

Prevention of Child Sex Abuse

How to conduct “NO BAD TOUCH” session for a group of
children aged 5-10years

Facilitator’s Training Workshop

By-

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INTRODUCTION

Many aspects of human sexuality still remain an enigma to us. We are still far from complete understanding of how we develop our sexual identity and what determines sexual gratification for a person.

Most of us are lucky to have a sexual identity and sexual preferences that are harmless for others and can be expressed by socially acceptable ways. Unfortunately, some adults derive sexual pleasure by using children as object of sexual gratification. This experience is very harmful for a child in short term and most children exposed to such experience have to suffer lifelong harmful effects. Legal framework all over the world recognizes this as Abuse.

These sexually perverted individuals are part of our society and there is no easy way to identify them as such. Therefore, current thinking is geared towards protecting children from such horrible experience by developing a system of child protection that will prevent child abuse where-ever possible and detect it as early as possible.

This workshop is designed to protect our children from such individuals and child sex abuse (CSA).

Some facts about Child Sex Abuse-

1. Proportion of children abused sexually is almost same across countries, cultures, religions, languages, social and economic classes.
2. Until puberty, boys and girls are equally targeted. After puberty, girls are more vulnerable.
3. Abusers are almost always men (in more than 90% cases). Most abusers are serial offenders. That means, they often abuse many children serially or simultaneously.
4. Most abusers are well-known to the child and child's family. Abusers often choose professions or roles where they have access to children. Abusers have excellent child-skills. They can gain a child's confidence easily.
5. Abused children face difficulty in leading normal life and development. They can develop many problems related to their personality, self-confidence, relationships and development of sexuality.
6. With appropriate training, children can protect themselves from such abuse. This training can be given to children without talking about sex, genitals or abuse.

Aim and Objectives

AIM - To sensitize children to the concept of “bad touch” AND to teach them a technique to protect themselves from bad touch.

OBJECTIVES

1. To help children identify areas of body those are used for sexual touch by abusers.
2. To educate children about three important steps that they can take to protect themselves.
3. To establish concept of safe adult and identify a safe adult for every child.
4. To complete the loop of child protection by connecting the child and safe adult.

When every child learns this self protection technique, we can hope to prevent or reduce CSA in our society. It works like immunizing children against deadly diseases; the more number of children are immunized, the more they are protected.

Very Important -

1. **Please DO NOT talk about “good touch” at all.** A good/pleasurable/ accepted touch is a very complicated concept and experience. We should not expect children to have such ability to differentiate. It makes practical sense to talk about danger in clear terms instead of confusing kids with terms like good touch.
2. No matter how good your intentions are, please don't add or delete any components of this workshop. This is designed as emergency training manual. Children are likely to remember and follow steps if they are crisp and simple. Any attempt to use this opportunity to teach more stuff will only result in some important component getting deleted from kids' mind.

STEP BY STEP FLOW OF WORKSHOP

STEP ONE – Establish concept of safety and danger.

STEP TWO – Identifying “danger areas” of body

STEP THREE – Three steps to safety

STEP FOUR – Identifying safe adult

STEP FIVE – Closing the loop by communicating with safe adult

Though we have divided this workshop into five steps, the workshop should flow as one single event. The division into five steps is for instruction purpose only.

This workshop is best conducted for a group of 10-12 children. In school, where class strength is large, we can divide children in small groups of (girls and boys separately) of 10-12 and conduct this workshop.

Typical workshop will need about 15-20 min. for each group.

PLEASE WATCH VIDEO ON THE WEBSITE – WWW.NOBADTOUCH.COM BEFORE PROCEEDING FURTHER.

STEP ONE – establish concept of safety and danger

First part of discussion is aimed at developing rapport with children. The facilitator can start by introducing herself. Then she can ask names of all the kids in the group. Discussion can have free flow of chatting after that. Many things that children are interested in can be discussed. Discussion about sports is often useful way to gently direct conversation towards safety. Most children have a favorite sportsperson. Facilitator can open discussion about sports and direct it towards clothes and safety gear that sportsmen use to keep themselves safe from injuries. It can be pointed out that simple things like shoes, helmets and good quality clothes protect player from injury.

After this facilitator should talk about things that are considered as dangerous in daily life. Children can list things and situations where they need to be careful to avoid harm.

At this point facilitator can tell children - “some grown-ups touch children in a way that is not good for children, this touch can make you feel uncomfortable”. It is advisable not to take discussion towards identifying children who have received such touch.

STEP TWO – identifying “danger areas” of body.

At this point facilitator should tell children that there are three areas of body that are not to be touched by others. These areas are identified by the facilitator by using open palm. If she is comfortable, she can put her palm on these three areas one by one. **DO NOT USE A CHILD TO DEMONSTRATE THIS PART.**

These three areas are **chest, bottom and between legs.**

Children should be made to repeat these three areas two to three times so as to fix it in their memory.

If facilitator is uncomfortable about pointing to body parts, she can use diagram in science books or photos of sports persons.

It is important to tell children that parents may need to touch them on these areas when giving bath. Doctor may touch them there while examining, but only in presence of parents.

STEP THREE – three steps to safety

Once children have memorized three areas, we take next step. Now we inform them about NO-GO-TELL action plan.

NO – when somebody tries to touch the child on one of the danger areas, child should clearly say “NO” or “don't touch me there”. During workshop asking children to demonstrate shouting “NO” usually gets them into a shouting match with lots of giggles and laughter.

GO – child must try to get away from that person and place as soon as possible. Children should be told specifically that a place with lots of people is a safe place. Child should try to get to such a place of safety as soon as possible.

TELL – after getting away from that person, child must tell this incidence to the “safe adult” as soon as possible.

Make the children repeat these steps a few times.

STEP FOUR – identifying safe adult

This is a crucial part of workshop. This is started by asking each child to identify a person who they feel safe with, a person who has never given them “bad touch”. Help them to identify a female member of the family if possible. Once all children have identified a safe adult, make them write that name at the bottom of the handout.

Most important safe adult is child's mother. Children should be encouraged to identify other safe adults in their life as well. Most kids will be able to make a small list of safe adults in their life.

Facilitator should sign her name there as well.

STEP FIVE – closing the loop by communicating with safe adult

Ideally facilitator should talk to the safe adult in front of the child and tell him/her that child has identified them as a safe adult and if the child gets “bad touch”, the child will talk to them as soon as possible. If possible, do this as a group activity where all safe adults and children are brought together and this process is explained to all adults in front of the children.

Impact of this drill is enhanced if the adult signs on the handout in front of the child.

If this is not possible, second best option is let the children take that paper home and obtain sign of safe adult on that handout. It will be really helpful if the facilitator can talk to the safe adult on the phone to make sure that they have understood this whole thing properly.

At the end of this all children should be cheered and given the message “be smart – stay safe”.

COMMON DOUBTS AND TROUBLESHOOTING

1. Will this workshop make children suspicious of all adults?

Children use their intelligence to assess any situation. They are quite clearly aware of the normal fun touch and rough & tumble play that is harmless.

Most of the times, children themselves are very uncomfortable with bad touch but they do not tell it to anyone as they do not know how to explain it to adults. They are also worried that they will be blamed for everything and will get punishment.

This workshop will give them confidence that they can talk to at least one adult about bad touch and their chosen safe adult will listen with proper respect and attention.

In fact, this kind of communication channel helps children bond better with adults and develops a sense of safety in the child. This increases their self confidence.

Most important role of safe adult is included for this reason. A child will approach a safe adult in case of receiving bad touch. It is a safe adult's responsibility to evaluate the information given by child and take appropriate steps.

So far after teaching thousands of children in such workshop, I have not come across even a single reported case of false accusation by a child or safe adult. In fact many children have reported appropriately about bad touch and made themselves safe with the help of responsible adults in the family.

2. What about Touch by family members and servants?

Many kids are looked after by maids, grandparents or older siblings. Abuse can very well happen in these situations. It is important to let you kids get in the habit of reporting ALL bad touch to you. You can decide if that touch was really abuse. If a person is touching your kid without intention of abuse but the kid does not like it then it is better to tell that person to stop touching your kid in that way. This is very relevant with grandparents and maids.

3. How to answer uncomfortable questions asked by children?

You can try and answer questions as best as you can. If you feel uncomfortable about the answer, it is absolutely okay to tell children that you feel uncomfortable answering that question. If you say that with a smile, they will understand and will let you off the hook.

4. How about older children?

Older kids (older than 10 years old) are usually trapped by abusers by using temptation & blackmail. Many times, boys are tempted by showing pornography. Once they have seen the pornographic material, then they can be blackmailed by saying "I'll tell your parents". Girls can be blackmailed in various ways. "I have your photographs, and I'll put them on the internet." The abuser doesn't even need a photograph. Just take a photo from the internet with similar profile and claim it is that girl's photograph. And once the girl is scared of her photos going on the internet (or in the wrong hands), then she'll go a long way to avoid that. How can parents counteract this?-

- Be reasonable about children accessing objectionable content. Extreme reactions push children away. Do not treat every mistake as a catastrophe.
- Remember the vaccination principle: booster doses every 6 months will keep information fresh in children's mind and you will get a chance to connect with them.
- Multiple instances of showing faith in your children and letting them commit small mistakes goes a long way to build their faith in you.

APPENDIX I

NO - GO - TELL POSTER

If you get “Bad Touch”

1. say **NO!**

2. **GO** away from that person.

3. **TELL** a safe adult about the bad touch you got.

be smart – stay safe!

Date -

Child's sign -

Teacher's sign-

Safe Adult's sign -

APPENDIX II

LETTER TO PARENTS

Safeguarding Children from Unsafe Touch

Dear Parent,

As you are aware, many children fall prey to sexual abuse by adults and sometimes older children. A large number (up to 50%) of adults report that they were abused or inappropriately touched as children! Children from all social and economic classes are affected!

This experience can leave very deep emotional scars on children and affect their development as happy, healthy adults.

Our school is working on a simple and effective way to prevent Child Sex Abuse (CSA) by educating children about safe / good and unsafe / bad touch.

This does not involve any talk of SEX or sex organs! It is a part of safety training for all children.

We will educate children about 3 parts of their body (chest, bottom and between legs) that are not to be touched by anyone. We will also teach them how to protect themselves in case such a thing happens. Your child will have to identify a "safe adult" as a part of this training. The role of safe adult is important – your child will communicate with this person in case they experience "Bad Touch"

Please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher for any doubts about this safety training. Let's all work together to give our children a safe and happy childhood.

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