



Radio Stations : **All Community Radio Stations**  
Subject : **Early Childhood Development**  
Audience : **Parents, caregivers and educators**  
Program Topic : **Preventing Child Abuse (PROTECTION)**

### **Guidelines to the presenter**

- Presenter – please familiarize yourself with the brief and the use the facts effectively by referring to them from time to time during the show.
- You should be seen as a peer rather than an authority.
- Offer guidance or opinion rather than telling people what to do.
- Encourage people to seek further information
- Always keep the objectives and outcomes in mind and drive these.

### **Topic:**

Preventing child abuse

### **Objectives**

- Build awareness around the prevalence and different types of abuse.
- Enable understanding of how to prevent physical and sexual abuse in communities
- Enable understanding of safer environments for their children and how to create them
- Encourage caregivers to talk to their children about sexual abuse and how to say no

### **Introduction**

On this show, we celebrate the fact that you are the most important person in your child' life. You have the power to give your child the best possible start in life and it doesn't have to cost you a cent.

*Today we are talking about a very difficult topic – child abuse and how to prevent and deal with this difficult issue. 80% of children are abused by someone that they know. Neglecting a child is also abuse as well as beating a child excessively. But what should we do if we suspect child abuse and how can we prevent it?*

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Facts/Information</b>
<p>1. <i>Can you tell me, what is child abuse and why is it important to talk about?</i></p>	<p>Child abuse is any action that results in harming a child.</p> <p>It is never an easy thing to talk about, and far easier to stay silent about, but it is not someone else’s problem – it touches all our lives and therefore it is really important to break the silence and speak out in order to educate people, especially children, about this, so we can stop abuse.</p>
<p>2. <i>Are there different kinds of child abuse?</i></p>	<p>Yes. There are many different forms of child abuse including. The one that we often forget about is neglect. This is where children’s basic needs – for love, food, shelter, health and education - are not met. For many parents, particularly those who are poor, it is a constant struggle to try and meet these basic needs of their children. Yet, there are also those parents who don’t care and who don’t try and meet their children’s needs. These children suffer from neglect.</p>
<p>3. <i>Could you give some examples of neglect?</i></p>	<p>For example children might be left alone for a long time without someone to look after them and keep them safe. They might not get enough to eat. They might also not get enough love or not be properly protected from danger. Many</p>

<p>4. <i>What are some of the other types of abuse?</i></p> <p>5. <i>I imagine that for some parents who use hitting to punish their children, this might be a bit confusing. What is the difference between discipline and abuse?</i></p> <p>6. <i>What are the signs of physical abuse?</i></p> <p>7. <i>But children are often falling and hurting themselves. How do you tell the difference?</i></p>	<p>disabled and sick children are vulnerable and need our care and protection – and sometimes families neglect to give them this.</p> <p>Another type is physical abuse. Physical abuse happens when a child is deliberately hurt by someone else – e.g. hitting then very hard, burning a child or banging a child’s head against the wall. We live in a very violent society where women and children are often the victims of abuse.</p> <p>Parents sometimes beat their child as a way to punish them for being naughty. Our new children’s act does allow parents to punish their children but not to physically harm them through beating. Parents should not take out their frustrations on their children or be spiteful and unreasonable. Beating at school or any other setting is not allowed,</p> <p>Look out for these signs of physical abuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many bruises, cuts or broken bones</li> <li>• Cigarette burns</li> <li>• Head injuries</li> <li>• Finger marks on the face or neck</li> <li>• Signs that the child was beaten with a sjambok, belt or stick</li> </ul> <p>Children do fall and hurt themselves by accident BUT a child who always seems to have a number of unexplained or suspicious injuries all at different stages of healing is probably being abused. They also might not be able to remember who they got hurt, makes excuses for the</p>
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<p>8. <i>What should one do if you suspect abuse?</i></p> <p>9. <i>I have seen sometimes a parent still being quite abusive to a child, but without actually hitting them. Isn't this also abuse?</i></p> <p>10. <i>The really difficult one to talk about is the one we are reading so much about in the newspapers at the moment – sexual abuse. What is sexual abuse?</i></p> <p>11. <i>How does sexual abuse happen?</i></p>	<p>injuries and might be frightened of adults or being touched.</p> <p>If you suspect abuse, don't start making accusations, rather talk to the parent and the child separately. They might tell different stories.</p> <p>Yes this is called emotional abuse. Not all abuse is physical. Emotional abuse is when a child is denied love and attention or made to feel frightened or guilty. Emotional abuse hurts children's feelings and makes them feel bad. For example shouting and swearing at a child, always finding fault in a child and always telling them they are bad, not listening to the child, withholding love and affection, forcing children to do something they don't want to do. All these things break down a child's confidence and self esteem and can lead to serious problems later in life.</p> <p>Sexual abuse happens when a child is raped or forced into sexual activity with a teenager or adult. Sexual abuse can happen to both boys and girls, and doesn't include only rape, but also includes forcing children to touch the abuser or touching children's breasts, bottoms or genitals, taking photographs of children to be used as pornography or showing them pornography.</p> <p>Sexual abuse or rape often happens after a long period during which the abuser tries to win the child's trust. This is often</p>
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<p><i>12. What are some of the signs that sexual abuse might be happening?</i></p>	<p>done by giving the child gifts, special treats and lots of love and attention. When the abuse finally happens, the child often feels too guilty or frightened to ask for help, and they are often threatened by the abuser.</p> <p>A child who is abused may have difficulty sleeping, eating or relaxing. Bedwetting and nightmares are common signs of physical, sexual and emotional abuse. If a child's behavior changes suddenly or the child becomes very aggressive or very quiet, something is wrong. Other signs of sexual abuse include: inappropriate sexual play, excessive masturbation, torn or blood stained underwear, bruising, swelling or injuries to the vagina, anus, sexually transmitted disease and unusual itching in the genital area.</p>
<p><i>13. Who commits abuse?</i></p>	<p>Research has found that 80% of children are abused by someone that they know. It is usually a member of the family, a relative or a friend that abuses children. That is why it is so important to be aware of what is going on with your children at ALL TIMES.</p>
<p><i>14. Why do people abuse children?</i></p>	<p>People who abuse children have a serious problem. They may feel lonely, angry or confused and they take it out on those weaker than them. We also live in a very violent society and feelings of anger and frustration mixed with substance abuse often give rise to abuse. Domestic violence also often puts children at risk. We need to work together to break the</p>

*15. What can we do to prevent child abuse and protect our children?*

cycle of child abuse and domestic violence.

The most important thing is to help children protect themselves. We do this by talking to children about their rights and responsibilities. Tell them that they have the right to say no to anyone who tries to hurt them or make them feel bad – including friends and family. Teach children about their body parts (and the proper names for them) and tell them that these are their private parts and that no one else has the right to touch them. Talk to children about child abuse and what they can do to protect themselves.

Encourage children to:

- Say NO (if you can)
- RUN away (if you can) and
- TELL someone that you can trust (if you can)

Importantly encourage children to express their feelings and reassure them that they must tell you if someone is hurting or harming them in anyway.

*16. What should I do if a child asks for help?*

If a child tells you that he or she has been abused, remember that you are there to protect the child. Remember that it took great courage for an abused child to share with an adult as they often feel guilty or blame themselves so try not to show anger, shock or embarrassment. Listen to their story and tell her that you believe her. Young children are very unlikely to lie about sexual abuse. If the abuse has just happened, don't destroy any physical

<p><i>17. What will happen next?</i></p>	<p>evidence (i.e. don't wash the child or burn clothes as the police will need this evidence). Take immediate steps to ensure the child's safety and explain what will happen next.</p> <p>When you suspect child abuse, it is critical that you report the child abuse at the police station. Tell the officer on duty that you want to speak to a member of the family violence and child protection unit. They are specially trained to deal with cases of child and sexual abuse, and will come and collect the child and their caregiver as soon as possible.</p>
<p><i>18. How as a community can we help prevent child abuse from happening?</i></p>	<p>The most important thing in a community to help prevent child abuse is to work together and try and support each other. People have to work long hours and often travel far distances to get home late, so it is important to organize safe places for children to be and play when their parents are away. It is also important for neighbours to look out for disabled children who are easily abused. Some communities get together and organize safe houses, and give children whistles to call for help if needed.</p>
<p><i>19. Where can we go for help?</i></p>	<p>There are a few different places that offer help if you suspect child abuse, or if a child you know has been abused. Child welfare is a big umbrella body that represents a number of organisations. You can report neglect or abuse by calling 0861 424453.</p> <p>Childline runs a national helpline</p>

	telephone that is available toll free 24 hours a day. You can call them on 0800 055 555.

### **Learning outcomes**

After listening to this show the audience should:

- Understand that there are different types of abuse, and that withholding love is also abuse.
- Know and are on the look out for signs and symptoms of abuse
- Understand the difference between discipline methods and physical abuse
- Know how to protect children from child abuse by talking to them about abuse
- Know what to do if a child asks for help