without good conflict resolution skills and compassion for one another, they get caught up again and again in a cycle of storms. They do not have frequent periods of calm.

Note that some students may be unfamiliar with sonnets. If time permits, or if you are teaching the lesson in collaboration with an English or Language Arts class, you may wish to explain that a sonnet is a poem that conforms to a specific format, in this case 14 lines consisting of three quatrains followed by a rhyming couplet, with the rhyme scheme A-B-A-B-C-D-C-D-E-F-E-F-G-G.

Activity

- Ask students to list some family traditions, such as Sunday afternoon or Friday night dinners, Labor Day family reunions, naming babies after esteemed relatives, watching a particular TV show every week as a family, etc.
- Point out that certain ways family members relate to each other may also be “family traditions.” For example, some families have quiet homes, others have frequent shouting matches. In some families parents take their children everywhere and seem close-knit. In others family members seem less connected.
- Have students read the sonnet, “Seasons of Peace.” Then discuss it as a class or in small groups.
- Have students write an essay or poem on traditions in their family they would want to continue or change. Make sure to mention that all people have the ability to break the cycle of abuse, and to raise children with the kindness and consideration with which they wish they had been raised themselves. Point out that parenting classes, books, and support groups can help people accomplish the goal of transforming a cycle of abuse into a new cycle of help and wellness.

SEASONS OF PEACE

by Betty Rothbart

Some families are storms with infrequent eyes.
Others ride seasons in peace.
Most are a puzzle of intricate ties,
Traditions to treasure, clashes to cease.
Every new branch of a family tree,
Shaded and shaped by the branches before,
Echoes their patterns, yet also is free
To grow its own way, to learn something more.
For children, like birds, sing the songs they are sung,
Their melodies legacies parents renew,
But when it comes time to tend their own young,
Can croon the old tunes, or choose some that are new,
 Resolve family puzzles, the clashes to cease,
 And transform ancient storms into seasons of peace.