

7th GRADE: ABUSE

LESSON 2 OVERVIEW

Abuse: Recognizing It & Knowing What to Do



Lesson Time:
30 Minutes

Materials Provided:

- Lesson Slides [Download](#)
- Lesson 2 Information Sheet (one per group)

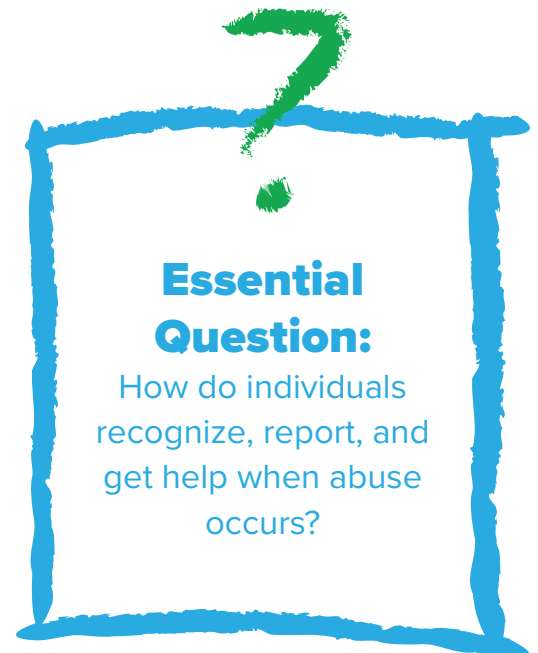
Materials Needed:

- Paper for Advocacy Poster (card stock, copy paper, or poster paper)
- Markers
- Writing Utensils
- Index Cards

Objectives:

Students will be able to...

1. Recognize signs of abuse.
2. Identify possible causes of abuse.
3. Describe the effects of abuse.
4. Determine how to ask for help and/or report suspected or confirmed abuse.



Abuse: Recognizing It & Knowing What to Do

Handout



1

Lesson Script/Talking Points

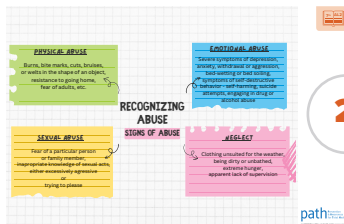
Lesson Introduction: (3 minutes)

(Display Slide 1)

Today we will begin our lesson with a brief review of the types of abuse. Raise your hand if you can remember one of the four major categories of abuse. (Allow students to respond. Answers may include Physical, Emotional, Sexual, and Neglect.)

Can you give me examples of each type? (Allow students to respond. Answers may include: Physical - hitting, biting, shoving, pinching; Sexual - forced sexual activity, inappropriate touching; Emotional - name calling, constant insults, yelling; Neglect - failing to provide basic needs, food, shelter, medical attention)

In today's lesson, we will dig a little deeper into the topic of abuse and learn more about the signs and causes. We will also spend some time discussing the effects of abuse and identifying specific actions you can take to end abuse when you recognize it.



2

Core Lesson: Coping with Abuse Slides 2-4 (10 minutes)

Let's look at Slide 2 to help us learn how to recognize signs for each type of abuse.

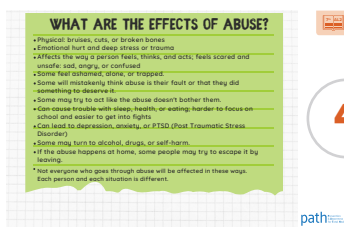
- Physical Child Abuse: Burns, bite marks, cuts, bruises, or welts in the shape of an object, resistance to going home, fear of adults, etc.
- Emotional Child Abuse: Severe symptoms of depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression, bed-wetting or bed soiling, symptoms of self-destructive behavior - self-harming, suicide attempts, engaging in drug or alcohol abuse
- Sexual Child Abuse: Fear of a particular person or family member, inappropriate knowledge of sexual acts, either excessively aggressive or trying to please
- Neglect: Clothing unsuited for the weather, being dirty or unbathed, extreme hunger, apparent lack of supervision (Childmatters.org, 2023)



3

It's hard to understand or imagine why someone abuses others. According to research, people who are abusive to others may have:

- A history of child abuse or neglect during their own childhood
- A substance use disorder
- Physical or mental health conditions, such as depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Experienced poor parent-child relationships; stress or crisis caused by domestic violence, relationship turmoil, separation, or divorce (Holland, 2018)



4

Hurt people who have not dealt with their pain appropriately, are more likely to hurt others.

Let's take a look at some of the effects of abuse.

- Physical: bruises, cuts, or broken bones
- Emotional hurt and deep stress or trauma
- Affects the way a person feels, thinks, and acts; feels scared and unsafe; sad, angry, or confused

Core Lesson (cont)

Handout

WHAT SHOULD SOMEONE WHO IS BEING ABUSED DO?

TALK TO A TRUSTED ADULT

If the first person you talk to doesn't help, tell someone else. Keep talking until one listens, believes what you say, and helps.

Tell an adult you trust right away. If an adult is treating you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, but you're not sure whether it's abuse, you can still talk it over with another adult you trust. Even if the abuse happened before but isn't happening now, you should tell someone about it.

The person you tell can be a parent, a grandparent, or a caregiver. It can be a doctor or nurse. It can be a teacher, school counselor, therapist, or coach.

If you don't have an adult you feel comfortable sharing with, you can call or text 1-800-422-4453 to talk to someone at the Childhelp Hotline or visit their website: www.childhelpline.org. People are there to help for free, 24 hours a day.

You might feel nervous at first, but don't let that stop you.



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Lesson Script/Talking Points

- Some feel ashamed, alone, or trapped.
- Some will mistakenly think abuse is their fault or that they did something to deserve it.
- Some may try to act like the abuse doesn't bother them.
- Can cause trouble with sleep, health, or eating; harder to focus on school and easier to get into fights
- Can lead to depression, anxiety, or PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)
- Some may turn to alcohol, drugs, or self-harm.
- If the abuse happens at home, some people may try to escape it by leaving. (Kidshealth.org, 2024)

It's important to know that not everyone who goes through abuse will be affected in these ways. Each person and each situation is different.

(Display Slide 5)

What should someone who is being abused do to get help?

- Tell an adult you trust right away. If an adult is treating you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, but you're not sure whether it's abuse, you can still talk it over with another adult you trust. Even if the abuse happened before but isn't happening now, you should tell someone about it.
- The person you tell can be a parent, a grandparent, or a caregiver. It can be a doctor or nurse. It can be a teacher, school counselor, therapist, or coach.
- If you don't have an adult you feel comfortable sharing with, you can call or text 1-800-422-4453 to talk to someone at the Childhelp Hotline or visit their website: www.childhelpline.org. People are there to help for free, 24 hours a day.
- You might feel nervous at first, but don't let that stop you. (Kidshealth.org, 2024)

Talk to a trusted adult. If the first person you talk to doesn't help, tell someone else. Keep talking until someone listens, believes what you say, and helps.

Lesson Activity: Advocacy Posters (15 minutes)

Now that we are familiar with the types of abuse, how to recognize abuse, the effects of abuse, and how to get help, I want you to become advocates for others. We are going to use our knowledge to create Advocacy Posters for abuse awareness to help others know what to do if they are experiencing abuse. Who can tell me what advocacy means? (*Allow students to respond.*) Advocacy is an action by an individual or a group that aims to support a particular cause or pleads on behalf of others. We need to be advocates for others who are experiencing abuse.

I am going to divide you into four groups. I will provide each group with an information sheet to help you create an advocacy poster. Each group will be assigned a topic to create a poster to help others. (*Have students number off*

Core Lesson (cont)



Handout

Lesson Script/Talking Points

with each stating a number 1-4. Group students based on their number with all #1s in one area of the room, 2s in another area, and so forth. Provide each group with an information sheet, and paper for their poster. Have them bring their markers.)

The section that your group is assigned to is as follows:

1 - Recognizing Abuse

2 - Why Does Abuse Happen?

3 - What Are the Effects of Abuse?

4 - What Should Someone Being Abused Do?

(Allow students time to design their posters. As students are working, walk around the room to advise and support them. Allow each group to pick a person to share their poster with the class. Posters may be displayed in the classroom or hallway if desired.)

Closing: Essential Question (2 minutes)

Everyone, you did a great job with your posters. Today we have learned how to recognize abuse and some of the effects of abuse. The best way for someone to cope with abuse is to recognize it, report it, and then seek help in dealing with the long-term effects of the abuse. We also learned that you can help end abuse by reporting it to a trusted adult. Why is it so important to report abuse if we suspect it? (Allow students to respond. Be sure to guide the discussion towards the fact that abuse always has negative consequences and the longer it goes on the more difficult it is to recover.)

(Display Slide 6 and provide each student with an index card.)

FOR YOUR EXIT SLIP TODAY,
PLEASE LIST 3 THINGS:

1. YOUR NAME
2. SOMETHING THAT YOU LEARNED TODAY OR WOULD LIKE TO SHARE
3. THE NAME OF A TRUSTED ADULT ON THIS CAMPUS TO WHOM YOU WOULD REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE



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For your exit slip today, please list 3 things:

1. Your name

2. Something that you learned today or would like to share

3. The name of a trusted adult on this campus to whom you would report suspected abuse

As soon as you answer the three questions, fold your index cards in half and I will collect them.

(Read through the index cards and follow up with any students who may need additional support.)

References:

- *Indicators of child abuse*. Emotional, Physical, Behavioural. (n.d.). <https://www.childmatters.org.nz/awareness/abuse-indicators/>
- Holland, K. (2018, December 3). *Causes of child abuse: Why some adults hurt children*. Healthline. <https://www.healthline.com/health/causes-of-child-abuse>
- Lyness, D. (Ed.). (2023, August). *Abuse: What you need to know (for teens)* | *nemours kidshealth*. KidsHealth. <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/family-abuse.html>

Click Here to Provide Feedback on this Lesson

Lesson 2 Abuse: Recognizing & Knowing What to Do

Information Sheet

Some Signs of Physical Child Abuse

- Burns, bite marks, cuts, bruises, or welts in the shape of an object
- Resistance to going home
- Fear of adults

Some Signs of Emotional Child Abuse

- Severe symptoms of depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
- Bed-wetting or bed soiling
- Severe symptoms of self-destructive behavior – self-harming, suicide attempts, engaging in drug or alcohol abuse

Some Signs of Sexual Child Abuse

- Fear of a particular person or family member
- Inappropriate knowledge of sexual acts
- Either excessive trying to please or aggressive

Some Signs of Child Neglect:

- Clothing unsuited to the weather
- Being dirty or unbathed
- Extreme hunger
- Apparent lack of supervision

Causes of Abuse:

What increases a person's risk of abusing a child?

- history of child abuse or neglect during their own childhood
- having a substance use disorder
- physical or mental health conditions, such as depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- stress from financial issues, unemployment, or medical problems
- family stress or crisis caused by domestic violence, relationship turmoil, separation, or divorce

How Does Abuse Affect People?

- Some abuse causes injuries that you can see, like bruises, cuts, or broken bones. Some injuries need medical care. Abuse also causes emotional hurt and deep stress that you can't see. This deep emotional stress is called trauma.
- The stress of abuse affects the way a person feels, thinks, and acts. It can make them feel scared and unsafe. They might feel sad, angry, or confused. Some feel ashamed, alone, or trapped.
- Some will mistakenly think abuse is their fault or that they did something to deserve it. Some may try to act like the abuse doesn't bother them and try not to show the deep hurt.
- For some, the stress of abuse can cause trouble with sleep, health, or eating. It can make it harder to focus in school or easier to get into fights.
- For some people, abuse can lead to depression, anxiety, or PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). Some may turn to alcohol, drugs, or self-harm to try to cope. But these ways of coping cause the person more harm than good. If the abuse happens at home, some people may try to escape it by leaving.
- Not everyone who goes through abuse will be affected in these ways. Each person and each situation is different.

What Should I Do if I'm Going Through Abuse?

If you are going through abuse, **tell an adult** you trust right away. If an adult is treating you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, but you're not sure whether it is abuse, you can still talk it over with another adult you trust. Even if abuse happened to you before but isn't happening now, you should tell someone about it.

The person you tell can be a parent, a grandparent, or a caregiver. It can be a doctor or nurse. It can be a teacher, counselor, therapist, or coach. It can be a friend's parent. If you don't have an adult you can turn to, you can call or text **1-800-422-4453** to talk to someone at the Childhelp Hotline or visit their website: www.childhelphotline.org.