



“Protecting Children With Disabilities from Abuse: Strategies for Grades K-7”

In Collaboration with the Division for Communicative Disabilities and Deafness (DCDD)

October 9, 2014

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- Leah:
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HOLD FOR POLLING QUESTION

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 - ▣ Next, please respond concerning your professional role by choosing the most appropriate answer and clicking the “submit” button. If you are participating as a group, choose the answer that is representative of most of the group.



PROTECTING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES FROM ABUSE: STRATEGIES FOR GRADES K-7

**In Collaboration with the Division for
Communicative Disabilities and Deafness (DCDD)**

Presented by
Harold Johnson & Irene van der Zande

Presenters

- Harold Johnson (hjohnson4deafed@gmail.com)
 - Professor Emeritus/Kent State University
 - 40 plus years of experience in the field of Deaf Education as a teacher, then as a program administrator, and then finally as a university professor preparing individuals to become teachers of students who are deaf/hard of hearing (d/hh).
 - Career focused upon the use of web-based technologies and resources to enhance education, reduce isolation, facilitate collaboration and recognize excellence (e.g., www.deafed.net).



Presenters

- Harold Johnson (cont.)
 - In 2006 his work expanded to include an emphasis upon understanding and preventing the maltreatment of children with disabilities. This work resulted in the establishment of the “O.U.R. Children Project.” The project, carried out in collaboration with the “[Hands & Voices](#),” and now the [CEC Division for Communicative Disabilities and Deafness \(DCDD\)](#) represents a major effort to reduce the incidence and impact of child maltreatment via awareness, understanding, and proactive engagement.



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Presenters

- Irene van der Zande (irene@kidpower.org)
 - Executive Director and Founder
Kid power Teenpower Fullpower International, a global nonprofit leader dedicated to providing effective empowering child protection, positive communication, and personal safety skills for all ages and abilities worldwide since 1989.
www.kidpower.org
www.internationalchildprotectionmonth.org
 - 45 years working with children, teens, and adults with all kinds of special needs, including: teaching life skills to children with autism; developing curriculum, teaching, and training others to teach personal safety workshops for people who have developmental disabilities, are deaf/hard of hearing (d/hh), use a wheelchair, are blind/visually impaired, or have severe multiple life challenges.



Presenters

- Irene van der Zande (cont.)
 - Author of numerous books and articles that introduce and teach 'People Safety' knowledge and skills in ways that are age-appropriate, fun, emotionally and physically safe, relevant to different life situations, and adapted for people with special needs, including [*The Kidpower Book for Caring Adults: Personal Safety, Self-Protection, Confidence, and Advocacy for Young People*](#); the cartoon-illustrated Kidpower and Fullpower [*Safety Comics series*](#) and [*Teaching Book series*](#); the [*Kidpower Safety Signals*](#); and the [*Kidpower Child Protection Advocate Workbook*](#).



Webinar Questions & Targeted Knowledge

- What do we know about the incidence, indicators, impact and risk factors of child abuse and neglect as experienced by children with disabilities?
- What can we do to enhance the safety and success of all children?
- What barriers are we likely to experience in our efforts?
- Where can we go for more information and help?



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Preamble

- Why are we here today?



To enhance the safety and success of all our students.



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Preamble

- Society recognizes the risk of:
 - ▣ Riding in a car, so we use safety precautions;
 - ▣ Fire, so we teach kids how to be safe; &
 - ▣ Drowning, so we teach kids how to swim.
- Society does not recognize the risk of child maltreatment, as evidenced by the fact that educators are taught to report, not how to prevent maltreatment.
- We must change this lack of recognition for the safety and success of our children!



Incidence

- Children with disabilities are three times more likely to experience maltreatment (i.e., neglect & abuse) than their nondisabled peers (Sullivan & Knutson, 2000).
- This rate indicates that at least 25% of children with disabilities will experience one or more forms of maltreatment between birth and 18 years of age (Jones, Bellis, Wood, Huges, McCoy, Eckley & Officer, 2012).



Incidence

- Educational professionals submit more reports of suspected child maltreatment than any other group of professionals.
- Yet, only 10% of suspected cases are reported.

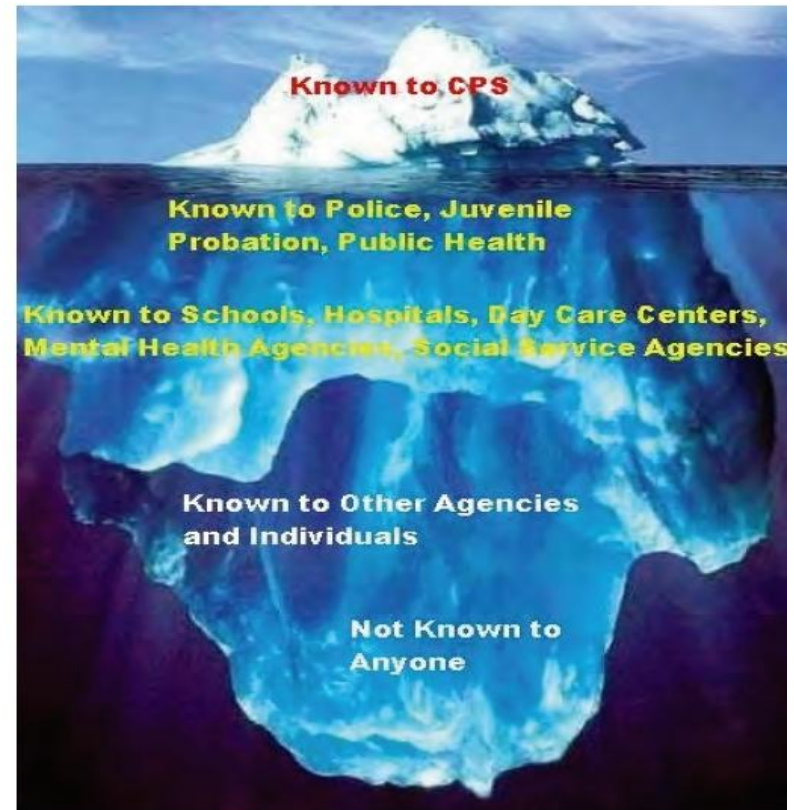
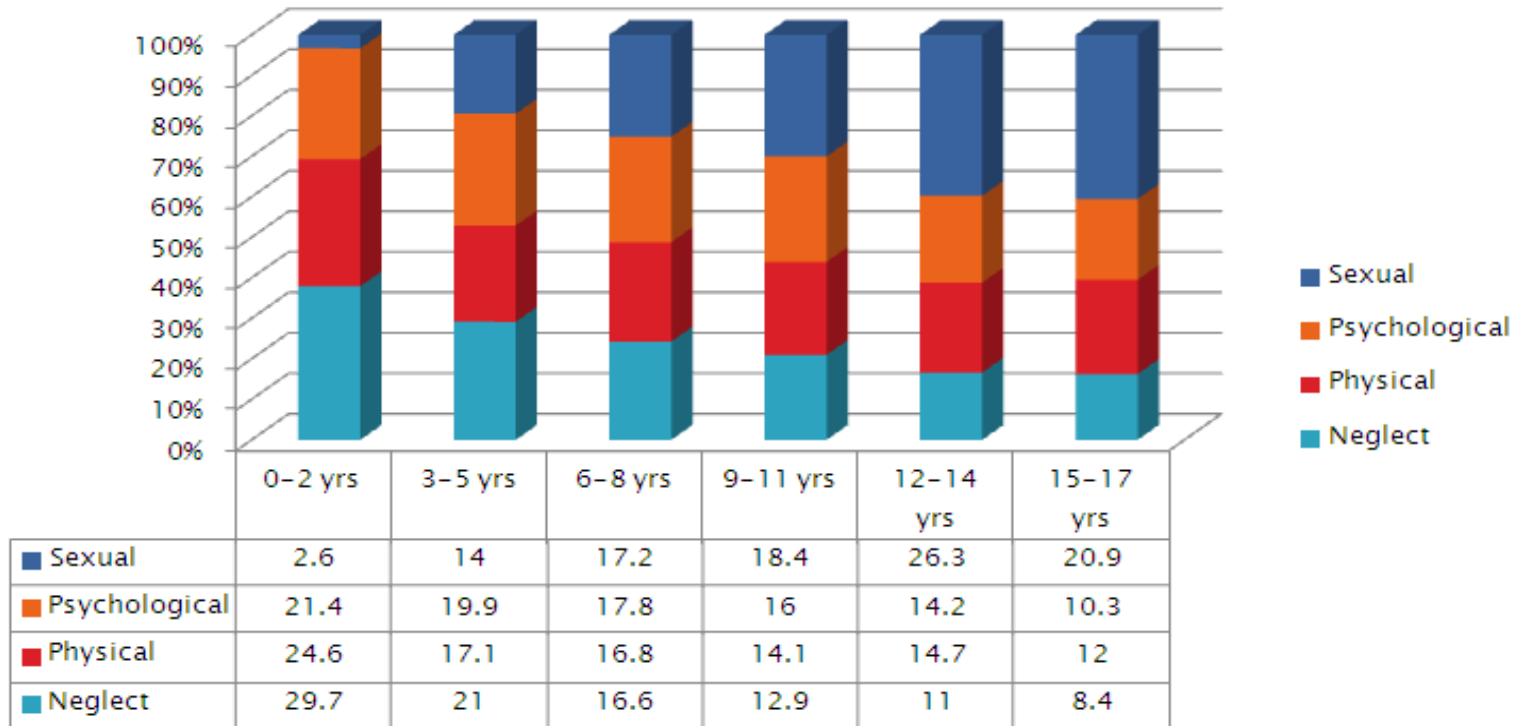


Figure 2-1. Levels of Recognition of Child Abuse and Neglect.

[Child Maltreatment 2012](#): U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services – Administration for Children & Families – Administration on Children, Youth and Families – Children’s Bureau

Exhibit 3-E Selected Maltreatment Types of Victims by Age, 2012
Types of Maltreatment by Age



Johnson & van der Zande © 2014

Implications:

- The younger the child, the greater their vulnerability to maltreatment.
- The type of maltreatment experienced by children changes over time, i.e., incidence of:
 - ▣ Neglect, physical and psychological maltreatment decreases with age; vs.
 - ▣ sexual abuse increases with age.
- We should change our prevention efforts to reflect children's changing risks for maltreatment.



Indicators of Neglect & Abuse

- Please be forewarned that some of the following information and images may be personally disturbing.
- As parents and professionals it is critical we know the visual, verbal and behavioral indicators that a child may be experiencing neglect and/or abuse.
- Please go to the [Child Welfare Information Gateway: What is Child Abuse & Neglect – Recognizing the Signs & Symptoms](#) for more indepth information.



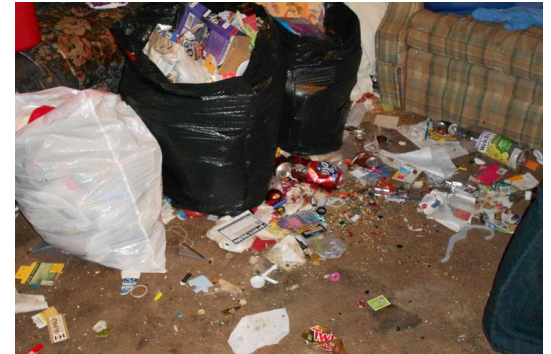
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Indicators of Neglect & Abuse

□ Neglect

▣ Child indicators

- Is frequently absent from school
- Beggars or steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses
- In consistently dirty and has severe body odor
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs
- States that there is no one at home to provide care



Indicators of Neglect & Abuse

- Neglect (cont.)
 - ▣ Parent indicators
 - Appears to be indifferent to the child
 - Seems apathetic or depressed
 - Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner
 - Is abusing alcohol or other drugs



Indicators of Neglect & Abuse

□ Physical Abuse

■ Child indicators

- Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes
- Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school
- Seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home
- Shrinks at the approach of adults
- Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver



Indicators of Neglect & Abuse

□ Physical Abuse(cont.)

■ Parent indicators

- Offers conflicting, unconvincing, or no explanation for the child's injury
- Describes the child as "evil," or in some other very negative way
- Uses harsh physical discipline with the child
- Has a history of abuse as a child



Indicators of Neglect & Abuse

□ Sexual Abuse

■ Child indicators

- Has difficulty walking or sitting
- Suddenly refuses to change for gym or to participate physical activities
- Reports nightmares or bedwetting
- Experiences a sudden change in appetite
- Demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior
- Becomes pregnant or contracts a venereal disease, particularly if under age 14
- Runs away
- Reports sexual abuse by a parent or another adult caregiver



Indicators of Neglect & Abuse

- Sexual Abuse (cont.)
 - Parent indicators
 - Is unduly protective of the child or severely limits the child's contact with other children, especially of the opposite sex
 - Is secretive and isolated
 - Is jealous or controlling with family members



Indicators of Neglect & Abuse

□ Emotional Abuse

▣ Child indicators

- Shows extremes in behavior, such as overly compliant or demanding behavior, extreme passivity, or aggression
- Is either inappropriately adult (parenting other children, for example) or inappropriately infantile (frequently rocking or head-banging, for example)
- Is delayed in physical or emotional development
- Has attempted suicide
- Reports a lack of attachment to the parent



Indicators of Neglect & Abuse

- Emotional Abuse (cont.)
 - Parent indicators
 - Constantly blames, belittles, or berates the child
 - Is unconcerned about the child and refuses to consider offers of help for the child's problems
 - Overtly rejects the child



Reality Check...

- Most of the time the signs of neglect and abuse are ambiguous.
- You will almost always have doubts about your suspicions that a child is being maltreated.
- Never forget that our job is to act on our concerns and report our suspicions, NOT to investigate until we are sure.



Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-4-A-CHILD.
This hotline is staffed 24/7 by degreed counselors.

[Explanatory YouTube Video](#)

□ When you feel worried, but are not yet ready to call the police or child protective services, call 1-800-4-A-CHILD.

□ **Confidential counselors at the hotline can help:**

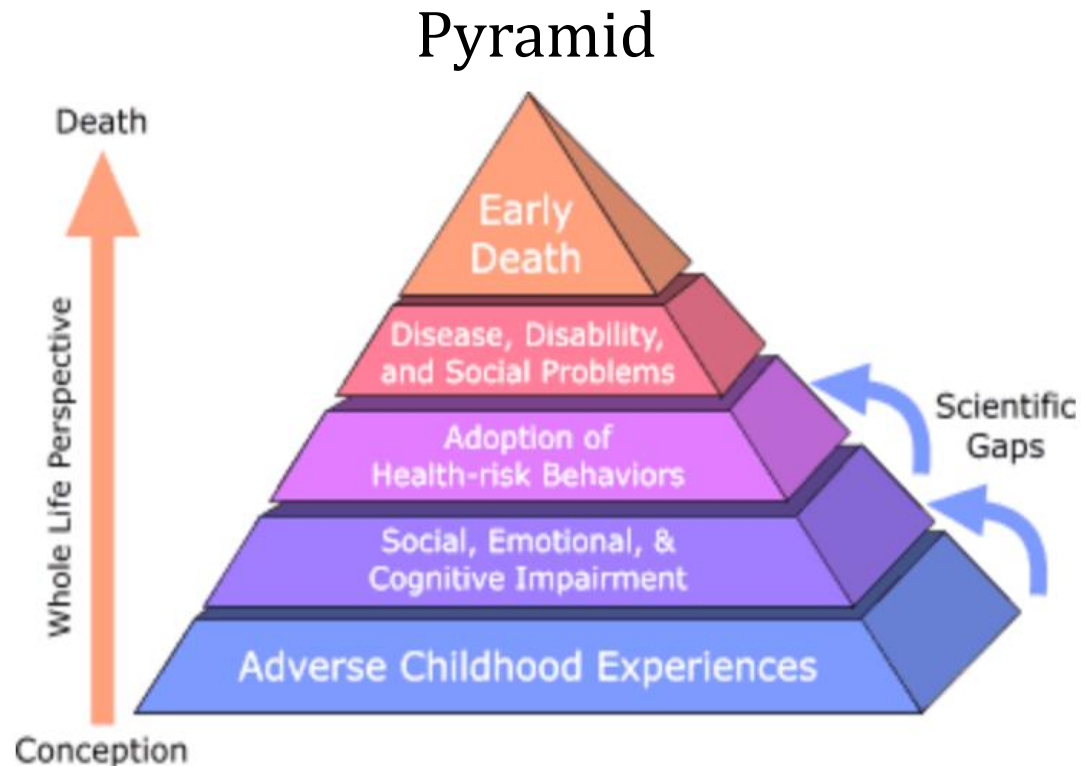
- ▣ **Victims:** children and teens who have been abused
- ▣ **Survivors** of child abuse
- ▣ **Abusers:** people who have abused a child or who are afraid that they may abuse a child
- ▣ **Witnesses** to child abuse
- ▣ **Concerned people** with questions



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Impact of Maltreatment



Web site:

[The ACE Study](#) (Adverse Childhood Experiences) – YouTube Video:
[Wounds that won't heal: The ACE Study](#)

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Risk Factors for Children with Disabilities

- Why are children with disabilities three to four times more likely to experience abuse than their nondisabled peers?



Note: For more indepth information, see “[The Risk and Prevention of Maltreatment of Children with Disabilities](#)” on the [Child Welfare Information Gateway](#)



Risk Factors for Children with Disabilities

- ...who have chronic illness, physical, cognitive, emotional and/or behavioral disabilities that may overwhelm their parents;



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Risk Factors for Children with Disabilities

- ...often do not understand what constitutes maltreatment and that they have the right to say, “NO!”;



- ...may have limited communication skills that inhibit their ability to tell others that they have been abused;



Risk Factors for Children with Disabilities

- ...are frequently physically dependent upon others to meet their essential needs;



- ...may be considered to be unresponsive, or over responsive, to affection;



Risk Factors for Children with Disabilities

- ...may be separated from their caregivers for extensive periods of time;



- ...are expected to interact with a significant numbers of adults in a variety of contexts;



Risk Factors for Children with Disabilities

- ...may not understand their own sexuality;



- ...may not know how to recognize or protect themselves in a “risky situation”;



Risk Factors for Children with Disabilities

- ...are often socially isolated and frequently lonely;
- ...are not recognized to be at higher risk for maltreatment;



Risk Factors for Children with Disabilities

- ...may display physical marks and/or patterns of behavior that are difficult to attribute to abuse vs. their disability;



- ...would often be difficult and time consuming to investigate due to a lack of professional training, inconsistent definitions, and limited/different patterns of communication;



Risk Factors for Children with Disabilities

- ...may prove to be a unconvincing witness in a court of law; and



- ...are likely to be difficult to place in a foster home.



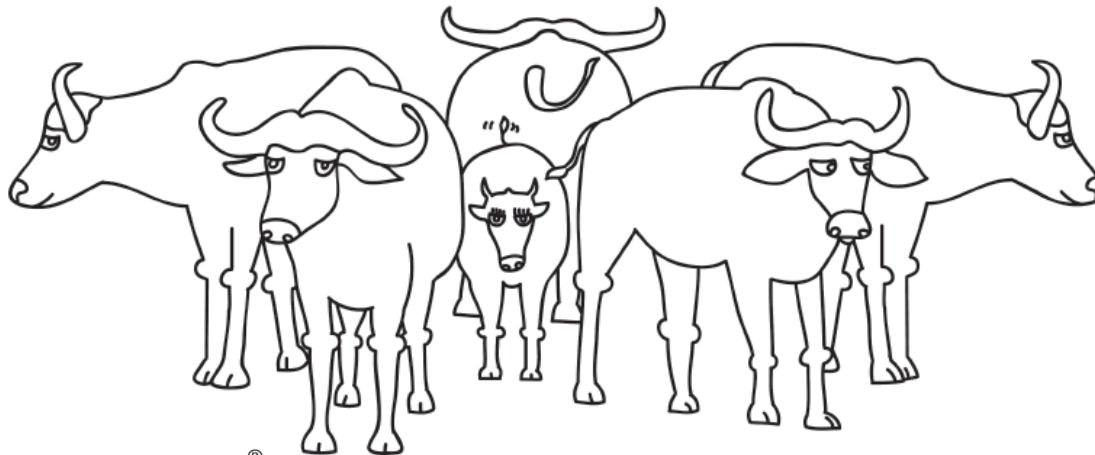
Guiding Concepts

- We must work to prevent, as well as observe, understand, and report the suspected neglect and/or abuse of our students.
- We can turn risk factors into prevention strategies by incorporating safety knowledge and skills into the students' educational planning documents, their day-to-day instructional experiences, and resources for their parents and other caregivers.



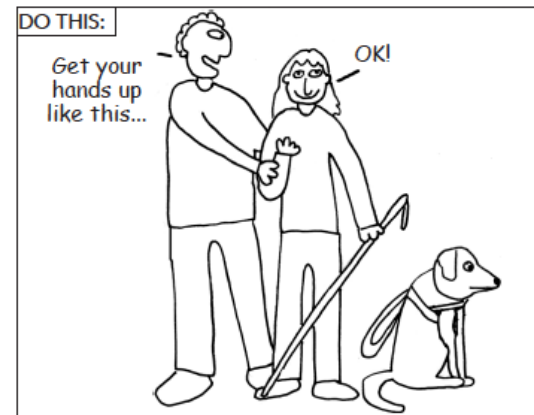
Create Positive Classroom Climate

- ❑ Know what you stand for
- ❑ Use your awareness – split attention to avoid tunnel vision
- ❑ Intervene to stop unsafe behavior
- ❑ Advocate with other adults to create a safe and respectful climate
- ❑ Coach use of skills in daily activities
- ❑ Measure classroom climate
- ❑ Get help instead of going it alone



Adapt for Different Abilities

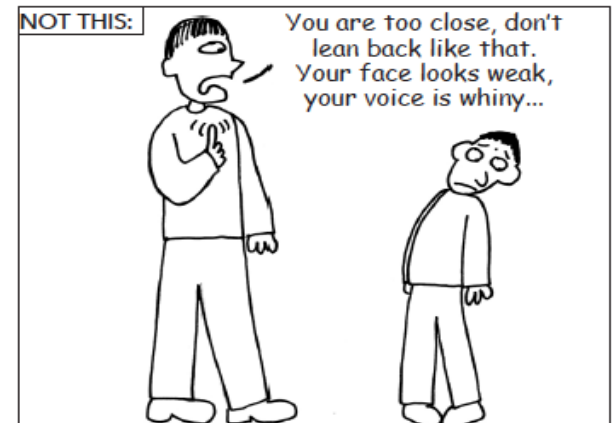
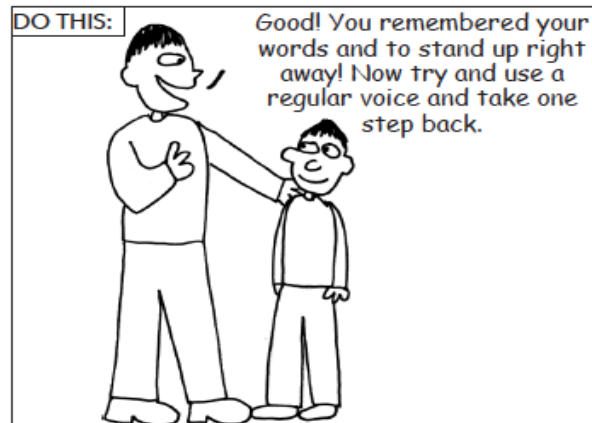
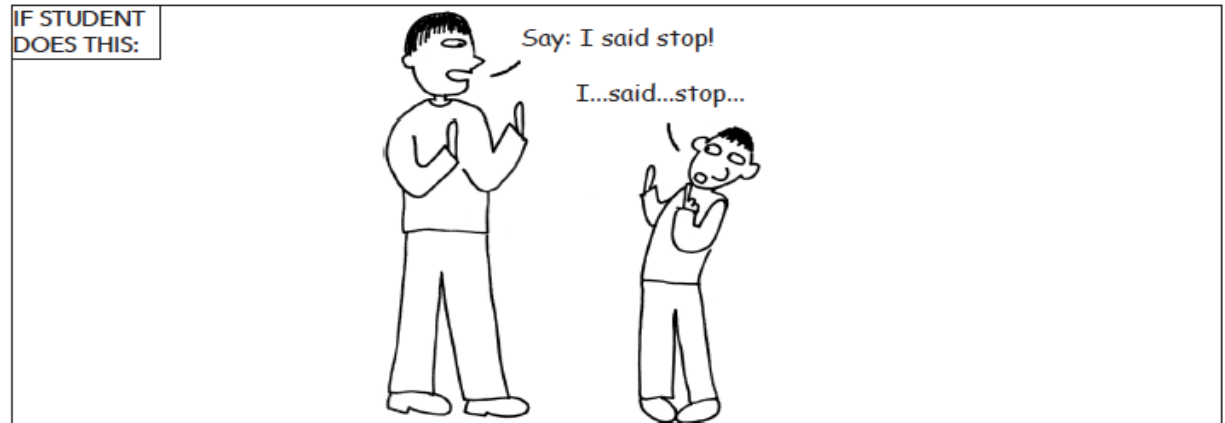
1. Focus on possibilities rather than limitations
2. Look for progress, not perfection
3. How to teach safety if student:
 - Has deafness or is hard of hearing
 - Has blindness or is hard of seeing
 - Has difficulty understanding, learning, and/or remembering concepts
 - Has little or no verbal speech
 - Is unable to move parts of his or her body/uses a wheelchair
 - Is unsafe towards self or others with her or his body and/or words
 - Requires constant support from an aide



Kidpower's Positive Practice Teaching Method

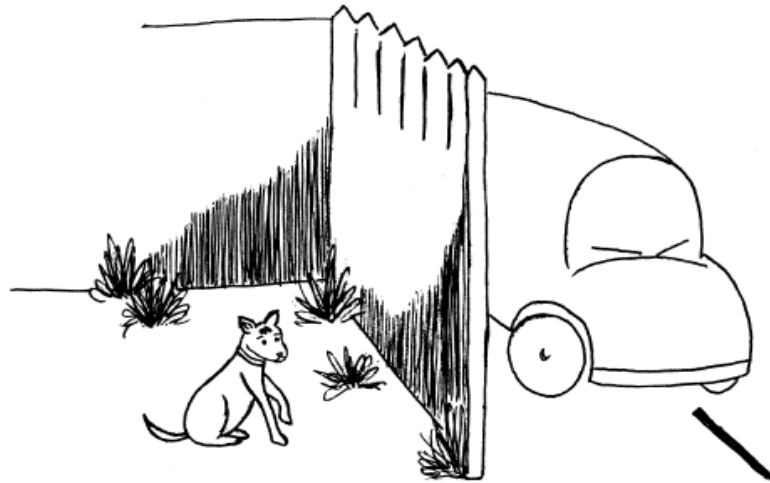
Keep it:

- Simple
- Consistent
- Relevant
- Successful
- Safe
- FUN!



What Are Boundaries?

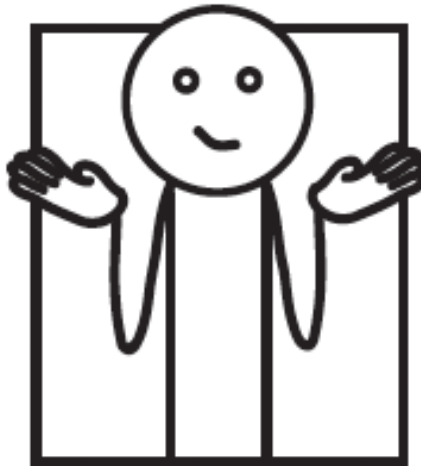
- A boundary is a limit or dividing line between one thing and another
- Physical boundaries you can see and touch – like a fence or a wall or a line in sports.
- Personal boundaries you cannot always see or touch – but you can feel them when they are crossed.



Kidpower's Four Boundary Rules



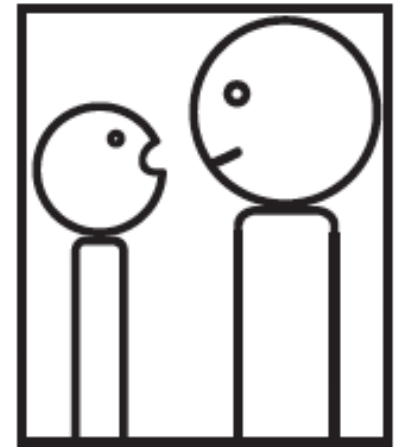
1. We each belong to ourselves



2. Some things are not a choice- health, safety, respect, chores, schoolwork



3. Problems, touch, games, presents others give you, photos - should not be secret



4. Keep telling until you get help



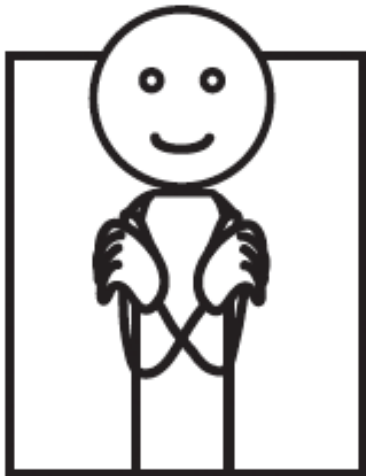
kidpower[®].org

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Explaining the Safety Rules About Touch & Play

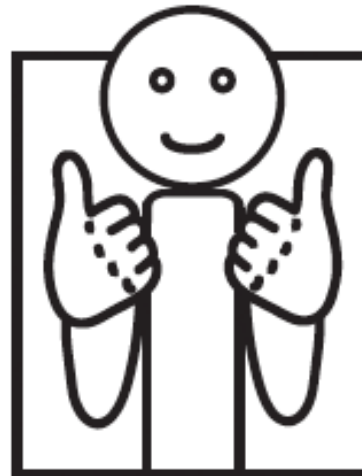
Touch, play, or games for fun, teasing, or affection should be



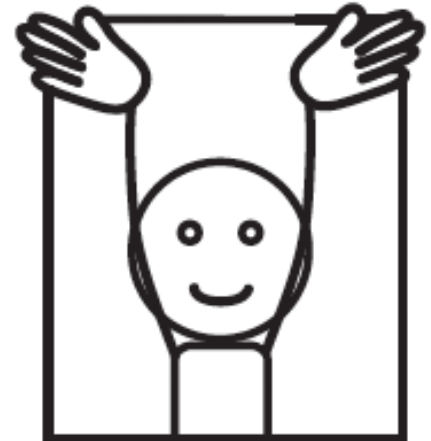
1. Safe



2. Okay with each person



3. Allowed by the adults in charge

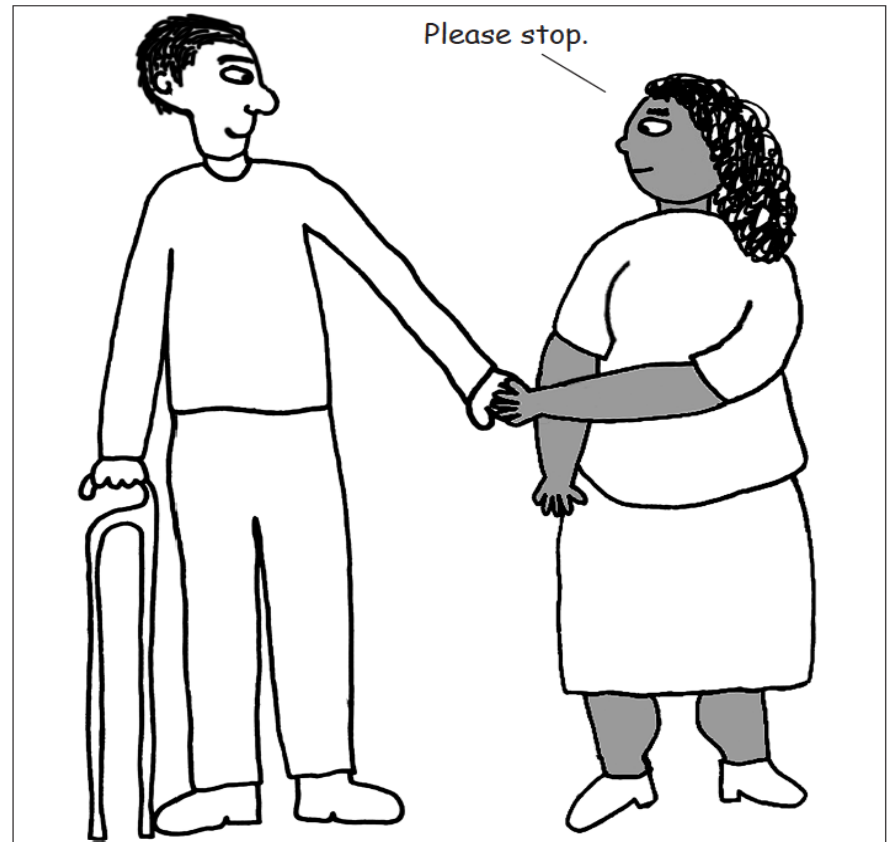


4. Everyone can know (not a secret)



Getting Ready to Practice Stopping Unwanted Touch

- Use non-intrusive touch like a hand on a shoulder to practice
- Show what happens with the wishing technique
- Remind the students, “I am pretending so we can practice!”
- Coach the student to be successful – pause and give physical cues when needed.



Practicing Being Persistent in Stopping Unwanted Touch

Coach student through these steps

1. If someone doesn't notice –
“Please stop!”
2. If someone doesn't listen -
Fence Power and “I said
stop!”
3. If someone gets sad or angry
(uses emotional coercion) –
“I'm sorry and stop!”
4. If someone breaks the safety
rules – Stop or I'll tell

OOH!! You are hurting my
feelings. If you were my
friend, you'd let me touch
your shoulders.

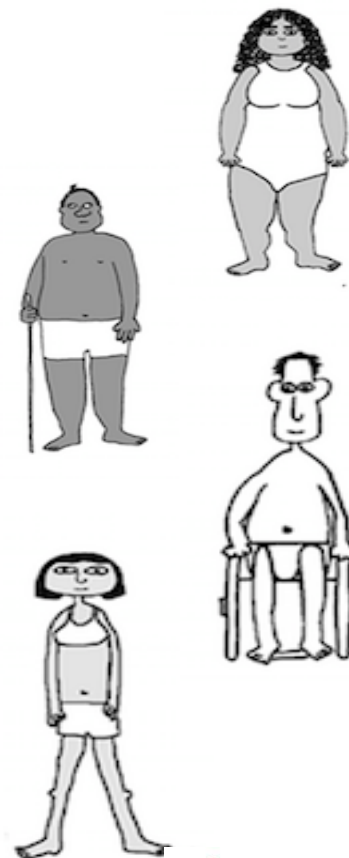


SORRY
and
STOP!



Ways Someone Can Break the Safety Rules

1. Keeps going after you said, "Stop!"
2. Offers a bribe to try to get you to change your boundary/let them touch you
3. Uses their power to make you do something unsafe or not okay with you even if it should be your choice
4. Breaks the safety rules about private areas: *Your private areas are the parts of your body that can be covered by a bathing suit. For play or teasing, other people are not to touch your private areas nor are they to try to make you touch their private areas and they are not to show you pictures or movies about people and their private areas. For health or safety, someone might need to do this, but it should never be a secret.*



Getting Help

- Sometimes you have to wait when you want something.
- Your job is to interrupt and keep asking if you have a safety problem and need help.
- Know your safety plan for everywhere you go.
- Think of at least three people you could ask for help.



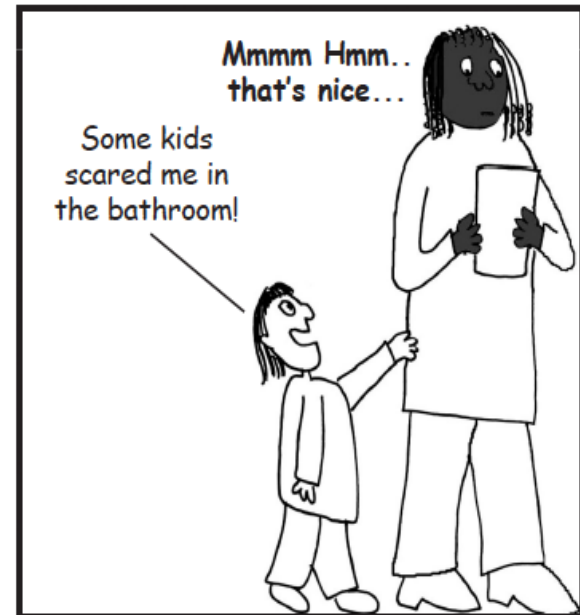
How to Practice Being Persistent in Getting Help From Busy Adults

1. Pick a situation that might be relevant to this student – don't use worst case situations. For example, "Suppose someone kept trying to roughhouse with you after you said "Stop.""
2. Remind student "I am pretending so we can practice."
3. Pretend to be very busy doing something like texting or looking at the computer



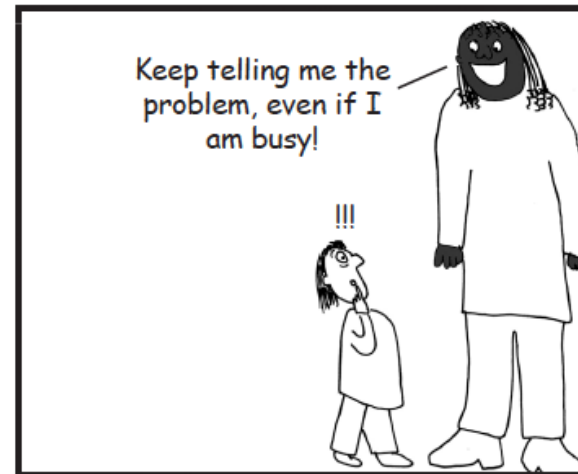
How to Practice Being Persistent in Getting Help From Busy Adults

4. Coach the student to interrupt firmly and politely, “Excuse me. I have a safety problem.”
5. Pretend not to hear and say, “That’s nice.”
6. Coach student to persist and say, “Please look at me. I need help.”



How to Practice Being Persistent in Getting Help From Busy Adults

7. Pretend to get grumpy and say, "I'm busy! I told you not to bother me when I'm busy."
8. Coach student to persist and say, "I have a safety problem. I need help. A kid keeps trying to roughhouse with me and won't listen when I say to stop."
9. Become very kind and say, "Thank you for telling me. I'm sorry I was grumpy. Let's talk this over and make a plan so that this doesn't happen. You deserve to feel safe here."



Imagine the impact if all adults discussed this message with every child in their lives!

The Kidpower Protection Promise™

“You are very important to me!

If you have a safety problem, I want to know – even if I seem too busy, even if someone we care about will be upset, even if it is embarrassing, and even if you made a mistake.

Please tell me, and I will do everything in my power to help you.”

InternationalChildProtectionMonth.org

kidpower.org



kidpower.org

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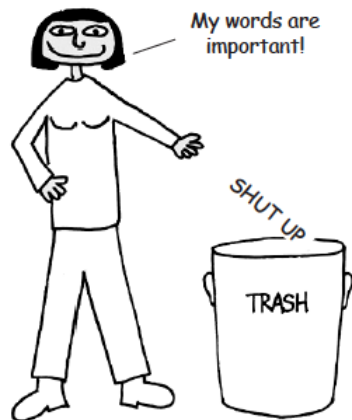
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How to Practice Protecting Yourself From Hurting Words

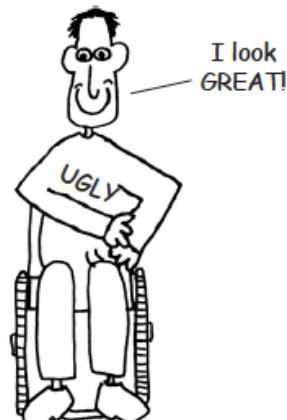
The Kidpower Trash Can (or Teenpower Trash Can or Fullpower Trash Can) Technique

“I am pretending so we can practice!”

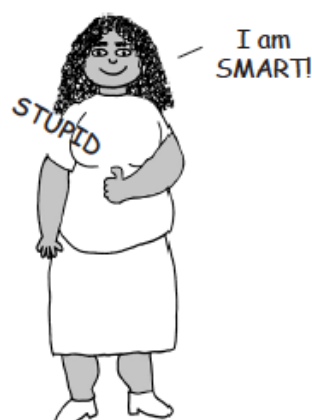
1. Make a trash can with your body or use a real one
2. Catch hurting words others say or you say to yourself, like, ‘I don’t like you.’”



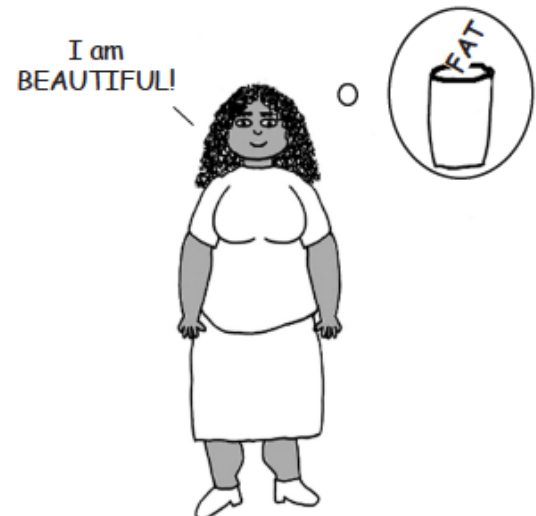
Real Trash Can



Fullpower Trash Can



Mini-Trash Can

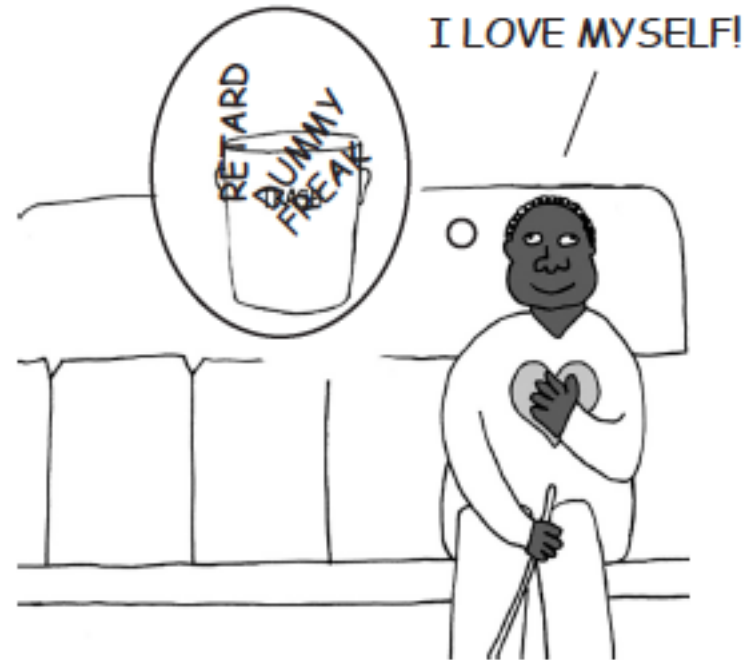


Imagination Trash Can



How to Practice Protecting Yourself From Hurting Words

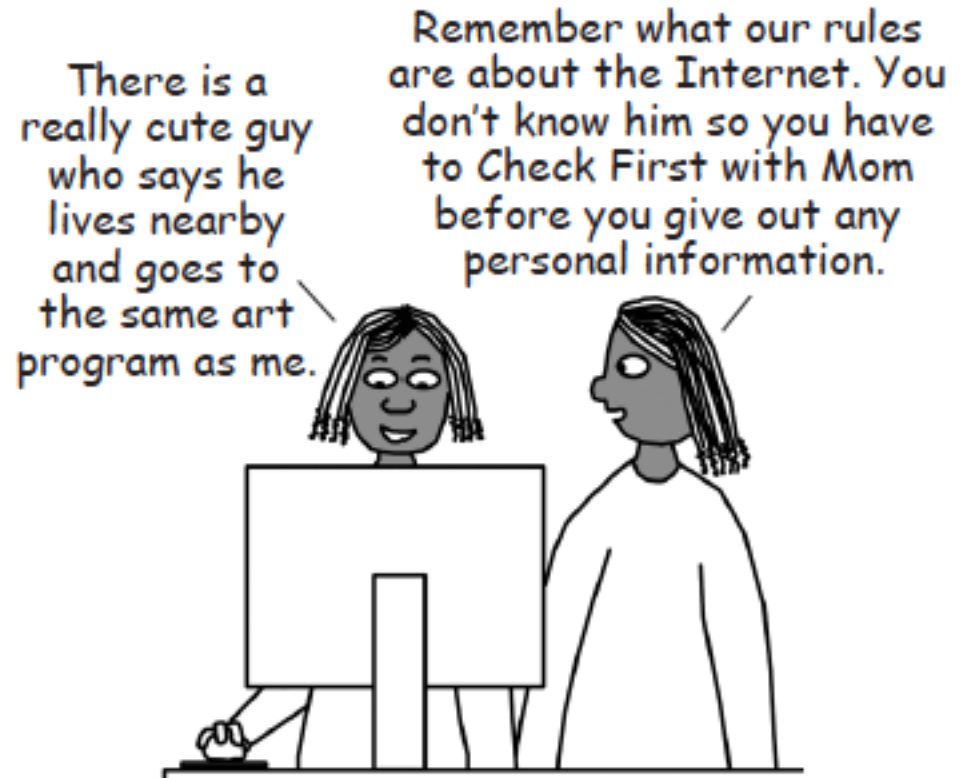
3. Throw the hurting words in the trash can
4. Put your hand on your heart and say something good to yourself, like “I like myself.”



Online Safety

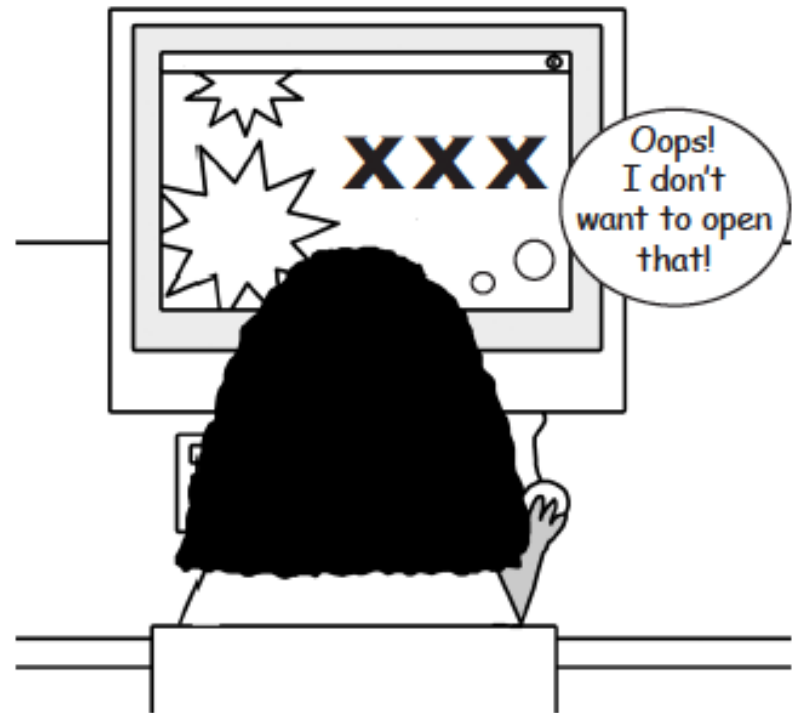
What is personal information?

- Check and think first before giving personal information.
- Do not put anything online that you do not want the world to see.



What if you get to an inappropriate or upsetting website?

1. Leave the page open but do not look further.
2. Go get an adult who can help you, even if you did something wrong that caused you to be there.



Online Safety

- Being mean is being mean
– no matter how it is done
- Protecting yourself and others from cyber-bullying
 - ▣ do not reply
 - ▣ save the message
 - ▣ and get help!

We should send this photo of Mikey to all of our friends! Look at how silly he looks!

We shouldn't send a photo that might upset Mikey, even if it seems funny.



Kidpower Safety Signals for Everyone, Everywhere

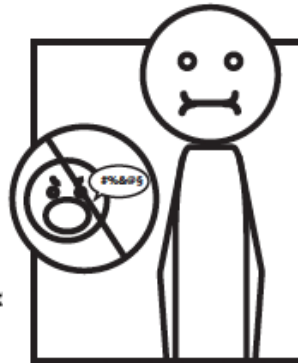


TAKE A BREATH STRAIGHTEN YOUR BACK

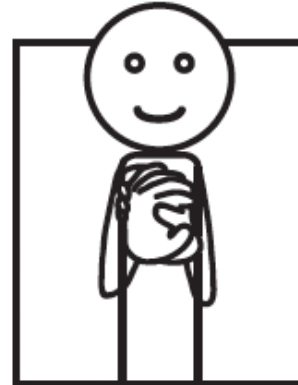
Calm Down Power



Hands and Feet Down Power



Mouth Closed Power



Waiting Power



Walk Away Power



Roll Away Power if you are on wheels



Kidpower Put Safety First Commitment™

**“I WILL put the safety
and well-being
of young people ahead
of anyone’s
embarrassment,
inconvenience,
or offense!”**

InternationalChildProtectionMonth.org

kidpower.org



kidpower.org

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Reporting Suspicions of Child Neglect and/or Abuse

- 59% personally know someone who has been a child abuse victim.
- 21% admit that they were abused as a child.
- 19% have a relative who has been a child abuse victim.

(Penn, Schoen, & Berland Associates (2008).
“Bystanders and Child Abuse Survey”)



Reporting Suspicions of Child Neglect and/or Abuse

- When actually confronted with suspected child abuse, only 6% of Americans said they contacted authorities.



- When asked what actions a person can take to help stop child abuse, 48% say they would not go to the authorities, contact the police, or contact child protection services.



Reporting Suspicions of Child Neglect and/or Abuse

- More than one in four Americans (26%) say they have been in situations where they suspected a child has been a victim of child abuse but didn't know what to do



- One-third (33%) say people are reluctant to report suspected cases because they do not want to get involved.



Reporting...Educational Professionals

- Most (58%) instances of child neglect and abuse are reported by professionals, with teachers representing the single largest (17%) category of professionals.
- While protocols have been established to guide educator's reporting of child neglect and abuse (Crosson-Tower, 2003), most (**87%**) educators submit reports to school officials vs. Child Protective Services (CPS), with less than **30%** of suspected cases subsequently shared with CPS.

Web Link: [State by State Statues Search](#)

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Why professionals do not report their suspicions that a child is experiencing neglect and/or abuse...

1. Belief that child neglect and abuse is not a common, or sufficiently important problem to warrant our attention



2. Insufficient knowledge re....

- ▣ ...the signs and symptoms of child neglect and abuse ; and
- ▣ ...uncertainties re. child neglect and abuse reporting procedures



Alvarex, Kenny, Donohue, & Carpin, 2004; Bonner, & Hensley, 1997; Kenny, 2001, 2004

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Why professionals do not report their suspicions that a child is experiencing neglect and/or abuse...

3. Perceived negative consequences of reporting child neglect and abuse, i.e., ...
 - ▣ ...make things worse for the child; and
 - ▣ ...fear of disapproval from parents, parental denial, lack of administrative support and legal ramifications for false allegations.



4. Lessons learned from past reporting, e.g., nothing happened.



FAILED

Why professionals do not report their suspicions that a child is experiencing neglect and/or abuse...

5. Negative attitude towards Child Protective Services.



6. The lack of training, and ongoing support, concerning recognizing, reporting and responding to possible incidences of child abuse and neglect.



Why professionals do not report their suspicions that a child is experiencing neglect and/or abuse...

7. The belief that someone else is dealing with this problem



Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-4-A-CHILD.
This hotline is staffed 24/7 by degreed counselors.

[Explanatory YouTube Video](#)

- When you suspect, but are not yet ready to call the police or child protective services, call 1-800-4-A-CHILD.
- **Confidential counselors at the hotline can help:**
 - ▣ **Victims:** children and teens who have been abused
 - ▣ **Survivors** of child abuse
 - ▣ **Abusers:** people who have abused a child or who are afraid that they may abuse a child
 - ▣ **Witnesses** to child abuse
 - ▣ Concerned people with questions



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When a student discusses an abusive situation, it is important to:

- [New York City, Department of Education](#)
 - Understand that a school staff member's role is to listen and accept, not to act as a therapist or investigator.
 - Convey a sense of caring and interest. Use “active listening” skills.
 - Allow the student to relate the information in whatever way he or she finds most comfortable.
 - Don't change the student's choice of words.



When a student discusses an abusive situation, it is important to:

- State that a student has the right to tell, and that it is courageous to do so.
- Emphasize that abuse is not the student's fault.
- Irene van der Zande: Kidpower
 - Report your suspicions to child protective services and contact school and community mental health personnel to see what support they can give the child and their family.
 - Be persistent in your efforts to ensure the safety of the student.



Guiding Concepts

- We must work to prevent, as well as observe, understand, and report the suspected neglect and/or abuse of our students.
- We can turn risk factors into prevention strategies by incorporating safety knowledge and skills into the students' educational planning documents, their day-to-day instructional experiences, and parental support.



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Critical Resources & Links

- U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services:
 - ▣ [The Role of Educators in Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect](#)

- Kidpower, Hands & Voices & Described & Champion Media
 - ▣ YouTube: [“7 Kidpower Strategies for Keeping Your Child Safe”](#)

- New York City, Dept. of Education: [“ONE TO ONE RESPONSE TO A KNOWN OR SUSPECTED CHILD VICTIM”](#)

Critical Resources & Links

- [The O.U.R. Children Project: Advocating for IFSP and IEP Objectives to Include Safety Statements](#)
- [Protecting Children and Teens From Sexual Abuse Kidpower Resource Page](#)
- [Silence is NOT an Option: Documents for the Safety & Success of OUR Children](#)
- [What Educators Can Do to Reduce Risk Factors for Kids with Disabilities: Protective Knowledge, Skills and Actions from Kidpower](#)

Critical Resources & Links

- Cyber Safety:
 - [NetSmartz: A Program of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children](#)
 - [3 Actions for Adult Leaders to Take to Keep Kids Safe Online](#)

- [What Internet safety rules do you recommend for disabled children?](#) Helping you make safer choices online [videos, games, comics & bios]
 - [“Tweens”](#)
 - [“Teens”](#)
 - [Educators](#)
 - Online Safety Education Kits
 - Teaching Materials
 - Presentations
 - Promotional Items

Summary

- Recognizing and reporting suspected instances of child abuse and neglect is not enough. We must also work to protect children from all forms of maltreatment.
- Understanding of risk factors, indicators of different kinds of maltreatment, reporting protocols, and use of Kidpower concepts/strategies are critical for the safety and success of your students.



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Q&A



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