

8th GRADE: ABUSE

LESSON 1 OVERVIEW



Types of Abuse



Lesson Time:
30 Minutes

Materials Provided:

- ☐ Handout: “Four Types of Abuse” (printed one per student)
- ☐ Video: [“Help a Friend in Trouble”](#) (:50)
- ☐ Parent Letter (shared electronically or printed one per student) [Download](#)
- ☐ Lesson Slides [Download](#)

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Projector with Video/Audio Capability

Objectives:

Students will be able to...

1. Define the 4 types of abuse.
2. Identify examples of 4 types of abuse.
3. Describe options for getting help when abuse is suspected.

Educators:

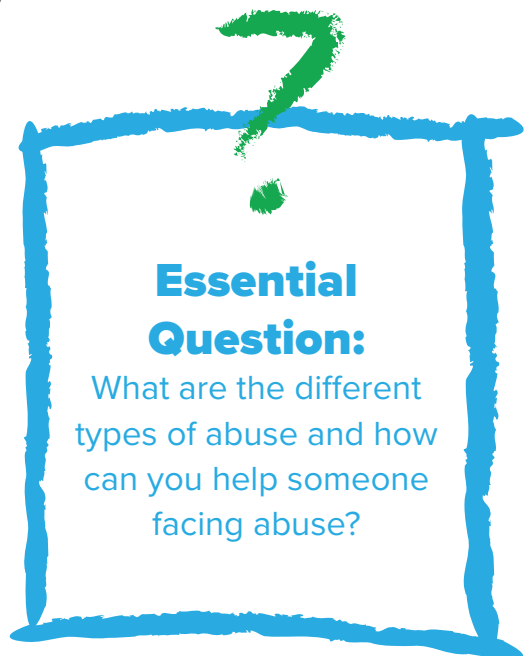
Did You Know?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it is estimated that 1 in 7 children has experienced child abuse and/or neglect in the past year (CDC, 2024a), with neglect continuing as the most common form of abuse. These survivors are more likely to experience a wide range of difficulties as adults from high-risk behavior such as smoking, alcohol and drug abuse, and unsafe sex (Springer, 2003). They can experience mental health disorders including depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, PTSD, eating disorders, and substance abuse disorders (Cameranesi, 2019). Some of these difficulties begin to manifest themselves during childhood. Recognizing signs and risk factors for abuse is key to helping children who are suffering. Signs of abuse may include physical signs, unexplained changes in behavior, and emotional signs such as depression, mood swings, or anxiety. Risk factors vary, but the CDC’s research indicates that a higher risk exists for children with caregivers who experience high levels of stress, past abuse, drug/alcohol issues, and financial strain, among others (CDC, 2024b). As students age, they become more careful in revealing signs of distress, but they do exist. There is hope for children in abusive situations through concern, care, and commitment. The healing from this trauma begins with the action of a trusted adult who will advocate for them.

Educator Prevention Tips:

These lessons have a variety of objectives and are not all centered around the harsh facts of abuse. Although the definitions of abuse and neglect will be introduced, most lessons focus more on mental health, healthy boundaries, and responses to challenging situations. We encourage you to be an advocate for the children in your classroom. Convey to them that you are a trusted adult who genuinely cares for their physical and mental well-being. Be aware of the dynamics in your classroom during these lessons in order to maintain a safe space.

If the topic of child abuse is new to you, we encourage you to educate yourself and research some tips for helping those in need. Also, know your obligations as a mandatory reporter. Talk to a counselor or administrator if you have questions about the reporting process.



Types of Abuse

Slide/Handout

Lesson Script/Talking Points

Lesson Introduction: (1 minute)

The subject of abuse is a very sensitive topic for both adults and students to discuss. However, it is important that we educate ourselves about this subject because it affects many young people. You may know someone personally who suffers from abusive situations or even long-term abuse. Because of this, we will approach these lessons very carefully and respectfully since people among us may be personally affected. Today we will learn more about the four types of abuse so that you may better recognize it. We will also introduce the options of what to do if you suspect someone you know is being abused.

Core Lesson: Types of Abuse Slides 1-4 (10 minutes)

About 4 million cases of child abuse and neglect involving almost 7 million children are reported each year. (HealthyChildren, 2022) We are going to define the four types of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect. As we discuss these, please take notes on the Four Types of Abuse handout. *(Distribute the handout "4 Types of Abuse" graphic organizer. Students will fill in the blanks identifying the four types of abuse as you work through the four slides.)*

4 Types of Abuse

Directions: Fill in the blanks with identifying information about the four types of abuse as you work through the slides.

Physical	Sexual
Emotional	Neglect

path



1

Slide 1: Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is defined as an injury that can be caused by hitting, kicking, punching, shoving, burning, shaking, or doing anything that causes physical harm. The statistics show that it is the second most reported type of abuse, and this may be because it is easier to recognize since it can leave physical signs. It also may be because it is simply that prevalent. Sometimes students ask, so I will say that if you are wondering, spanking isn't typically seen as abuse as long as there are no visible marks left on the child.



2

Slide 2: Sexual Abuse

The State of Alabama and many other states have adopted a law intended to spread awareness of sexual abuse and hopefully end it. Erin's law is named after Erin Merryn who was a victim of sexual abuse for much of her childhood. Erin Merryn has used her experience to fight for laws that require teachers to help students understand this type of abuse. Although this topic is hard to discuss, it is a real problem in our society, so we cannot ignore it. The definition of sexual abuse is inappropriate touching or non-touching behavior with a minor. This may include showing/taking videos, exposing body parts to a minor, vulgar texts/communication, or pictures with a minor (RAINN, 2024). This is a very sensitive issue because a victim may feel a sense of guilt, but only the aggressor is at fault and should bear the guilt alone. If you or someone you know experiences this type of abuse, it is vital that you speak to your counselor or another trusted adult immediately.

Core Lesson (cont)

Slide/Handout



3

Lesson Script/Talking Points

Slide 3: Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is often harder to recognize because it tends to happen slowly over time and leaves no physical marks or scars. Emotional abuse is defined as a form of abuse that occurs when a person's self-worth and value are damaged or destroyed through negative words or actions (Gordon, 2022). The goal of the aggressor is to obtain/maintain power over the victim. This may be done by relatives, other adults, or even by friends, boyfriends, or girlfriends. Be aware of this as you begin to choose people to date and who you associate with. This type of abuse is often part of a pattern of behavior that may include the aggressor apologizing for their actions and promising never to do it again, only to repeat the behavior over and over again.



4

Slide 4: Neglect

Neglect is the most common form of maltreatment. Of the children who experience abuse, three-quarters of them suffer from neglect. Neglect is failure to provide enough food, clothing, housing, health care, mental health care, or supervision. Neglect can begin very early in a child's life (Sussex, 2021).

Do you have any questions about the different types of abuse? *(If the facilitator is a classroom teacher, any unanswered questions should be referred to the school counselor.)*

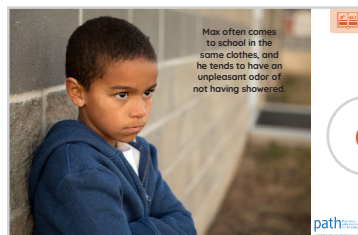
Activity: Identifying Abuse Practice (11 minutes)

Let's make sure that you understand the difference among the types of abuse. You will use the back side of your handout to answer whether each scenario is physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, or no abuse. Number the back of your paper from 1-10. As I read through each scenario, write down what type of abuse the scenario is describing if any. We will go back through them together to check your answers. *(Give students about 15 seconds to respond to each slide. After you have shown each slide once, go back over the slide and read the scenario and ask the class to tell you what the right answer is and why – listed below in bold letters. Work through the statements to ensure that students understand the types of abuse.)*



5

Slide 5 Cally, who is 12, shares that her brother's friend, Todd, who is 18, touches her on her bottom. She tells him to stop. He says, "Now, come on. A little touch doesn't hurt anyone." She firmly tells him to stop again, but he disregards her demand and refuses to stop. **(Sexual Abuse)**



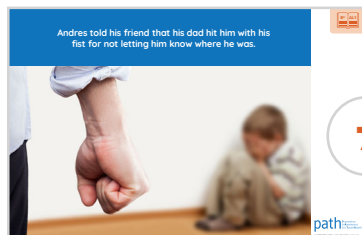
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Slide 6 Max often comes to school in the same clothes, and he tends to have an unpleasant odor of not having showered. **(Neglect)**

Core Lesson (cont)

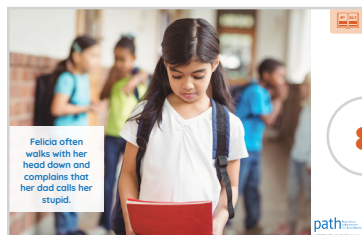
Slide/Handout

Lesson Script/Talking Points



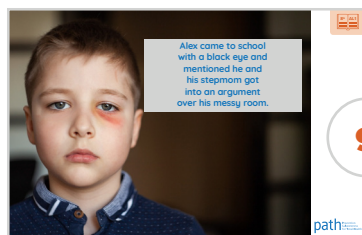
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Slide 7 Andres told his friend that his dad hit him with his fist for not letting him know where he was. **(Physical Abuse)**



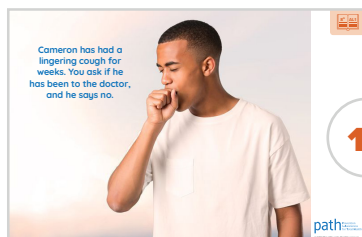
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Slide 8 Felicia often walks with her head down and complains that her dad calls her stupid. **(Emotional Abuse)**



9

Slide 9 Alex came to school with a black eye and mentioned that he and his step-mom got into an argument over his messy room. **(Physical Abuse)**



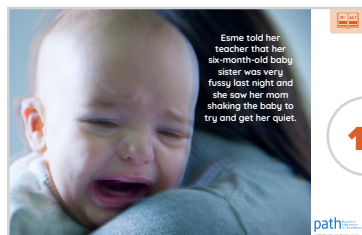
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Slide 10 Cameron has had a lingering cough for weeks. You ask if he has been to the doctor, and he says no. **(Neglect)**



11

Slide 11 Jay shares with his mom that his neighbor touches him in a way that makes him feel uncomfortable. The neighbor tells Jay to keep the touch a secret. **(Sexual Abuse)**



12

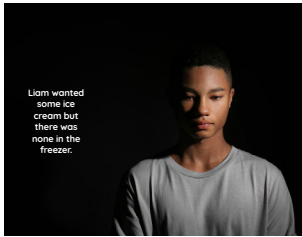
Slide 12 Esme told her teacher that her six-month-old baby sister was very fussy last night and she saw her mom shaking the baby to try and get her quiet. **(Physical Abuse)**

Core Lesson (cont)



Slide/Handout

Lesson Script/Talking Points



Slide 13 Liam wanted some ice cream but there was none in the freezer. **(No Abuse)**

13

path



Slide 14 Sadie often comments that her grandmother constantly tells her that she isn't as smart as her siblings and treats them better than she does Sadie. **(Emotional Abuse)**

14

path



Activity 2: "How to Help an Abused Friend" Video (6 minutes)

Now that you know more about recognizing and differentiating the four different types of abuse, you have to think about what to do if you or you suspect a friend is being abused. The answer is for you to report to a trusted adult! This can be a teacher, counselor, parent, or any other trusted adult. Your job is definitely not to investigate - leave that to the professionals whose job it is to investigate. There are ways to be supportive, but you are not responsible for anything other than speaking to a Go-To Adult. Let's watch this video called "Help a Friend in Trouble" (:50) https://youtu.be/wPQPf_f7WA4?si=qhlqhvyr-Hirnhwi

Closing: Essential Question (2 minutes)

What are the different types of abuse and how do you help someone facing abuse? (Allow students to respond.)

Hopefully, each of you now understands the four types of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect). Even more importantly, you have learned what to do if you recognize any of these abusive situations in your own life or the life of a friend. You, your family, and your friends have the right to be safe.

We also discussed how to report abuse. Seeking out a trusted adult like a teacher, counselor, or parent should always be your first step. However, if you don't have a trusted adult that you feel comfortable talking to, you can always call Childhelp. This hotline is staffed with people who have experience talking about this tough topic and providing help to callers. The information for Childhelp is printed at the bottom of your worksheet. Everyone, please keep this worksheet in case you ever need help.

Core Lesson (cont)



References:

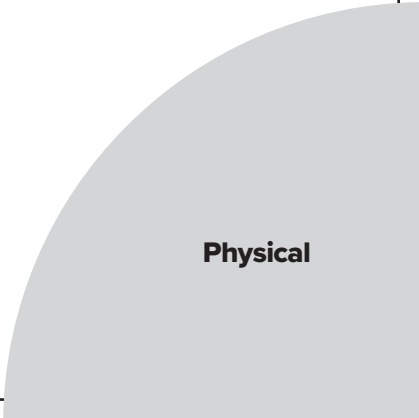
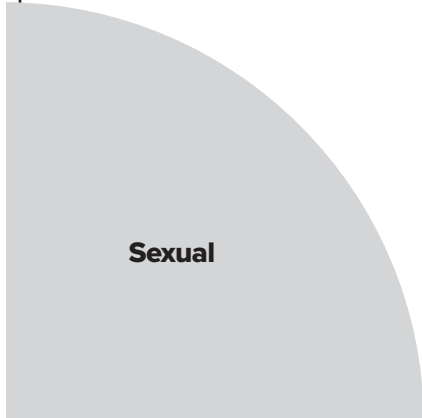

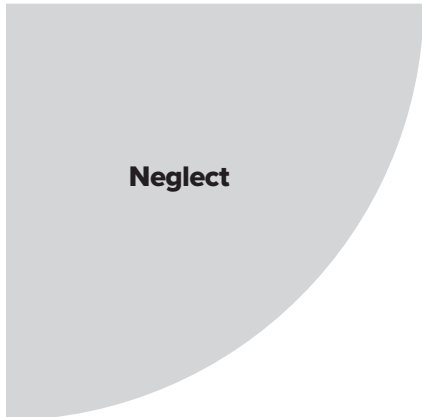
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[Click Here to Provide Feedback on this Lesson](#)

Name: _____ Date: _____

4 Types of Abuse

Directions: Fill in the boxes with identifying information about the four types of abuse as your teacher goes through the slides.

 <p>Physical</p>	 <p>Sexual</p>
 <p>Emotional</p>	 <p>Neglect</p>

Childhelp Hotline:
Call or Text 800-422-4453