

New Jersey Child Assault Prevention

EARLY CHILDHOOD ADULT GUIDE



Empowering
Children to
be *Safe, Strong & Free*

A Program of the International Center for Assault Prevention



Early Childhood CAP Program

As the young child is at high risk for victimization, the CAP Early Childhood program sets a strong foundation for ongoing prevention education in each young child's life. Program evaluation has determined that the young child does retain personal safety information. CAP provides the setting for ongoing self-esteem building, as well as providing prevention education. Educators and parents best summarize this finding:

"Retention was apparent as the children continued to discuss program issues and scenarios long after the CAP workshops." – Preschool Teacher

"We were happy that the information empowered our four year old without scaring her. It's comforting to know that she can help protect herself if we are not with her." – Parent

"I thought the role plays were excellent for student comprehension. All the materials presented were age appropriate. What I like about the dolls is that they look real and the children related. Songs are a plus and I liked it. – Kindergarten Teacher

TEACHER/STAFF INSERVICE TRAINING: This training requires approximately is held within one month prior to classroom workshops. All school staff are encouraged to attend this training, since anyone in a school community might be approached by a child seeking help. The training includes an overview of child assault, a detailed explanation of the children's workshop, information on the identification of abuse, guidelines, community resources, referrals for reporting abuse and legal rights and responsibilities.

PARENT PROGRAM: This workshop was developed along the lines of the teacher/staff in-service. While much of the material presented is similar, the emphasis is on prevention, communication and positive parenting, rather than on reporting procedures, identification and crisis skills. The program begins with an acknowledgement of parents' fears about the subject, and how these fears impact on the messages passed on to children. We discuss CAP's prevention approach, and then provide a detailed account of the classroom workshop.

CLASSROOM WORKSHOPS:

Preschool Program: The Preschool Program is geared for children between the ages of 3 ½ - 5 years. The classroom workshop consists of 3 one-hour sessions, presented on three consecutive days by two CAP facilitators. This time frame includes presentation of the workshop as well as time for individual review of the program which takes place in the classroom.

Kindergarten Program: The Kindergarten Program is geared for children ages 5-6. The classroom workshop consists of 2 one-hour sessions, presented on two consecutive days by three CAP facilitators. This time frame includes presentation of the workshop as well as time for individual review of the program which takes place in the classroom.

Children's rights and personal safety issues are taught through the use of pictures, dolls, songs and roleplays. The classroom workshop trains children to recognize potentially dangerous situations, and to make effective use of the options available to them in these situations. CAP emphasizes self-assertion, peer support, communication and reporting skills as potential prevention strategies. CAP approaches the question of assault within the framework of basic human rights.

The opening discussion and pictorial representation of safe, strong and free concepts is followed by a different role play for each one. These role plays represent the most common assault experiences a child might encounter: child against child (bullying), sibling against sibling, adult stranger against child (demonstrated through the use of large dolls), and assault involving a known adult.

A final roleplay employs the classroom teacher in the role of a trusted adult responding to a child's request for help. This roleplay gives children an opportunity to visualize what would happen if they needed to talk to someone about a similar problem. It gives a clear message to the child that his/her teacher cares and is there to offer support.

At the end of each day's workshop, each child is given the opportunity to meet individually with the facilitators. The primary purpose of this meeting is to review the concepts of the day to ensure the child understood the prevention strategies. It is also used to help the child problem solve any concerns he/she has. Teachers and parents are given follow-up material to reinforce the CAP concepts in the classroom and in the home.

Teachers Notes

1. Children should be seated in a semi-circle, (on the rug or on chairs) facing the front of the classroom. Please allow a large space for performance of the program. Allow time for toileting before workshop.
2. Name tags should be prepared, but please do not put them on the children. The facilitators distribute name tags in an effort to begin establishing a rapport with the children. Please use a dark colored magic marker and use the child's **first name** only.
3. PRESCHOOL children who are absent from **either** the first or second day, may attend the workshop on day three. However, children who miss **two** days **cannot** be placed in the third day workshop as each day's lesson builds on the previous one.
KINDERGARTEN is implemented in a two-day time period, children who miss Day 1 may participate in Day 2 because an extensive review is provided prior to the introduction of new concepts.
4. Teachers, please plan to spend a minute before the classroom workshop with the facilitators discussing any child about whom there is a concern.
5. Please allow facilitators to handle any disciplinary problems during the workshop. This helps the facilitators to keep the attention of the children focused on them.
6. If parents are employed by the school district/school, it is recommended that they not attend their own child's workshop. However, parents who are volunteering at the school cannot attend their own child's workshop.
7. A fourth roleplay about a child confiding in a trusted adult will take place. The teacher is asked to participate in this roleplay. If the teacher feels uncomfortable, or for any reason cannot perform this task, an alternate may be chosen from school personnel. The "Trusted Adult Role play" script will be provided.
8. On the 3rd day of Pre-k and the 2nd day of Kindergarten, the CAP Facilitators will be reviewing the correct terms for body parts with the song, "Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes". Please teach this song to the children before the CAP workshop.
9. Review time will take place in the classroom. All children should be encouraged to visit with the facilitators following the classroom workshops. Every child will have an opportunity to speak with a facilitator if they so choose. During this time, teachers may want to use one of the CAP follow-up activities.
10. After the last classroom workshop, please take the time to complete the **two-sided** Teacher Evaluation form provided by the facilitators. Your response will be greatly appreciated.

Trusted Adult Role Play

(The teacher sits in one of two chairs in front of the children. She/He pretends to be at a desk working. Facilitator posing as a child comes up.)

FACILITATOR: "Hello, Ms./Mr. _____. May I talk with you for a moment?"

TEACHER: "Hello, _____. Sure, we can talk. Have a seat."

FACILITATOR: (Sitting down in other chair) "Ms./Mr. _____, do you remember the CAP people who came to talk with us about ways to be safe?"

TEACHER: "Yes, I remember them. They were fun, weren't they?"

FACILITATOR: "Sometimes kids bother me and I don't like it. They tell me to keep it a secret. I don't know what to do about it.."

TEACHER: (Sincerely concerned) "_____, I'm glad that you came to talk with me. That must have been hard for you. How about if we find some time today when we can talk? I'd like to help you. Would you like that?"

FACILITATOR: "Oh yes, I'd like that very much!"

TEACHER: "Good!"

(The role play ends and the teacher leaves the scene. The role players rejoin the circle of children.)

Pre-Workshop Concepts

The activities listed below will help your children become familiar with some of the CAP concepts before we arrive. By working these activities into your curriculum, we feel that your children will have a greater understanding of the information, and therefore, a better retention of the concepts.

1. **SAFE** - Have children make a collage of places where they feel safe. Have them bring in pictures of places where they feel safe, and people with whom they feel safe. Let them cut out pictures from magazines of people who look safe (*i.e. a baby with his mom*). Talk about safe in a variety of ways, not just traffic safety.
2. **INNER STRENGTH** – Discuss the concept of being brave and having courage to help the students be prepared for the introduction of this vocabulary. Talk about going to the doctor or dentist. Ask if they were scared or how they felt afterwards. Try to have the children give examples of when they had to tell an adult something that was hard to share, such as getting into trouble at school. Discuss anything else that relates to the concept of inner strength or courage.
3. **FREE** - Have the children do a collage of children who look free. Do a language experience chart of "I feel free when _____." Talk about freedom as people have choices. Help the children to see that "free play" is a type of freedom.
4. **STRANGERS** - Make a classifying game of people that they know and people that they do not know. Allow the children to bring pictures from home and place the pictures in a box. Allow each child to play the game, placing the people that they know on one side, and the people that they do not know on the other. The game will be different for each child. Define stranger as "someone that you do not know. "Do not label any stranger as **good** or **bad** as this concept of who is good or bad is not easily distinguished by this developmental age group.
5. Teach the children this song to the tune of "London Bridges"
Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes,
Knees and Toes,
Knees and Toes,
Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes,
My Own Body!
Eyes, Ears, Mouth and Nose,
Mouth and Nose,
Mouth and Nose,
Eyes, Ears, Mouth and Nose,
My Own Body!

Follow-up Ideas

1. Practice strategies from workshop. Play "What if..." game using bullying, friends, siblings, a trusted adult or "someone they do not know."
2. Go over rules of what to do near "someone they do not know." Talk about how far they should stand, don't give names, how to walk, etc.
3. Go over what to do if someone should grab them, practice the CAP yell!!! Show where to kick. Review that it is alright to kick, scratch, bite or do **anything** that they may have to do in order to get away. Emphasize telling someone. Get each child to name two or three people whom they could tell.
4. Practice observation and description skills. Put a teacher or aide in front of the class, let the others look at him/her, have him/her hide. Ask the others to describe clothes, color of eyes, hair, how tall, etc. Bring him/her out and let them see how observant they were. With very young children start with simple objects, let them see the object, then hide it and ask them to describe it.
5. Talk about their bodies being their own. Review all body parts, including genitals using the correct terminology. Sing the song, "Feeling Safe, Strong & Free." Let them know that they can say no if anyone touches them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. Ask the children who they could tell if this happened to them. Get each child to name a few people who they could tell. Have them identify at least one person in the school with whom they could tell.
6. Feeling badges. Help children to talk about their feelings. Make up badges that have words or pictures that represent angry, mad, sad, happy, funny, etc. Let a child choose a badge and talk about when he/she felt this way.
7. When you talk about safety, talk about more than just traffic safety, talk about keeping our bodies safe. Encourage the children to problem solve on their own and with each other.
8. Encourage the children to problem solve on their own and with each other.

How can I recognize if a child is abused?

Sometimes children don't tell us they are in crisis, they show us. A change in a child's behavior could be due to the stress of being abused. These changes in behavior can alert adults to their problem.

Abuse and neglect can also sometimes leave physical marks on a child's body which adults can observe. Knowing both the physical and behavioral clues to abuse can help adults intervene on behalf of children.

Abused children cannot be identified by racial, ethnic, religious or socio-economic class. Abuse crosses all these lines.

Keep in mind that some clues can be normal behavior for a given child at a given time. Therefore, it is important to be aware of new behaviors, extreme behaviors, or combinations of the following characteristics:

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| Abused Children Are Often | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- fearful of interpersonal relationships or overly compliant- withdrawn or aggressive, hyperactive- constantly irritable or listless, detached- affectionless or overly affectionate (misconstrued as seduction) |
| Physical Symptoms | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- bruises, burns, scars, welts, broken bones, continuing or unexplainable injuries- urinary infections (particularly in young children)- sexually transmitted diseases- chronic ailments, stomach aches, vomiting, eating disorders,- vaginal or anal soreness, bleeding, or itching |
| Activity/Habit Clues | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- nightmares- inappropriate masturbation- a child afraid to go home or to some other location- running away- delinquency- fear of being with a particular person- lying- fire setting |

Recognizing an abused child, continued....

- Age** - an onset of thumb sucking
- Inappropriate Behavior**
- sexually active or aware
 - promiscuity
 - bed wetting
 - alcohol/substance abuse
 - older child assaulting younger children
 - child takes on adult responsibilities
- Educational Concerns**
- extreme curiosity, imagination
 - academic failure
 - sleeping in class
 - inability to concentrate
- Emotional Indicators**
- depression
 - phobias, fear of darkness, public restrooms, etc.
 - chronic ailments
 - self-inflicted injuries
 - injuring/killing animals
 - excessively fearful
 - lack of spontaneity, creativity



How can I help an abused child?

When you are faced with a child who has been assaulted, it is often difficult to know how to respond. These guidelines will help you and the child through this crisis period.

If a child tells you about abuse....

1. Always be calm. Your reaction makes a difference.
2. Believe what you are hearing. Too often, children lack credibility. Listen to the child in a non-judgmental way.
3. Deal with explicit language. A child may use explicit terms to discuss her/his experience. Be prepared. Try and use this same language also.
4. Do not avoid embarrassing subjects. Let the child know that he/she can talk about anything.
5. Do not project or assume anything. Let the child tell the story and leave your own assumptions out.
6. Assess a child's safety needs.
7. Validate the child's feelings.
8. Assure the child that: he/she is not to blame.
9. Let the child know she/he has a RIGHT to be safe.
10. Let the child know what action you will take.

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It is important to know the reporting law. If a report needs to be made, be prepared to do so.

Reporting Child Abuse in New Jersey

The Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) is New Jersey's child protection and child welfare agency within the Department of Children and Families. (DCF)

DCP&P is responsible for investigating allegations of child abuse and neglect and, if necessary, arranging for the child's protection and providing support to the family.

The Child Abuse Hotline (State Central Registry) receives all reports of child abuse and neglect 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. Reports requiring a field response are forwarded to a DCP&P Local Office for investigation. After normal business hours, the hotline is linked with a statewide network of Special Response Units charged with the responsibility of responding to reports.

If You Suspect Child Abuse

Call the NJ Child Abuse Hotline:
1-877-NJ ABUSE (24 HRS -7 DAYS A WEEK)
(1-877-652-2873)

The following information would be helpful:

- Name and address of child
- Name and address of parents or caretaker
- Age and sex of child
- Nature and extent of injuries or description of abuse

Helpful Resources

STATEWIDE:

- Alcohol & Drug Information Hotline - 24 Hours **800-238-2333**
- Domestic Violence - Referral/Information - 24 Hours **800-572-7233**
- Office of Advocacy - 24 hours **www.nj.gov/dcf** **877-543-7864**
- Parents Inc.- 24 Hours **800-THE KIDS 1-800-843-5437**
- NJ Self-Help Clearinghouse- Monday-Friday, 9:00am-4:00pm **800-367-6274**
Information on Forming and Finding Self-Help Groups Statewide
- NJ Child Assault Prevention (CAP) **www.njcap.org** **856-374-5001**
- NJ Helps-Services to assist families in NJ **www.njhelps.org**
- Women's Referral Center - 24 Hours **800-322-8092**
Information/Referrals on all issues relating to women
- 2ND FLOOR - Youth Helpline **www.2ndfloor.org** **888-222-2228**

NATIONAL:

- Domestic Violence - 24 hours **800-799-7233**
- Missing & Exploited Children - 24 hours **www.missingkids.org** **800-843-5678**
- Missing Persons Hotline - 24 Hours **800-843-5678 (1-800-THE LOST)**
- Runaway Hotline - Switchboard -24 hours **800-621-4000 (1-800-RUNAWAY)**
- Sexual Assault Hotline **www.rainn.org** **800-656-4673**
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline **www.njhopeline.com** **800-273-8255**

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A Project of the New Jersey Department of Children and Families



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