



Instructor's Guide

ETERNAL SCARS: PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL CHILD ABUSE

INTRODUCTION

The effects of child abuse are traumatic and long-lasting. At least 50% of abuse victims suffer from clinical anxiety and depression. Child abuse continues to be an on-going problem within our society, even though awareness has increased and support systems have been implemented for children. This program explores and dissects the signs and effects of child abuse, including mental, physical and sexual abuse. Each of our storytellers share their stories in order to shed light on this horrific problem. Creating awareness and education are the best ways to eventually win the fight against child abuse.

OBJECTIVES

By viewing this program, students will learn the following:

- The short-and long-term effects of abuse
- Warning signs to identify a victim of abuse
- Characteristics of an abuser
- What to do when you or someone you know is being abuse
- Who to talk to about the abuse
- Why talking about the abuse is important
- The possible outcomes from telling about the abuse



DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. What is child abuse?
2. What are some of the effects of abuse?
3. What are the warning signs that someone is being abused?
4. What should you do if you feel a friend or family member is being abused?
5. Who in the community can you turn to?
6. Why is it important to tell about abuse?
7. If Krystal had told someone outside the family about her abuse, what do you think would have happened?
8. What led Steve to attempt suicide? How could he have prevented his own demise?
9. Michelle gave two main reasons for not telling anyone about the abuse by her uncle. What were they? How could she have trusted them enough to tell?

PROGRAM RECAP FOR DISCUSSION

Q1: What are the types of child abuse?

A: Emotional abuse; physical abuse; sexual abuse; neglect.

Q2: Who are the perpetrators of abuse?

A: Mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, neighbors, and any other person in contact with a child.

Q3: What are some of the warning signs of abuse?

A: Bruises; low self-esteem; behavioral changes; changes in attitude; trouble sleeping; promiscuity; upset stomach.

Q4: What are the effects of child abuse?

A: Emotional; physical scarring; depression; feelings of inadequacy; trust issues; poor self-esteem; increased chance of becoming an abuser; anxiety.

Q5: What are some characteristics of an abuser?

A: The desire for power and control.

Q6: Who can you talk to if you are being abused?

A: A teacher; counselor; member of the clergy; doctor; good friend's parent; family member; National Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-422-4453).

Q7: What should you do if you feel a friend is being abused?

A: Depending on their age, talk with the friend about your concerns. Tell a parent or an adult you trust about your concerns. Keep talking until you get a satisfactory answer.

Q8: Why is it important to talk sooner rather than later?

A: Keeping it inside will cause your suffering and pain to increase. The sooner you get help, the sooner you heal. Even though the outcome may result in removal from the home, it is best for everyone to get the help they need.

ACTIVITY 1

The main issue facing children who are abused is the lack of trust toward those closest to them. Many children and teens feel that adults are not trustworthy of their problems and issues, let alone a child or teen that is being abused. This activity will benefit every student in your class by providing them with a list of people within their community to turn to any time needed. The focus of this exercise is to get young people to begin to look around them to see how many people they have to use for support.

Exercise

- Individually, have students make a list of names of all adults in their lives. (This includes family, both immediate and distant relatives, teachers, counselors, administrators and school employees, friends' families, church groups, and so on.)
- From this list, have students circle the names of the adults with whom they might be able to share their feelings about school, friends, boyfriends/girlfriends, peer pressure, stress, and so on. (Note the word "might," as many of these students probably have never tried.)
- Encourage students to turn to these adults when they have even the slightest problems or concerns. Continue to reach out to those individuals as much as possible.

- This next step will help build those relationships with the adults they've chosen by participating in shared experiences. In this step, have students make a list of their recreational interests: What they like to do, and what they would like to do. Encourage students to do these activities with their mentors in order to build a solid trust and bond between one another.

ACTIVITY 2

This activity is designed to get students involved in issues facing their peers, such as child abuse. Participating in this activity will offer students the chance to research the topic and increase awareness in the fight to beat it, while giving them the opportunity to use creativity and work together.

- Group three to four students together, preferably students who have not yet worked together or are simply acquaintances.
- As a group, have students begin the research process to find out as much about child abuse as is available to them.
- As a group, they will design a public service poster that focuses on the abuse of children.

Resources for the creation of posters could be the Internet, magazines, drawing utensils, stock photo books, newspapers, and other art materials.

Each poster should include information that the students feels will be helpful to others, such as the National Child Abuse Hotline number: 1-800-422-4453 (1-800-4-A-CHILD); www.childhelp.org.