

ABUSE

Lesson 1

GRADE

8

LEARNER OUTCOME¹ W-8.7:

Determine the signs, methods and consequences of various types of abuse (e.g., neglect, physical, emotional, sexual abuse).



MATERIALS:

1. INFO SHEET: Types of Abuse
2. SLIDE: Cycle of Abuse
3. INFO SHEET: Healthy Ways to Cope
4. HANDOUT: Is This Abuse?
5. SLIDE: Choosing to Disclose
6. SLIDE: Supporting a Friend



INTRODUCTION:

Knowing the signs, methods and consequences of various types of abuse can help those in abusive situations recognize their need to get help, while others can use this information to help those in abusive situations seek help. This lesson focuses on identifying various types of abuse, signs of abuse, the impact of abuse, coping skills, protective factors, and choosing to disclose..



APPROACHES/STRATEGIES:

A. GROUND RULES (5-10 min)

Ensure ground rules are established before beginning this lesson. For classes that have already established ground rules, quickly reviewing them can promote a successful lesson.



Addressing the topic of abuse may cause some students to be distressed or show signs they are or have been somehow involved in an abusive situation. Dealing with controversial issues encourages students to examine their own beliefs and experiences. Teachers need to act with sensitivity and discretion when handling individual student information that is sensitive or could cause embarrassment or distress to the student or family. Respect confidentiality in the classroom and anticipate where discussions will lead in order to protect students from revealing inappropriate personal information².

- Before starting these lessons it is recommended you advise the school counsellors so they are aware of possible disclosures of abuse.
- Ensure your students understand that disclosures of abuse cannot be kept confidential. Disclosures will result in the immediate aid to the student who is or has been abused.
- Refer to your school division's guidelines for your policy around reporting abuse.
- *The Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* requires you to report the abuse of a young person to the Child and Family Services Authorities or Delegated First Nation Agencies. You can locate your local office by visiting http://www.child.alberta.ca/home/local_offices.cfm
- For more information review [Responding to Child Abuse: A Handbook](#), published by the Government of Alberta or visit <http://www.child.alberta.ca/home/593.cfm>

B. DISCUSSING ABUSE (20-30 min)

Students become familiar with various types of abuse and the abuse cycle.

1. As a class, brainstorm various types of abuse. Write the answers up on the board.
 - Neglect
 - Physical abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Sexual abuse
2. Review the definitions and signs of different forms of abuse using the **Types of Abuse** slide.
3. Discuss how abusive situations may fluctuate using the **Cycle of Abuse** slide.
4. Review the ways people may cope with abuse using the **How Survivors Might Cope** slide.

C. IS IT ABUSE? STORY ACTIVITY (15-20 min)

Students explore abuse scenarios to learn ways to find and offer help.

1. Divide the class into small groups.
2. Give each group one of the handouts **Is This Abuse?**
3. Give groups time to read the scenarios and discuss the answers to the questions on each handout. Have one person per group record the answers.
4. Debrief this activity using the slides **Choosing to Disclose** and **Supporting a Friend** to aid in the discussion of the following questions:
 - How do you think a person who has been abused feels?
 - What can a person who is being abused do to leave the abusive situation?

Use Choosing to Disclose slide.

- What can you do if you suspect or know someone is being abused? **Use Supporting a Friend** slide.



QUESTION BOX (10 min)

If time permits, address student questions.



SELF REFLECTION

During the lesson, were:

- Ground rules being followed?
- Good practices established regarding group work and discussion?

What will you change for future classes with this group?

What will you change for future use of this lesson?



STUDENT ASSESSMENT

During the lesson, did students:

Knowledge:

- Describe the four types of abuse?
- List the healthy and unhealthy ways that survivors cope with abuse?
- List ways a student can support a person a student suspects is being abused?
- Identify support people an abused person can access for help?

Skills:

- Describe what an abused person can do to disclose the abuse?
- Recognize the signs of abuse?

Attitudes:

- Understand the impact of abuse that an abused person goes through?

1. Alberta Education. (2002). Health and life skills guide to implementation: Kindergarten to grade 9. Retrieved from <http://education.alberta.ca/media/352993/pos.pdf>
2. Alberta Education. (2002). Health and life skills guide to implementation: Kindergarten to grade 9. Retrieved from <http://education.alberta.ca/media/353029/epc.pdf>

TYPES OF ABUSE

PHYSICAL ABUSE¹

- Any act which results in a trauma or injury to any part of a child's body. (hitting, burning or shaking)
- It may happen once or many times

EMOTIONAL INJURY²

- An attack on a child's self-concept and self-worth
- It is a pattern of ongoing behaviour that interferes with healthy development
- May take various forms including:
 - verbal attacks, threats, humiliation, unrealistic expectations, rejection, inappropriate accusations
 - corruption (allowing a child to use alcohol or drugs, participate in criminal activity)
 - being ignored, isolated or restrained
 - exposure to violence or severe conflict
 - chronic exposure to alcohol/drug abuse

SEXUAL ABUSE³

- The inappropriate exposure of a child to sexual contact, activity or behaviour caused by anyone, including a parent, relative, friend, or stranger
- It may take various forms including:
 - any sexual touching or intercourse

- obscene phone calls or e-mails
- exposure to pornography or flashing
- sexual exploitation (engaging a child in sexual activities for exchange of money, gifts, shelter, food, etc; using a child in pornography; luring a child via the internet for sexual purposes)

NEGLECT⁴

- **Physical neglect:** is a failure to meet the child's physical needs (adequate nutrition, clothing, shelter, health care and safety)
- **Emotional neglect:** is: a failure to meet the child's emotional needs (affection and belonging)

SIGNS OF ABUSE MAY INCLUDE:

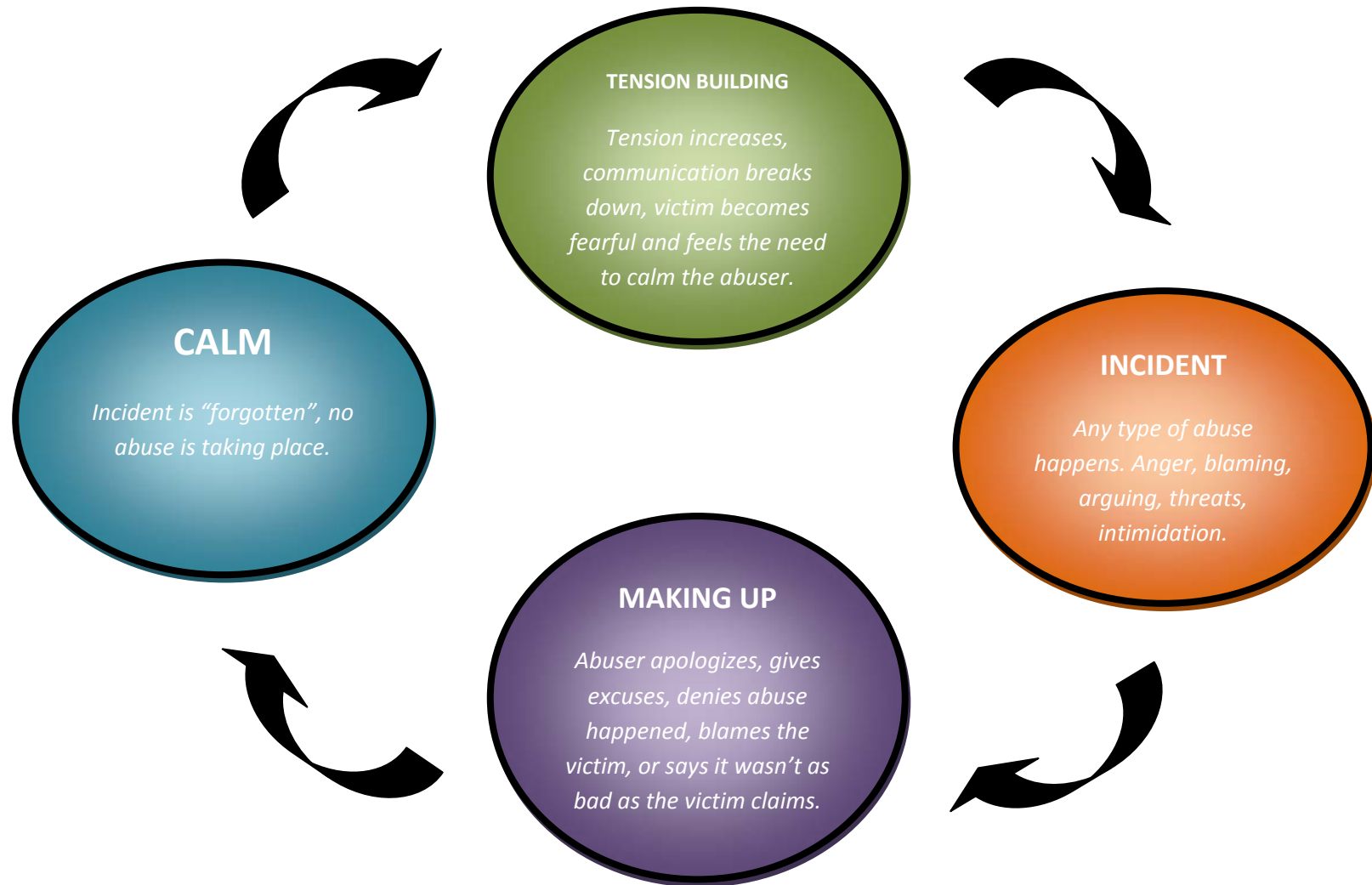
- Hinting or talking out rightly about abuse
- Unexplained and/or repeated bruises or injuries in places not normally injured
- Burns that leave a pattern outlining the object used to make the burn (iron, rope)
- Being continually hungry, unsuitably dressed for the weather and/or always dirty
- Being left alone often as a young child
- Being aggressive, angry, hostile, withdrawn or afraid
- Difficulties concentrating
- Refusing to participate or dress appropriately for physical activities
- Showing unusual knowledge of sexual matters or acting out sexually
- Repeatedly running away from home
- Poor school attendance

1. Government of Alberta. (2012). *Physical abuse*. Retrieved from: <http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/abuse-bullying/15391.html>
2. Government of Alberta. (2012). *Emotional injury*. Retrieved from: <http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/abuse-bullying/15390.html>

GRADE 8 ABUSE LESSON 1 INFO SHEET: TYPES OF ABUSE

3. Government of Alberta. (2012). *Sexual abuse*. Retrieved from: <http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/abuse-bullying/15392.html>
Government of Alberta. (2012). *Neglect*. Retrieved from: <http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/abuse-bullying/15389.html>

CYCLE OF ABUSE



HEALTHY WAYS TO COPE

- Occasionally arguments may happen and every close relationship involves some conflict. This is normal.
- Feeling angry is okay, this tells us something is wrong. However, using violence or abusive language is never an acceptable way to cope.
- Anger is often a mask for hurt feelings and fear. It's important to talk about the “real” problem, and avoid “my way or no way” thinking. Negotiate. Look for compromises—be willing to give a little to get a little. Make an effort to be fair and to be generous. Act as you want to be treated when someone is unhappy with you.
- Take 100% responsibility for your own thoughts, feelings and actions. You might be angry with someone, but they didn't MAKE you mad.
- Take a time-out. Use this time to talk yourself down from hostile thoughts, feelings and urges, and come up with creative, appropriate solutions.
- If you have trouble keeping your anger in check, or if you think you might be abusive, get help. You can change your behaviour, and learn to be part of a healthy relationship.
- Understanding limits—yours and someone else's—is important.
- Communication is the key to any healthy relationship.

HELP IS OUT THERE

No one has a right to hit you or harm you, to touch you where or how you don't want to be touched, to threaten you or to make you feel small, stupid or useless.

If this is happening to you—or to someone you care about—help is available.

- Talk to a trusted adult, parent, doctor, teacher, or family friend, about your situation. If they don't take you seriously, try again.
- Ask your school counsellor where to go for help.
- In an emergency, if you need help right away, call 9-1-1.

IS THIS ABUSE? ACTIVITY #1

Andrea is in grade eight. A year ago, she started seeing Tom, who is 17 and lives on his own. A few months ago, Tom began pressuring her to have sex with him. Andrea wasn't sure whether she wanted to, but Tom said if she loved him, that she should want to. Sometimes Tom drinks too much and calls her frigid. Last week, Andrea decided to go ahead and do it.

Now she's not sure she did the right thing because Tom wants to have sex all the time. He never wants to go out any more, but instead tells her to come over to his place. Andrea knows that if she goes, she will be expected to have sex with him.

Andrea is afraid to talk to anyone about this because her family and friends never really liked Tom. She often tells her mother that she is going out with girlfriends when she is really going to Tom's place. She doesn't talk to her friends about Tom because she believes they will think she is stupid. Andrea loves Tom, and doesn't want to hear bad things that are said about him.

- 1. What type of abuse is this? Explain.**
- 2. How do you think Andrea feels? Explain.**
- 3. Does Tom have the right to treat Andrea this way? Why or why not?**
- 4. What advice would you give Andrea?**

Adapted from: Dating Violence: A Discussion Guide on Violence in Young People's Relationship

IS THIS ABUSE? ACTIVITY #2

Surindher was invited to spend the night at her friend Jeannie's house for a birthday celebration. Many girls were invited. There was going to be cake and they were going to rent scary movies to watch late into the night. She was so excited!

Her Mom dropped her off at Jeannie's house. Everything was decorated with streamers and balloons. During the party, Jeannie's Dad opened a bottle of wine, and offered it to the girls. Surindher refused, as did all of the other girls. Later, when they were watching a movie in the family room downstairs, Jeannie's Dad kept coming into the room to get more alcohol from the bar that was attached. When Jeannie asked him to leave her and her friends alone, her Dad slapped her, pushed her out of the way and yelled at her to leave him alone.

Surindher was upset for her friend. When she talked to her about it the next day, Jeannie said that her Dad always got a bit crazy when he'd been drinking.

- 1. What type of abuse is this? Explain.**
- 2. How do you think Surindher feels? Jeannie? Explain.**
- 3. Does Jeannie's Dad have the right to treat her this way? Why or why not?**
- 4. What advice would you give Surindher? Jeannie?**

Adapted from: Dating Violence: A Discussion Guide on Violence in Young People's Relationship

IS THIS ABUSE? ACTIVITY #3

Joey lived with his mom. No one knew where his dad was. He and his mom moved around a lot. Most of the time, Joey's mom had a boyfriend but she never stayed with them for very long. Each time a new boyfriend started to come over, Joey's mom would ask Joey to go away. Whenever a boyfriend left, Joey's mom would lay on the couch in front of the TV all day and all night. She would cry and tell Joey that men were no good.

No matter whether there was a boyfriend on the scene or not, Joey was the one left to make sure that there was food to eat in the cupboards and clothes to wear. If it was during the school year, it was up to Joey to set an alarm clock and get to school on time. Because they moved a lot, Joey was always starting at a new school. Paying attention in class and doing homework wasn't difficult, and Joey usually maintained a pretty good average. Still, sometimes the stress got to him and he would sleep in and miss school. Sometimes he would try to find odd jobs to help with rent or grocery money, and would have to miss school because of that. He was beginning to think that he might as well quit school, move out and get a job.

- 1. What type of abuse is this? Explain.**
- 2. How do you think Joey feels? Explain.**
- 3. Does Joey's mom have the right to treat him this way? Why or why not?**
- 4. What advice would you give Joey?**

Adapted from: Dating Violence: A Discussion Guide on Violence in Young People's Relationship

IS THIS ABUSE? ACTIVITY #4

Matty was a straight “A” student. School didn’t always come easy, but Matty would work as hard as possible to make sure that assignments were done to perfection and that she was totally ready for any test. Not only was she on the honour roll, but Matty was also the student council secretary and a member of the school band and the basketball team. Matty seemed to love everyone, and everyone seemed to love Matty. At school, it looked as if she had a perfect life.

Things were a bit different at home. No matter how high her grades were, or how many awards she won or activities she was involved with, her parents were never satisfied. They would call Matty stupid if she came home with a grade of less than 90%. They would attend a band concert or basketball game, and then spend the entire car ride home picking apart her performance and suggesting how she could have done better. During the school year, she would have to come right home after school and spend the entire night sitting at her desk in the study. If she was over fifteen minutes late, she wasn’t allowed to eat supper. During the summer, she was expected to attend special science classes at the local university, since it was her parents’ dream that she become a doctor.

It wasn’t as if Matty didn’t like school. She did. She even thought that being a doctor might be kind of fun. Still, she was finding life stressful. Sometimes, she thought it would be easier if life could just stop.

- 1. What type of abuse is this? Explain.**

- 2. How do you think Matty feels? Explain.**

- 3. Do Matty’s parents have the right to treat her this way? Why or why not?**

- 4. What advice would you give Matty?**

Adapted from: Dating Violence: A Discussion Guide on Violence in Young People's Relationship

CHOOSING TO DISCLOSE

WHEN TO TELL

- It is never too late to TELL SOMEONE. You can disclose when you are ready
- Remember, the abuse is **NEVER** your fault. Abuse is **NEVER** okay
- There are people who can help
- Be persistent, keep telling

WHO TO TELL

- A close friend
- A trusted adult (a teacher, a friend's parent, guidance counsellor, coach, relative, neighbour, or someone else you trust)
- If you feel you are in immediate danger, contact the police or call 911

WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

- The person you tell should listen to you and believe you and will want to help you right away

Adapted from Kids Help Phone. (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.kidshelpphone.ca/Kids/InfoBooth/Violence-and-Abuse/Abuse-in-the-family/Family-abuse-what-can-i-do.aspx>

SUPPORTING A FRIEND

IMPORTANT THINGS TO TELL YOUR FRIEND:

- It's not your fault
- I believe you
- I'm sorry that happened to you
- I'm glad you told me
- I understand that telling is difficult to do and am proud of you for asking for help
- I'll help you to get help

IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO FOR YOUR FRIEND:

- Encourage your friend to tell a trusted adult and offer to help your friend tell
- Tell a trusted adult about the disclosure
- Respect your friend's privacy **DO NOT** tell other friends about the assault
- If nothing happens, tell another trusted adult