

# New Jersey Child Assault Prevention Special Needs



## Adult Guide

CAP Curriculum  
Meeting the Needs of a Diverse Population

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The CAP Curriculum has been specially designed to meet the needs of a diverse range of students, including those children with disabilities. As with other curricula designed by the International Center for Assault Prevention in Blackwood, New Jersey, the goals, objectives and strategies were developed by educators, psychologists and other specialists in the field of special education. The strategies of peer support, self-assertion and telling a trusted adult that have always been present in the CAP curriculum, have been enhanced in these curriculum adaptations and modifications.

All students, including students with disabilities, when possible, should receive CAP trainings with their typically developing peers in regular education classrooms. The modifications and adaptations to the CAP curriculum are designed for use with intellectually disabled students, students with behavioral and emotional disabilities and those students who may need a more individualized approach. They can be applied in all placements, including self-contained special education classrooms. Although intended for use at the middle school level, the adaptations and modifications of this CAP curriculum may also be appropriate for elementary age students.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL ADAPTATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS TO CAP CURRICULUM:**

The program has been lengthened and is delivered as a five-day model with the classroom teacher conducting the activities on the first and fifth days. The classroom teacher collaborates with CAP Facilitators and receives all the materials needed to implement those two days. On the other days, the CAP Facilitators (3) come into the classroom for 40 minute sessions. This collaboration of instructional support has proven to be an effective and comprehensive method of reaching the students who need to bond with a familiar adult when presented with information of a sensitive nature.

Role-plays and guided group discussion center on the issues of assault by someone bullying, by strangers and by a known and trusted adult are utilized. Pictures and other visual aids are used to convey concepts. Accommodations in the area of pacing, a lengthened time frame for instruction, student engagement, the reliance on a trusted adult in collaboration with CAP staff and additional activities intended to allow a more thorough review of the CAP essential elements are included to address the needs of students with disabilities and others who may benefit from specialized instruction.

Review time is offered daily to allow the students the opportunity to individually meet with the CAP Facilitator and discuss concerns or ask questions. This is coordinated with the classroom teacher.

## **Statistics:**

- Children with any type of disability are 3.44 times more likely to be a victim of some type of abuse compared to children without disabilities.
- 1 in 3 children with a developmental disability are victims of some type of maltreatment (i.e. either neglect, physical abuse or sexual abuse).
- Children with developmental disabilities are 4 to 10 times more vulnerable to sexual abuse than their non-disabled peers.
- Individuals with intellectual disabilities are 4 to 10 times as likely to be victims of crime as those without disabilities.

Most children are vulnerable to assault: they are considered to be powerless, are taught to respect authority, are dependent, etc. However, these factors are much truer for children who are disabled.

## **CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES ARE:**

- 1. Viewed as powerless and defenseless.**
- 2. Taught to respect authority and never question it.**
- 3. Told to be nice to everyone, all the time.**
- 4. Needy and eager to be accepted.**
- 5. Dependent.**
- 6. Isolated within their families or institutions.**
- 7. Often not exposed to adult disabled role models.**
- 8. Sometimes confused by “safe” and “unsafe” touches.**
- 9. Usually not given much privacy.**
- 10. Not encouraged to see themselves as strong, self-reliant people.**
- 11. Often treated as if they are very young, even when they are not.**
- 12. Often feel guilty.**
- 13. Not given much information about sex, sexuality or sexual abuse.**

# How can I help Children to be *Safe, Strong and Free?*

## 1. Review with your child what she/he learned in the CAP workshops by asking the following questions:

- **What three rights did you learn?**  
*(The rights to be Safe, Strong and Free)*
- **What happens when someone tries to take these rights away?**  
*(You have a problem.)*
- **How can you protect yourself from being bullied?**  
*(Stand up for yourself, say "NO", get away, get a friend, tell a "trusted adult")*
- **What can you do to protect yourself from strangers?**  
*(Stay more than two arm lengths away. Don't give your name, address, email address or other personal information. Don't talk to them.)*
- **What can you do if someone touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable?**  
*(Say "NO", get away, find trusted adults and tell them)*
- **Who can you tell if you have a problem? Who are your "trusted adults"?**  
*(Parents, relatives, neighbors, school staff, etc.)*
- **What can you do if you see a friend in trouble?**  
*(Do your CAP yell, get help, tell trusted adults.)*

## 2. Talk to them about their "private parts."

Teach your child that it is okay to talk about genitals. Not naming those parts of the body conveys to children that these parts are bad and should never be mentioned. Teaching a young child words like breasts, penis, vagina and buttocks helps him or her reach a comfort level with the proper terms.

## 3. Teach them their personal boundaries\*

- Help children understand that their bodies belong to them.
- Teach them how to wash, dress and care for themselves.
- Respect their right to privacy.
- Give them privacy when they dress, use the toilet or wash.
- Knock on their door before entering their bedroom or bathroom.
- Respect their possessions.
- As you set an example of respect for them, they may realize that they have the right to be respected as well as the responsibility to respect others.

#### 4. **Play the “What If...Game”\***

This game teaches children to strategize what they would do in a dangerous situation.

##### **How to start the game**

Ask the child "What would you do if..." and then let the child respond. The key is to let the child come up with ideas, and then reinforce good ideas with praise. This will build the child's self-confidence in handling dangerous situations. Below are some questions you might ask:

- What would you do if your bike broke down and a stranger offered you a ride home?
- What would you do if I were at home and the telephone man came to the door to say that he wanted to fix the phone?
- What would you do if a babysitter did something to you that made you feel uncomfortable and asked you to keep it a secret?
- What would you do if someone touched you in a way that you didn't like or confused you?

Let the child come up with the answers. Encourage the child to use realistic solutions. Solutions should include getting help from a friend, telling trusted adults, saying "NO", and standing up for his/her rights.

#### 5. **Learning to say “NO”**

"NO" is a **Safe, Strong and Free** word. One reason children may be reluctant to say "no" to abuse is they are taught that saying "no" is impolite or disrespectful. Adults must realize there are times when saying "no" is essential to keeping children safe. Children deserve to know that saying "no" is a good way to protect themselves and keep their rights.

#### 6. **Physical Activities\***

Encourage games and organized sports not only for boys but also, for girls. This will help them gain a sense of physical self-confidence in case they need to protect themselves.

Discourage games in which the adult or older child says, "Hit me as hard as you can; you can't hurt me." This teaches children that they are powerless against someone bigger, which is not necessarily true.

Make sure children are respected during games. For instance, if children are tickling each other, and one asks the other to stop, make sure that the game ends.

# How can I recognize if a child is abused?

Sometimes children don't tell us they have a problem, they show us. A change in a child's behavior could be the result of abuse. Some of the following changes in behavior can alert adults to the possible problems.

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| Abused Children Are Often  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-fearful of interpersonal relationships or overly compliant</li><li>-withdrawn or aggressive, hyperactive</li><li>-constantly irritable or listless, detached</li><li>-affectionless or overly affectionate (misconstrued as seduction)</li></ul>   |
| Physical Symptoms          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-bruises, burns, scars, welts, broken bones, continuing or unexplainable injuries</li><li>-urinary infections (particularly in young children)</li><li>-sexually transmitted diseases</li><li>-chronic ailments, stomach aches, vomiting, eating disorders,</li><li>-vaginal or anal soreness, bleeding, or itching</li></ul> |
| Activity and Habit Clues   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-recurring nightmares</li><li>-inappropriate masturbation</li><li>-a child afraid to go home or to some other location, running away</li><li>-delinquency</li><li>-fear of being with a particular person</li><li>-lying</li><li>-fire setting</li></ul>  |
| Age Inappropriate Behavior | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-regression in behavior (an onset of thumb sucking or toileting accidents after being toilet trained)</li><li>-sexually active or aware</li><li>-promiscuity</li><li>-bed wetting</li><li>-alcohol/substance abuse</li><li>-older child assaulting younger children</li><li>-child takes on adult responsibilities</li></ul>  |
| Educational Concerns       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-extreme curiosity, imagination</li><li>-academic failure</li><li>-sleeping in class</li><li>-inability to concentrate</li><li>-sudden change in school performance</li></ul>   |
| Emotional Indicators       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-depression</li><li>-phobias, fear of darkness, public restrooms, etc.</li><li>-chronic ailments</li><li>-self-inflicted injuries</li><li>-injuring/killing animals</li><li>-excessively fearful</li><li>-lack of spontaneity, creativity</li></ul>   |

## **How to respond to a child in crisis**

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.

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

## ***If You Suspect Child Abuse in New Jersey***

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

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.

# Places to Get Help

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| Alcohol/Drug Information Hotline   | 800-238-2333                |
| Family Helpline- 24/7  | 800-THE-KIDS<br>(843-5437)  |
| NJ Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline<br>24 Hour/7days  | 877-NJABUSE<br>(652-2873)   |
| NJ Child Assault Prevention <a href="http://www.njcap.org">www.njcap.org</a>                                       | 856-374-5001                |
| NJ Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NJ CASA)  | 800-601-7200                |
| NJ Women's Referral Center-24 hour hotline   | 800-322-8092                |
| NJ Youth Helpline-2 <sup>ND</sup> FLOOR- 24 hour hotline<br><a href="http://www.2ndfloor.org">www.2ndfloor.org</a> | 888-222-2228                |
| NJ Safe Haven for Infants  | 877-839-2339                |
| NJ Suicide Prevention Hotline      24/7<br><a href="http://www.njhopeline.com">www.njhopeline.com</a>              | 855-654-6735                |
| RAINN-Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network<br><a href="http://www.Rainn.org">www.Rainn.org</a>                     | 800-656-HOPE                |
| Runaway Hotline-24/7   | 800 RUNAWAY<br>800-786-2929 |
| SPEAK UP- 24/7<br>Hotline to anonymously report weapon threats   | 866- SPEAKUP                |



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