

# New Jersey Child Assault Prevention Teacher Guide



*All Children Deserve to be  
Safe, Strong & Free!*

A Program of the International Center for Assault Prevention



## New Jersey Child Assault Prevention (CAP)

The Child Assault Prevention (CAP) Project originated in 1978 in Columbus, Ohio and is presently disseminated nationwide by the International Center for Assault Prevention. In 1984, CAP was chosen as a state prevention program for New Jersey by the Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect. Since then, over 3.5 million children and adults have been trained by CAP. It has been recognized as one of “the most comprehensive prevention programs in the country today.”

NJ CAP is a network of projects, one in each county. The CAP Network is organized and trained by the NJ CAP Regional Training Center, which is located at the Camden County College (CCC).

CAP seeks to integrate the best resources of a community in an effort to reduce a child's vulnerability to verbal, physical and sexual assault. New Jersey's CAP projects work closely with the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCPP), law enforcement, community groups, and local school districts. CAP has a threefold educational approach to prevention which includes trainings in the following areas: Staff In-Service, Parent Workshops and Individual Classroom Workshops for children and teens.

**STAFF IN-SERVICE** is a workshop given by CAP facilitators for all staff. The training includes an overview of assault, a detailed explanation of the classroom workshop, information on characteristics of abused children, active listening guidelines for dealing with a child in crisis, community resources and referrals for reporting abuse, and the legal responsibilities of staff members who report abuse or neglect.

**PARENT WORKSHOP** is a session which emphasizes communication skills for discussing assault with children and effective responses for handling a child in crisis. Parents are given a detailed description of the classroom workshops and taught ways to empower their children to keep them free from abuse.

**CLASSROOM WORKSHOPS** are offered in any of the following areas: Early Childhood, Kindergarten-Sixth Grades, Special Needs and Teen CAP. Individual classroom workshops are implemented by CAP facilitators. Using roleplays or scenarios and guided group discussion, the classroom workshops train children and teens to recognize and deal with potentially dangerous situations. The roleplays or scenarios represent the most common assault experiences a child or teen might encounter. All CAP workshops are centered on the rights of children and young people to be “**SAFE, STRONG and FREE!**” ®

# PROGRAMS

The CAP (Child Assault Prevention) project is a comprehensive primary prevention program which includes strategies on self-assertion, peer support, effective communication and reporting skills. CAP programs are presented with a view of assault as a violation of basic human rights. Our motto is all children deserve to be **Safe, Strong and Free!**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD** consists of CAP's Preschool and Kindergarten:

**PRESCHOOL** is geared towards children between the ages of 3½ to 5. The classroom workshop is scheduled for a one hour time frame, presented on three consecutive days with specially trained facilitators. Each day's workshop is followed by time for individual review of the strategies within the classroom. Actual instruction time is approximately 30 minutes.

**KINDERGARTEN** is geared towards children ages 5 and 6. The classroom workshop is scheduled for a one hour time frame, presented on two consecutive days. Workshops are held in individual classrooms. Each session is inclusive of a review period available to all students. Actual instruction time is approximately 45 minutes.

**GRADES 1-5** workshops are presented by CAP Facilitators in one 60 minute period. Workshops are held in individual classrooms. Each interactive program includes a discussion of rights, an unsuccessful version of each of three roleplays (peer, stranger, known adult) with guided discussion of problem solving strategies, and the re-enactment of the roleplay with a successful resolution. Students also learn self-protection techniques and watch a roleplay with the staff member demonstrating adult support for a child's problem. The program is followed by a 30 minute review period available to all students.

**6<sup>th</sup> GRADE** workshops are presented by CAP facilitators in a one 60 minute period. Workshops are held in the classroom to discuss personal safety rights, common kinds of assault against youth, and strategies for handling dangerous situations. Throughout the workshop, PowerPoint is used to address common assault situations via short scenarios and guided group discussions.

**TEEN CAP** workshops, designed for adolescents, are implemented by CAP Facilitators in three 40-45 minute classroom periods. Workshops are held in individual classrooms. The programs include discussions of personal safety rights, types of assaults and effective strategies for handling many potentially dangerous situations.

**SPECIAL NEEDS** presentations are designed to meet the needs of a diverse range of students with special needs in the intermediate grades. The five day program focuses on working closely with the teacher to help students recognize body rights and the development of self-confidence and independence.

**CAP's BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM** is a six-month initiative designed to help the school community deal with bullying behavior. This innovative program is designed for implementation in grades K-8 in schools that have already participated in the CAP Program. It is a three-pronged approach with workshops for school staff, parents and children.

## TEACHER 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.
2. Name tags should be prepared by a CAP Facilitator or teacher, but please do not put them on the children. Please use a dark colored marker and use the child's first name only. The Facilitators will instruct the children as to where to place the nametags as they begin to establish a rapport with them.
3. Children who are absent from a workshop should be included in another class of the same or close grade level.
4. Please be prepared to speak with the primary facilitator before the workshop begins regarding any classroom dynamics that will affect the CAP workshop, classroom attendance numbers and whether or not any children have been denied permission to attend the workshop.
5. Usually the CAP Facilitators will handle any disciplinary problems during the workshop. This helps the facilitators keep the attention of the children focused on them. However, there may be times when we ask the teacher for assistance.
6. Please note that all children, who are willing, should be incorporated into the classroom workshop activities.
7. A fourth roleplay about a child confiding in a trusted adult will take place. You are asked to participate in this roleplay. If you feel for any reason you cannot perform this task, please select an alternate staff person and be sure that person is available for the workshop.
8. "Review Time" will immediately follow the workshop. During this time the children will have the opportunity to tell us how they liked the program while we reinforce their comprehension. This is voluntary and children should be encouraged to participate but never required. We use extra chairs for this purpose in the classroom for Kindergarten and Preschool and in the hall for grades 1 – 6. During this time, we recommend that you use one of the follow-up activities provided by CAP.
9. After the classroom workshop, please take the time to complete the evaluation sheet provided by the facilitators. Your response will be appreciated.

## TEACHER ROLE PLAY

(The teacher sits in one of two chairs in front of the children, pretending 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.)



# Reinforcing CAP



1. Practice strategies from the workshop. Practice what to do in peer, trusted adult and stranger situations. Review rules of what to do near a stranger. Reinforce in a positive rather than a negative way:

**DO** stand two arms lengths away.  
**DO** your yell if you are uncomfortable.  
**DO** fight and kick and say, "NO."  
**DO** run to a safe place.  
**DO** tell someone.

2. Reinforce self-protection techniques such as yell, kick, stomp, elbow, etc.
3. Practice observation and description skills. Have one child stand in front of the class. Let the others look at him/her for a few minutes. Get them to describe clothing, color of eyes, hair, height, etc. Younger children can play description games with simple objects. Let them see an object, put it away, and then let them describe it in detail.
4. Allow children to identify "trusted adults" in their own lives. Be careful not to identify all teachers, police, clergy, etc. as trusted adults. A typical response would be:

*"Yes, some teachers are easy to talk with.  
Can you name someone in the school that you could trust?"*

5. Help children in your class talk about their feelings. Make up signs or cards with feeling words such as angry, mad, sad, happy, funny, bad, etc. Allow children to share incidents when they experienced these feelings.
6. When you discuss safety, talk about personal safety as well as traffic, fire and swimming safety.
7. Have children identify places that they would go for help or support people that they might talk to.
8. Ask children to draw a picture or to write a story about what they have just learned.
9. Children enjoy writing letters to the CAP facilitators.
10. Have children write or sign a note to parents inviting them to discuss what they have learned.
11. Practice the yell and other self-defense techniques. Encourage a practice session at home. Stress the importance of using the yell. only in a dangerous situation.
12. Develop a learning unit on “Safety in the Community” focusing on assault prevention strategies.
13. Incorporate the “**Safe, Strong and Free**” ® model into your classroom curriculum. For instance: Encourage children to “problem solve” bullying situations and to look to peers for support. Review the meanings of the words “**Safe, Strong and Free**” ® when you are encouraging decisions that need to be made in and out of the classroom.
14. Request that funds be budgeted for the CAP MAINTENANCE program for the next school year. Celebrate CAP DAY once a year in your school to reinforce the CAP concepts. Decorate hallways and classrooms with pictures and stories of “**Safe, Strong and Free**” ® strategies.



## 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.

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"><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>
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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>
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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>
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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>
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## Recognizing an Abused Child, continued....

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Educational Concerns	-extreme curiosity, imagination -academic failure -sleeping in class -inability to concentrate -sudden change in school performance
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Emotional Indicators	-depression -phobias, fear of darkness, public restrooms, etc. -chronic ailments -self-inflicted injuries -injuring/killing animals -excessively fearful -lack of spontaneity, creativity
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### 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.

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.

## **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

**Notes:**

## Helpful Resources

### STATEWIDE:

- Alcohol & Drug Information Hotline - 24 Hours **800-238-2333**
- Domestic Violence - Referral/Information - 24 Hours **800-572-7233**
- Parents Inc.- 24 Hours **800-843-5437**
- NJ Child Assault Prevention (CAP) **www.njcap.org** **856-374-5001**
- NJ Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline 24/7 **877-NJABUSE**
- 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](http://www.2ndfloor.org) **888-222-2228**
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline **www.njhopeline.com** **800-273-8255**

### NATIONAL:

- Missing & Exploited Children - 24 hours **www.missingkids.org** **800-843-5678**
- Missing Persons Hotline - 24 Hours **800-843-5678 (1-800-THE LOST)**
- Sexual Assault Hotline **www.rainn.org** **800-656-4673**

## New Jersey Child Assault Prevention (CAP)

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200 College Drive,  
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[www.njcap.org](http://www.njcap.org)  
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