



Leader's Guide

INTRODUCTION

This video is an outgrowth of a Family and Consumer Sciences curriculum developed by Jean Gerdes, a teacher at Donegal Middle School in Marietta, PA. During the parenting unit, students were required to care for a “baby.” As technology has advanced over the past twenty-five years, so have the students’ “babies”, which evolved from hard-boiled eggs and bags of flour, to “state of the art” electronic baby simulators. One constant over the years has been the occurrence of child abuse inflicted upon these “babies” by the student caretakers.

The consequence for students mistreating their “babies” has been required attendance at a presentation about child abuse given by Joanne Castner, a school counselor in Lancaster, PA. Imagine speaking to a group of 40-60 hostile middle school students who had to wait for lunch because of you! But Joanne persevered in this annual tradition.

We know that children who exhibit abusive behavior toward others are likely to have been abused themselves, and we know that child abuse occurs all too frequently. Teachers **must** be willing to consider the possibility that one, or more, of their students has experienced abuse.

This is why it is so important for students to hear the messages so clearly presented in this video:

- If you have been abused, **it is not your fault.**
- The abuser (parent/caretaker) does not necessarily hate you.
- There are ways of getting help for yourself and your family.
- Child abuse is **never** acceptable, and **no child deserves to be abused.**

Over time, we realized that producing our own video about child abuse would ensure that Joanne’s message would be available, not only to the students at Donegal, but also to other groups which had begun to express interest in this topic. Thanks to a generous grant from the Donegal Education Foundation, the video became possible and developed a life of its own. Joanne wrote the script and (reluctantly) allowed herself to be persuaded to play the role of counselor. George Winchell, of **GW MEDIA**, donated his expertise, energy and countless hours to shoot and edit the video. Jim Johnson, director of Donegal Performing Arts, managed the auditions and directed the project. Novice and professional actors from Lancaster County worked long hours to “do it right.” And Jean took her place “behind the scenes” and embraced the daunting role of project coordinator.

All of us involved in this project feel very strongly that no one should ever profit from child abuse. As a result, proceeds from this video will be donated to organizations that help fight child abuse.

Our hope is that this video may be helpful to you in opening up the topic of child abuse in a way that makes it safe for individuals who may have been abused to come forward and begin the process of healing – by asking for help and beginning to accept that, indeed, **NO CHILD DESERVES TO BE ABUSED.**

INTENDED AUDIENCE FOR THIS VIDEO

- Students in a classroom
- Students in a group situation (scouts; youth groups; etc.)
- Adults (parents; teachers; youth workers; adult survivors of abuse, etc.)

OUTLINE OF VIDEO CONTENT

In this video, you will learn about:

- How and when child abuse came to be considered a crime in the US
- Different types of child abuse: what they are, and what they look like
- Those who abuse children, and what the risk factors are that may contribute to someone becoming an abuser
- Mandated reporters
- Why victims of abuse are often reluctant to seek help for themselves
- The best way to stop child abuse

LETTER TO SEND HOME TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

In the interest of building relationships between home and school, it is often helpful to send a letter home to parents/guardians, letting them know what you have covered in class. This can be especially helpful when you are dealing with a topic as sensitive as this one. By initiating a letter home, you make it clear that you are not trying to hide anything, and that indeed you are anxious for their help in doing the best job of preparing their children for the future. On the following page is a sample letter you might choose to send home:

Sample Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Tomorrow we will view a video in class, entitled “Hope Beyond the Breaking Point, No Child Deserves to be Abused[®].” The video describes the various types of child abuse (physical, emotional/verbal, neglect, and sexual), and talks about the factors that might lead individuals to become abusers. Most importantly, it stresses the messages that **abuse is never the child’s fault; there is help available to families where abuse is occurring; and NO child deserves to be abused.**

All of us—teachers and families alike—carry the hope that the children in our care will grow up to be happy and healthy individuals. To this end, there are things we can do to help our children to learn the skills they will need to enjoy healthy relationships. Here are some suggestions for things you may choose to do at home to follow up on today’s lesson:

- Model positive problem solving. Allowing your child to observe you handle conflict in a non-violent manner helps him/her to learn that conflict is normal, and can be resolved in a healthy manner.
- Talk about healthy ways to disagree; to express anger; to express fear.
- Teach your child to distinguish appropriate behavior from another person. Talk about what your child can do to protect him/herself when he/she is not feeling safe.
- Let your child know the difference between good and bad secrets. Teach them to ask, “Could someone be harmed if I do not tell this secret?” If the answer is yes, then they should tell!
- Talk with your child about good and bad touches. Apart from examinations by a health care professional, your child should know that **no one** should be touching the parts of their body which are covered by a bathing suit.
- Be aware of changes in your child’s behavior or attitude. If a child says he/she does not want to be with someone, ask why.
- Most importantly, reinforce to your child that they can **always** come to you with their concerns and fears. Often, children will keep the fact that they have been abused a secret, because they fear that their parents will be angered, disgusted, and/or condemning if they find out about an abuse situation (particularly if it involved sexual abuse). Your child needs to know that you will always be there to help keep them safe—emotionally, and physically.

Thank you for your support in this matter, and for your care for your child!

Sincerely,

HOW TO USE THIS VIDEO

Many adults are uncomfortable talking about the topic of child abuse, and with good reason...it is an unpleasant and disturbing subject. But you do not need to be an expert in the field to share information with your learners which will be of help to them.

First, keep in mind the statistics. According to the most recent figures available from Childhelp USA at the time of this writing, three children die each day in the United States due to child abuse in the home. Three million reports of child abuse are made in the United States annually; the actual incidence of abuse and neglect is estimated to be three times greater than the number reported to authorities. So it is quite possible, as you talk with a room full of students and/or adults, that at least one individual present may have been the victim of abuse.

For this reason, we encourage you **NOT** to make statements which characterize child abusers as necessarily being monsters. The fact is that most individuals who abuse children were themselves abused when they were young, and this unfortunately a learned pattern of behavior for them. Stress, instead, that **it is never a child's fault when abuse occurs; help IS available for families where abuse is occurring; and NO CHILD DESERVES TO BE ABUSED.** Repetition of these statements may be enough to encourage an individual who is silently enduring abuse to step forward and ask for help.

If someone **does** approach you after viewing this video and shares that they are being abused:

- Stay calm. Listen. Do not ask a lot of questions.
- Reassure the child that telling was the right thing to do, and you appreciate that you were trusted.
- Let the child know that your primary job is to make sure that he/she is safe. Therefore, you will report the abuse and get help.
- If you suspect that the child has been sexually assaulted, **DO NOT CHANGE HIS/HER CLOTHES NOR WASH THE CHILD. CONTACT THE NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM IMMEDIATELY.**
- If you are a teacher, follow your district's policy on reporting child abuse. Often, the first step is to inform the building principal and/or school counselor.
- If you are not a teacher, make a report by calling your local child protective services hotline, or local police or sheriff's department.
- If you are unsure who to call, contact the 24-hour Childhelp USA National Abuse Hotline at 1-800-4-A-CHILD for that information.

Assisting in the prevention of child abuse can be difficult and upsetting. However, if you are called upon to respond to a child in need, you have the opportunity to change the course of a child's life forever.

Hope Beyond the Breaking Point®

No child deserves to be abused

Lesson Plan

Day 1

Objective

Students will be able to identify types of child abuse and know where to turn for help if needed.

Day Before Lesson

Send home letter and have it signed.

Learning Activities

1. Arrange students into 8 small groups.
2. Give each group a Discussion Card and allow them 3-5 minutes to discuss the questions and agree upon an answer. A group member should stand and be prepared to share the questions and the answers with the class.
3. When time is up or all groups have a member standing, which ever come first, do a whip around to hear the groups' responses.
4. Show *Hope Beyond the Breaking Point*®.
5. After the video, go over the Discussion Cards with each group and see if their answers have changed. Use the Teacher Discussion Guide to help add to the discussion and reinforce important points.

Materials Needed

- *Hope Beyond the Breaking Point*® video
- Discussion Cards (Reproducible Discussion Cards are located on the next two pages of this Teacher Discussion Guide.)
- Teacher Discussion Guide

Homework

Students should write a statement or paragraph about anything they learned that they did not know before or what in the video struck in a powerful way and what they think is the most important thing we must do as a society to stop child abuse.

Discussion Cards: Day 1 Lesson Plan

<p>Discussion Card</p>  <p>HOPE BEYOND THE BREAKING POINT. <small>No child ever deserves to be abused!</small></p>	 <p>HOPE BEYOND THE BREAKING POINT. <small>No child ever deserves to be abused!</small></p>
<p>Discussion Card</p>  <p>HOPE BEYOND THE BREAKING POINT. <small>No child ever deserves to be abused!</small></p>	 <p>HOPE BEYOND THE BREAKING POINT. <small>No child ever deserves to be abused!</small></p>
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Reproducible Discussion Cards: Day 1 Lesson Plan

TRUE OR FALSE

- _____ Putting all abusive parents in jail is the best way to stop child abuse.
- _____ Many people who abuse children were victims of child abuse.

TRUE OR FALSE

- _____ Abusive or neglectful parents have a very poor self-image.
- _____ If a child is not physically hurt, it is not child abuse.

TRUE OR FALSE

- _____ Stress can trigger a parent to abuse a child.
- _____ Children can die from physical neglect.

TRUE OR FALSE

- _____ A very large number of abused children are infants and toddlers.
- _____ Child abuse has no long term effects on a child.

TRUE OR FALSE

- _____ Most violent parents intend to hurt their children.
- _____ Until recently, child abuse did not exist.

TRUE OR FALSE

- _____ Child abuse can happen in any family, regardless of how wealthy they are, their race, or their religion.
- _____ What children learn about love & trust comes from their parents.

TRUE OR FALSE

- _____ You can't be taken to court for protecting a child by reporting child abuse.
- _____ All children have the right to love and affection.

TRUE OR FALSE

- _____ Children don't tell about abuse because they believe the abuse is normal behavior.
- _____ Animals had rights before children.

Discussion Cards: Answers to TRUE/FALSE Statements

Putting all abusive parents in jail is the best way to stop child abuse.

FALSE. Most families need counseling to help them learn to deal with the stresses of parenting so that the family can heal and stay together.

Many people who abuse children were victims of child abuse.

TRUE. Child abuse seems to be a cycle; but with help, the cycle can be broken.

Most violent parents intend to hurt their children.

FALSE. Most people who abuse their children are doing the best they can, and lack the skills necessary to do a better job. They may be influenced by drugs and alcohol. They may not know how to express their emotions or have low self-esteem. Most likely they grew up in a family where violence was the norm. Regardless of the reasons, they need help. A child abuse report puts steps in action to help the family learn the skills they need to function in a way that everyone can be safe and healthy.

Until recently, child abuse did not exist.

FALSE. Child abuse has existed forever, but it was not considered a crime in the United States until the case of Mary Ellen Wilson in 1874. In recent years, reports of child abuse have increased. Childhelp USA reported that, in 2003, three children died each day in the United States from child abuse in the home. Three million reports of child abuse are made in the U.S. annually; the actual incidence of child abuse and neglect is estimated to be three times greater than the number reported to authorities.

Abusive or neglectful parents have a very poor self-image.

TRUE. Most parents who abuse their children hate themselves for doing it, and feel guilty and ashamed and desperately want to stop.

If a child is not physically hurt, it is not child abuse.

FALSE. Some experts say that emotional abuse is much more damaging a child than physical abuse, because it is easier to heal a bone than to heal someone who has been told over the years that they are worthless.

Child abuse can happen in any family, regardless of how wealthy they are, their race, or their religion.

TRUE. Child abuse occurs in all areas of our society. It crosses economic, social, racial, and IQ levels.

What children learn about love & trust comes from their parents.

TRUE. According to Erik Erikson, an infant has a window of opportunity to learn to love and trust. Trust is taught to infants by meeting their needs with love and care. If children do not learn trust in infancy, it will then affect their relationships throughout their entire lives.

Stress can trigger a parent to abuse a child.

TRUE. Parenting is one of the most difficult jobs anyone could ever have. The responsibility never ends. If a parent has additional stress (financial difficulties, problems with addiction, relationship difficulties, etc.) there is a potential for abusive behavior.

Children can die from physical neglect.

TRUE. A baby who is fed and changed—but not held, cuddled and spoken to—will die. Abuse or neglect may also lead to brain damage and malnutrition.

You can't be taken to court for protecting a child by reporting child abuse.

TRUE. Children have the right to be protected. The only way to ensure this is to protect the people who are reporting child abuse in good faith. Anyone who suspects child abuse can report it even if they don't have positive proof. In fact, teachers, doctors, child care workers, counselors, police and clergy are mandated reporters who **MUST** report child abuse if they suspect it is happening.

All children have the right to love and affection.

TRUE. Children also have the right to medical care, food, and shelter, as well as the right to protection from physical harm. Because most child abuse occurs in the home, it requires us to support families as best we can, and seek help for any family that is in need.

A very large number of abused children are infants and toddlers.

TRUE. Children are abused at all ages; but infants and toddlers, as well as preadolescents, make up a large percentage of abused children. These are developmental stages when children's behavior can be especially challenging, which adds to the parents' stress levels. Not surprising, many children are also abused when being punished for misbehaving. This is why it is so important for parents to learn to **discipline** their children, instead of **punishing** them. Discipline is a way to teach the child appropriate behavior, without harming the child and without the parent losing control. The ultimate goal of discipline is to teach the child self-control; with punishment, the child is controlled by the parent.

Child abuse has no long term effects on a child.

FALSE. Children who have been abused will need to overcome feelings of guilt and shame. Often they feel that the abuse is their fault, because they are "bad." They will have difficulty trusting others, and having healthy relationships. They may become aggressive, passive, withdrawn, overly eager to please, or very critical of others. If the abuse was sexual, they may have difficulty having a healthy and enjoyable sex life.

Children don't tell about abuse because they believe the abuse is normal behavior.

TRUE. If you grow up being abused, this may seem like "normal" behavior; but it not acceptable! Children also do not tell about abuse, because they often believe

it is their own fault. Children may also be embarrassed about the abuse. Finally, the child almost always loves the parent or caregiver, and wants to protect them.

Animals had rights before children.

TRUE. Although it may seem impossible to believe, rights were given to animals before they were given to children.

Hope Beyond the Breaking Point®

No child deserves to be abused

Lesson Plan

Day 2

Objective

Students will be able to identify types of child abuse and know where to turn for help if needed.

Learning Activities

1. Begin the class by asking students if any one would like to share their homework assignment from the **Day 1 Lesson Plan** with the class.

Special Note: We have found it helpful to ask individuals if they learned anything from the video that they did not know before; or if anything struck them in a powerful way. As the video is somewhat intense, individuals who view it may need to talk about it in order to debrief. If, while listening to an student's reaction, you sense that he/she may have experienced abuse, and he/she is about to share some intense and personal information with the group, please intervene by saying something along these lines of, "You know, sometimes watching a video like this brings to mind things of a personal nature that may have happened to us or people we know about, and this can be upsetting. Why don't you stay after class and talk with me for a few minutes so we have some privacy?" Remember that allowing a student to reveal personal information about themselves in the presence of other students would leave him/her extremely vulnerable.

2. Review with the class some basic vocabulary words that pertain to child abuse. Hand each student an activity sheet that asks them to match the type of abuse with its definition. (Reproducible activity sheets can be found on the page following the Day 2 Lesson Plan.) When students have completed this activity, review the answers as a class.

Matching Activity Answers

<u>C</u> Permitting or encouraging someone to abuse a child.	A. Physical abuse
<u>E</u> Not caring for a child's physical needs	B. Verbal abuse
<u>D</u> Sexually exploiting a child	C. Passive abuse
<u>F</u> Not paying attention to the child	D. Sexual abuse
<u>B</u> Yelling/screaming at a child; put downs	E. Physical neglect
<u>A</u> Physically harming a child	F. Emotional neglect

3. Arrange your class into small groups of two or three students and give each group a *Should I Tell?* card. Ask each group to come up with an answer to the question on the card you give them.

Answers to *Should I Tell?* Questions

- A. Not abuse. Time out is an appropriate consequence.
- B. Abuse. Neglect at the least; could also lead to a situation where the child dies of heat stroke, or could be kidnapped since the child is unattended.
- C. Abuse. Physical. Could lead to shaken baby syndrome, a very serious condition that causes the child's brain to bounce against the inside of the skull. This can cause brain damage or death.
- D. Abuse. Sexual. Also, mom is guilty of passive abuse.
- E. Abuse. Verbal/Emotional
- F. Yes, you should tell your parents, a teacher, a counselor, a clergy member, the police, or a child abuse hotline.
- G. Yes, you should tell your parents, a teacher, a counselor, a clergy member, the police, or a child abuse hotline.
- H. Yes, you should tell your parents, a teacher, a counselor, a clergy member, the police, or a child abuse hotline.

Materials Needed

- Matching Activity Sheets (Reproducible activity sheets can be found on the page following the Day 2 Lesson Plan)
- *Should I Tell?* cards (Reproducible cards can be found on the pages following the Day 2 Lesson Plan)
- Teacher Discussion Guide

Reproducible Matching Activity: Day 2 Lesson Plan

Match the term with the definition.

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. ____ Permitting or encouraging someone to abuse a child. | A. Physical abuse |
| 2. ____ Not caring for a child's physical needs | B. Verbal abuse |
| 3. ____ Sexually exploiting a child | C. Passive abuse |
| 4. ____ Not paying attention to the child | D. Sexual abuse |
| 5. ____ Yelling/screaming at a child; put downs | E. Physical neglect |
| 6. ____ Physically harming a child | F. Emotional neglect |

Match the term with the definition.

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| 4. ____ Not paying attention to the child | D. Sexual abuse |
| 5. ____ Yelling/screaming at a child; put downs | E. Physical neglect |
| 6. ____ Physically harming a child | F. Emotional neglect |

Should I Tell? Cards: Day 2 Lesson Plan

<p>Is this abuse?</p> 	<p>Is this abuse?</p> 
<p>Is this abuse?</p> 	<p>Is this abuse?</p> 
<p>Should you tell?</p> 	<p>Is this abuse?</p> 
<p>Should I tell?</p> 	<p>Should I tell?</p> 

<p>A. Six year old Linda got mad at her little brother and hit him with her Barbie doll. Now Linda's mother has given her a "time out" and is making her sit on a kitchen chair as punishment.</p> <p>Is this abuse? If so, what kind is it?</p>	<p>B. Two year old Matthew has fallen asleep in his carseat on the way to the shopping mall. His father decides to just leave him in the car, sleeping, rather than wake him up to take him shopping. He plans to be gone for about an hour.</p> <p>Is this abuse? If so, what kind is it?</p>
<p>C. Marie's baby is seven weeks old, and seems to cry a lot. She tries to comfort her daughter by picking her up, changing, or feeding her. But if the baby continues crying, Marie sometimes shakes her to try to make her stop.</p> <p>Is this abuse? If so, what kind is it?</p>	<p>D. Danielle's mother has been very ill for the past few months. Recently, Danielle's father has begun to come into her room at night and have sexual relations with her, since her mother is too sick to be a partner to him in this way. Danielle's mother seems to know what is happening, but isn't saying or doing anything to stop it.</p> <p>Is this abuse? If so, what kind is it?</p>
<p>E. Paul's father wanted to be a star athlete, but never quite made it in the big leagues. Paul dislikes sports, but plays in order to keep his father off his back. When Paul makes a mistake on the field, his father berates him in front of everyone.</p> <p>Is this abuse? If so, what kind is it?</p>	<p>F. When you are changing into your pajamas at a sleep over, you notice large welts and bruises all over one of your friend's back. When you say something about it, s/he says it was caused by a fall from a bike. All night you think about it. Those marks don't look as if they were caused by a fall from a bike; some of the bruises looked old and half-healed. You think it might be abuse. Should you tell? If yes, who will you tell?</p>
<p>G. Your best friend tells you that for 6 months her stepfather has been coming into her room at every night while her mother is at work. First he was just touching her, but now it is much more. She makes you promise not to tell. She is sure if she just changes the way she dresses, and avoids him, she can make him stop.</p> <p>Should you tell? If yes, who will you tell?</p>	<p>H. Every week you babysit your one year old cousin, Henry. The house is filthy... dirty plates & laundry are everywhere, as well as messes left by the dog. Henry is never clean, always seems hungry, and has a diaper rash that just doesn't seem to go away. Henry's mother says, "If you think you can do a better job, go right ahead!"</p> <p>Should you tell? If yes, who will you tell?</p>

National Number for Reporting Child Abuse
Childhelp USA: 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Childhelp USA: Child Abuse: What is it? What Can You Do? An Informative Handbook. Available from Childhelp USA (1-800-4-A-CHILD). This paperback guide is a comprehensive source of information about abuse for teachers, parents, and anyone who works with children.

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