

**British Columbia Foster Care
Education Program**

**CARING FOR CHILDREN:
WHEN CHILDREN EXPERIENCE
ABUSE AND NEGLECT
(6 HOURS)**

Ministry of Children and Family Development

About the Author

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

A. RATIONALE

Many children who come into care have experienced abuse and neglect. Caregivers need to know how to recognize the symptoms of abuse and neglect as often they will be the first to realize the extent and intensity of the maltreatment of the child placed with them.

Caregivers need to be able to listen to the child placed in their care when the child discloses information about abuse or neglect. In this module, caregivers will learn about the various aspects of abuse and neglect, and how to recognize symptoms or indicators of abuse and neglect. They will also have an opportunity to practice and improve their skills in order to respond effectively to children in care who have been abused or neglected.

B. LEARNING OUTCOMES

SESSION I

The caregiver can:

- describe ways in which people, including themselves, may respond to and feel about child abuse and neglect.
- identify self care strategies when working with children who have experienced abuse and neglect.
- describe types of abuse and neglect (physical, emotional, and sexual) that a child in care may have experienced.
- define physical, emotional, and sexual child abuse and neglect.
- describe factors that contribute to child abuse and neglect.
- identify and describe observable signs and behavioral indicators of child abuse and neglect.

SESSION II

The caregiver can

- describe potential impacts of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse on the development and behavior of children and youth.

- identify, describe, and demonstrate supportive responses while caring for the needs of children and youth who have experienced abuse or neglect.
- identify, describe, and demonstrate how to support a child who is disclosing an abusive or neglectful experience.

TRAINER'S INSTRUCTIONS

- **Honesty:** Be as honest as possible and express yourself as you really think and feel.
- **Respect**
- **Confidentiality:** If using descriptions of children in care and their families, no names or other identifying information are to be used.

2. HOW WE MAY RESPOND TO CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Learning Outcome:

The caregiver can describe the ways in which people, including themselves, may respond to and feel about child abuse and neglect.

Materials:

Handouts

- Handout #5 How We React to Child Abuse

Overheads

- Overhead #5 How We React to Child Abuse

Instructions:

Most adults have witnessed children being abused or neglected by parents. This may involve an experience in their own family, the family of a friend, relative or a neighbor. It may have been in a public place such as a shopping mall. In addition, many caregivers have seen the results of physical abuse (bruises, abrasions) on children in their care.

Violence against children, especially when deliberately carried out by parents, generates intense emotional reactions that may range from sympathy to hostility. Sometimes we may have conflicting emotions, such as feeling both angry and sorry for the offender.

Recognizing and accepting our emotional reactions to child abuse is not by itself sufficient to make us effective helpers to abused children. We must also develop helpful ways to resolve or channel some of these strong reactions. If these emotions are not constructively channeled or controlled, they are likely to affect our:

- objectivity.
- sensitivity to the child.
- perception of the child's family.
- reactions to the child's parents.

Exercise:

The following exercise may provoke very strong personal emotional reactions by participants towards child abuse and

neglect as well as emotional reactions toward those who are seen as responsible for inflicting the abuse or neglect. Let participants know they need only share those personal reactions they feel comfortable in sharing. It is quite possible that a participant experienced abuse or neglect as a child and has not disclosed this to anyone, or has not processed the effects of such an experience. The trainer should prepare the participants carefully for this activity, including a statement that difficult memories or emotions may be recalled. Participants should share feelings and experiences only to the extent to which they are comfortable.

Write down your responses to the following questions:

When I think about children being abused or neglected I feel...

How might your reactions affect you, as a caregiver, in your ability to interact with:

- a child who has experienced abuse or neglect?
- a family member alleged to have abused or neglected the child?
- other members of the child's family?

To what types of abuse or neglect do you most strongly react?

Why?

What helps you in resolving your feelings?

Points to consider.

Possible harmful effects of reactions include:

- being overprotective of children.

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- responding to children because of your subjective viewpoint of what happened to them rather than responding to how they see what happened to them.
 - upsetting them by your responses. Children often take care of adults' feelings and minimize or deny their own.
 - responding in hostile ways to parents and other family members which might get in the way of your relationship with the child and the child's relationship with family members.

Ways to resolve feelings include:

- discussing concerns with the child's worker.
- debriefing with appropriate resource persons.
- using stress reduction strategies and "time outs."
- implement regular self-care activities.

Source: Dawson, R. (1996). Self Awareness and Child Abuse Ministry for Children and Families: Recognizing Abuse and Neglect Child Protection Training. Victoria, BC Province of British Columbia.

Review Handout #5, "How We React to Child Abuse," to summarize this section.

Three issues seem to impact caregivers. These are:

- Having been abused or neglected themselves or knowing someone who has been abused or neglected. It is important when caring for children and youth to be aware of "your own stuff." Caregivers need to protect their own mental health and, if there are issues, to address them in therapy.
- Being a parent. Caregivers may reflect on their own behaviors as parents and may find themselves questioning the possibility of their own children being abused or neglected.
- In the case of sexual abuse, the ability to talk freely about sexual issues and the caregiver's own feelings about sexuality influence the ability to care for children and youth who have experienced abuse and neglect.

Source: National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect (1999). Substitute Caregivers: Child Abuse and Neglect, <http://www.calib.com>

Summary Remarks:

Reactions indicate our humanity and humanness. What is important is that, as caregivers, we are aware of our reactions, acknowledge them, and then respond to them in ways that allow us to be present for the children we care for and about.

3. SELF-CARE

Learning Outcome:

The caregiver can identify self care strategies when working with children who have experienced abuse and neglect.

Materials:

Handouts

- Handout #6 Self Care

Exercise:

Just as experiencing abuse and/or neglect affects children and youth, working with children and youth affects caregivers.

Participant think back to the module “Effects of Caregiving” when self care was discussed. The importance of taking care of self was emphasized. Think specifically about the reactions to abuse and neglect that you identified earlier in this session and to jot down in Handout #6, “Self Care,” 2 or 3 things you might do in each area when you are caring for a youngster who has experienced abuse or neglect.

You may want to review the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social dimensions of self care and think of an example for each.

4. DESCRIBING TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Learning Outcome:

The caregiver can describe types of abuse and neglect (physical, emotional, sexual) that a child in care may have experienced.

Materials:

Handouts

- Handout #7 Describing Abuse and Neglect

TRAINER'S INSTRUCTIONS

- Handout #8 The History of Child Welfare

Instructions:

This section will look at:

- How people describe what behaviors and actions might be abusive and neglectful.
- The history of child welfare.

Most people believe they understand what constitutes abuse and neglect. However, based on our own beliefs, values, and experiences, there may be differences.

Exercise:

- Refer to Handout #7, "Describing Abuse and Neglect."

Please write on a piece of paper what behaviors and actions you consider abusive or neglectful for each of them.

Behaviours and actions vary depending on our own beliefs and values. Historically, definitions of abuse and neglect have changed.

Refer to Handout #8, "The History of Child Welfare." Read it thoroughly. Caregivers need to be aware of the historical context because the values and attitudes that we hold about abuse and neglect are changing. It is essential that caregivers keep informed as they play a key role in providing care for children and youth. The historical perspective helps explain how and why child welfare legislation has changed over the years and has resulted in the current Child, Family and Community Service Act.

As caregivers we have our own beliefs, values, and attitudes about what constitutes abuse and neglect, however, we are obligated to know and to follow the definitions of child abuse and neglect as set out by law and statute.

5. DEFINING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Learning Outcome:

The caregiver can define physical, emotional, and sexual child abuse and neglect.

Materials:

Handouts

- Handout #9 Legislation Concerning Child Abuse and Neglect
- Handout #10 Definitions of Abuse and Neglect
- Handout #11 Shaken Baby Syndrome Background Information
- Handout #12 Failure to Thrive

Instructions:

As caregivers, we need to be familiar with legislation that defines child abuse and neglect.

In order to take appropriate action when concerns arise about the safety and well being of children for whom we care, caregivers need to be familiar with the legislation defining child abuse and neglect. The legislation is contained in the Child, Family and Community Service Act, as well as the Criminal Code of Canada. Refer to Handout #9, "Legislation Concerning Child Abuse and Neglect." The handout describes Section 13 of the Child, Family and Community Service Act with which you should be familiar.

Caregivers are governed by Section 13 of the Child, Family and Community Service Act. As such, if we have any reason to believe that a child/youth is currently being or has been abused or neglected, we need to report our concerns to a protection worker and let the worker investigate.

Refer to Handout #10, "Definitions of Abuse and Neglect" and study the definitions. The definitions in the handouts are what caregivers, MCF workers, teachers, and other professionals use in assessing child abuse and neglect. Draw your attention to the section on Shaken Baby Syndrome and Failure to Thrive.

There are two types of abuse and neglect that are receiving increased attention: Shaken Baby Syndrome and Failure to Thrive.

Shaken Baby Syndrome occurs when a young child's head is whiplashed back and forth during shaking. Since an infant's neck muscles are not strong enough to support head movements, the infant's brain can be bruised as it bangs against the skull.

Consequences may include:

- bleeding behind the eyes and in the brain
- seizures
- partial or total blindness
- mental retardation
- death.

Less severe shaking may result in learning and attention problems.

Shaken Baby Syndrome is about losing control. Most shaking is precipitated when a caregiver becomes frustrated when efforts to console an infant who is crying or “colicky” are unsuccessful.

Describe why infants cry.

Reasons may include that the infant is tired, hungry, needs a diaper change, is thirsty, or is not feeling well.

Consider some ways caregivers can help infants feel better when they are crying.

Ideas may include changing a diaper, feeding them, burping them, holding them, rocking them.

Taking a break and getting support so that someone else can care for the infant is important. If an infant has high needs, then the issue of caregiver support should be addressed in the plan of care. Caregivers should ask for help and ensure relief is available if necessary. In an emergency the caregiver should call the resource worker, the supervisor, or other current support line.

Refer to Handout #11, “Shaken Baby Syndrome.”

The term “failure to thrive” is used to describe infants and young children who are not growing as would normally be expected. The failure to grow must be noticeably significant and last for a period of time.

Ask participants to think back to a time when a doctor or nurse weighed and measured an infant or young child of their own or one they were caring for. The weight and height were recorded on a growth chart. A failure to grow is identified when an infant or young child’s weight gain does not keep up with her height gain.

Some cases of failure to thrive result from physical causes including heart and kidney disease. Others result from psychological and social difficulties that result in the infant or young child not getting enough calories needed for weight gain.

Psychological aspects of failure to thrive often centre around the attachment between the child and her mother. The mother seems to be less sensitive to the child's needs, less likely to comfort the child when she is upset, and more likely to insist on fixed feeding schedules. Some researchers suggest that the term non-organic failure to thrive centers on poverty and how it may contribute to an inability to provide a young child with adequate nutrition and nurturance.

- Using the child's guardianship team as a resource is important for the caregiver.
- Avoiding power struggles over feeding is important.
- Comforting the infant during feeding by rocking, singing, etc., provides a nurturing environment.

Refer to Handout #12, "Failure to Thrive."

A video on Shaken Baby Syndrome is available through the Kiwanis Club of Ottawa. Check the reference page (R. Epsom) for details. The Ministry of Children and Family Development will provide a pamphlet to trainers to accompany this module.

Summary Remarks:

Caregivers need to know what child abuse and neglect is in order to take appropriate action to ensure the safety and well-being of children placed in their care.

6. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Learning Outcome:

The caregiver can describe factors that contribute to child abuse and neglect.

Materials:

Handouts

- Handout #13 Factors Contributing to Child Abuse and Neglect

Overheads

- Overhead #6 Factors Contributing to Child Abuse and Neglect
- Overhead #7 Ecological Perspective of Child Abuse and Neglect

Instructions:

People working with children who have been abused or neglected need to develop a framework to understand the factors that can precipitate child abuse. It is important to understand why some families exhibit abusive behavior while others do not. Child abuse and neglect develops out of a combination of social and economic stresses, parental factors, and child factors. Abuse and neglect do not usually occur in the presence of one factor but is the result of a cluster of factors. The following exercise will help identify these factors.

Exercise:

Review Overhead #6, "Factors Contributing to Child Abuse and Neglect."

Take 5 minutes to brainstorm as many factors as you can that may contribute to child abuse and neglect.

Attitudes and Stresses Which Contribute to Child Abuse and Neglect

1. Cultural Values And Attitudes:

- Values about children
 - children as property
 - authoritarian parenting
 - perfect children and perfect parents
- Values about violence
 - violence as entertainment
 - problems are solved by force

- a certain amount of violence against children is acceptable

- Values about freedom
 - the primacy of individual rights
 - the myth of self-sufficiency
 - the price of privacy

2. Social And Economic Stresses:

- poverty or financial instability
- unemployment
- social deprivation
- family changes:
 - sickness
 - death
 - separation and divorce
 - job loss
 - frequent moves
 - need for two incomes
- isolation
- too many changes

3. Child Factors:

- prenatal factors
 - child unwanted or unplanned
 - pregnancy and/or delivery physically and emotionally difficult
 - problematic prenatal care
- prematurity
- disruptions in attachment
- physical or mental disabilities

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-
- temperament and behavior challenges

• parent/child mismatch

4. Parent Factors:

- parents' experiences in childhood
- inappropriate expectations of children
- role reversal
- personality conflicts

- social competence

These points are expanded on in Handout #13, "Factors Contributing to Child Abuse and Neglect."

Summary Remarks:

Refer to Overhead #7, "Ecological Perspective of Child Abuse and Neglect" to explain that child abuse and neglect occurs within the context of a family, neighborhood, community, society, and culture.

There are usually a number of factors that interact with one another to contribute to abuse and neglect. We need to understand that abuse and neglect of children and youth is a very complex issue.

7. SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Learning Outcome:

The caregiver can identify and describe observable signs and behavioral indicators of child abuse and neglect.

Materials:

Handouts

- Handout #14 Recognizing Indicators of Possible Child Abuse or Neglect

Instructions:

Sometimes, when children come into care, they may not have been assessed as being abused or neglected. Caregivers might be the first ones to notice something in a child's

behavior or physical condition that leads them to

wonder about the possibility that the child has experienced abuse or neglect. Having some idea about signs and indicators is helpful. The BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect summarizes possible signs and indicators. This information is in Handout #14, "Recognizing Indicators of Possible Child Abuse or Neglect." Briefly scan the list and note questions concerning anything you are unclear about.

Note that one or two isolated indicators do not necessarily mean a child was abused or neglected. Clusters of indicators are a stronger indication of abuse and neglect. However, it is important for caregivers to report all indicators of abuse and neglect immediately to the child's worker.

OVERVIEW OF SESSION II CARING FOR CHILDREN WHEN CHILDREN EXPERIENCE ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Session II

Objective: To orient participants to Session II of the module.

Materials:

Handouts

- Handout #15 Agenda for Session II

Overheads

- Overhead #8 Agenda for Session II

Learning Outcome:

The caregiver can describe potential impacts of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse and neglect on the development and behavior of children and youth.

Materials:

Handouts

- Handout #16 A Child's Picture
 - Handout #17 A Child's Energy
 - Handout #18 Behaviors That May Result From Abuse/Neglect
 - Handout #19 Exercise: Impacts of Abuse/Neglect on Children and Youth
 - Handout #20 Possible Effects of Abuse/Neglect on Children and Youth
 - Handout #21 Degree of Impact of Abuse/Neglect on a Child or Youth
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Overheads

- Overhead #9 A Child's Picture
- Overhead #10 A Child's Energy
- Overhead #11 Instructions for Exercise: Impacts of Abuse/Neglect on Children or Youth

Instructions:

The topics to be discussed:

- A way to understand the impact of abuse and neglect on the development of children and youth.
- Possible effects of abuse and neglect on children and youth
- Factors that may influence the degree of impact of abuse and neglect on children or youth.

Using Handout #16, "A Child's Picture," and Overhead #9, "A Child's Picture," highlight the fact that abuse and neglect can interfere with children's beliefs about themselves, other people, relationships, and the world.

Experiencing abuse and neglect may result in a child seeing himself as bad, worthless, "damaged goods," or powerless; seeing other people as bad, untrustworthy, all-powerful; relationships as manipulative, hurtful; and the world as a dangerous place. It is important for caregivers to understand that if young people perceive the world in this way, they may develop defensive and self-protective behaviors that challenge caregivers.

Refer to Handout #17, "A Child's Energy," and Overhead #10, "A Child's Energy." When normative development occurs in an environment in which a child's needs are being met, we can expect that a child's energy will go towards achieving development in each of the domains: physical, emotional, mental, and social. However, if abuse and neglect occur, then a child's energy may be diverted into trying to survive what is happening to her.

The child's picture of self, other people, and the world combined with the impact of abuse or

neglect directly influence a child's behavior. Abuse and neglect can interfere with a person's ability to "...experience life in a positive, creative, and fulfilling way" (Kempe, p. 7).

Understanding this can help caregivers recognize the importance of guiding and supporting children to find appropriate ways to meet their needs.

Exercise 1:

Think about the children with whom you have the most frequent contact and think of all the ways a child from this age range might show you, through behavior, that they are being abused or neglected.

For example, if you care mostly for toddlers, elementary school age children or adolescents, how would that child let us know, through his behavior that he is experiencing fear, anxiety, or sadness? For example some toddlers may become clingy, elementary school age children might bed-wet, adolescents might abuse substances. Children may have difficulties with academic work at school or with concentrating and following directions at home.

Refer to Handout #18, "Behaviors That May Result From Abuse/Neglect," and take a few minutes to read the material.

Exercise 2:

An exercise that explores some of the impacts of abuse/neglect on children. Pick one of the following areas:

- 1: child neglect
- 2: physical abuse/neglect
- 3: emotional abuse/neglect
- 4: sexual abuse

TRAINER'S INSTRUCTIONS

Refer to Handout #19, "Exercise: Impacts of Abuse/Neglect on Children and Youth."

Impacts of Abuse/Neglect on Children and Youth".

In Column One, jot down one or two abusive or neglectful actions or situations that a child might experience in the abuse category you have picked.

For Column Two, ask yourself, "If a child or youth experienced this action or situation, what beliefs about self, other people, and the world might she develop?" Write down your ideas.

In Column Three, answer the question, "If a child holds this belief about herself or other people, or the world, what might the psychological or emotional effects on the child be? Focus on the emotional and psychological effects, not on the behavioral or physical indicators of abuse or neglect.

In Column Four, list any behaviors identified in the last exercise that may fit. The sections on positive messages and positive actions or interventions will be used in another exercise later in the module.

Summary Remarks:

Refer to Handout #21, "Degree of Impact of Abuse/Neglect on a Child or Youth," The degree of impact of the abuse or neglect on the child depends on a number of factors.

- How old was the child when he was first abused? Can the child recall a time when he was not being abused? Is being abused a recent frightening experience?
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- How many times was the child abused? Was he abused once or many times over a number of years?
- How much violence or threat of violence was used on the child? Is her mother a victim of domestic violence?
- How closely related was the perpetrator to the child? Was there a violation of the child's trust in the parent, relative, or caregiver?
- Was there any adult close to the child who tried to protect him from the abuse? Was the child supported or rejected by adults close to her? Are there any adults whom the child felt close to and loved by?
- Were there any areas in the child's life where he experienced success and reward?
- How secret was the abuse and how much force or threat of force was used to keep the secret?

- Was the child believed if and when she attempted to tell?

The major effects seem to fall into one of four categories and influence the behaviors of children as they try to make sense of what happened and why. Effects of abuse and neglect include:

- A sense of betrayal—someone who was supposed to take care of, protect, and, in the instance of abuse or neglect by a family member, love the child, hurt him instead.
- A sense of powerlessness—the child did not have a choice in what happened, nor did she seem able to stop it.
- A sense of stigmatization—the child somehow felt different and that something was wrong with him to have this happening.
- Traumatic sexualization—in the case of sexual abuse, the child was introduced to sexual activity in inappropriate ways and may view herself as “...being valued for her sexuality.” (James, 1989, p. 32), or may view sex and sexuality as something to be avoided.

A child's cultural background, whether or not he experiences any developmental disability, and whether the child is male or female might influence the effects.

Children and youth may demonstrate resilience. They have the ability to “bounce back” when faced with situations that overwhelm their normal capacity to cope. These young people are able to make sense of what happened and to move forward with their lives. However, it is important to remember that even the most resilient child will face huge difficulties when impacted too greatly by abuse and neglect. Being able to connect with one person who believes in her and truly cares about her well-being and worth as a person is crucial to a child's healing.

While abuse and neglect does impact a child development, each child is unique and caregivers cannot assume that everyone will be impacted by abuse or neglect in the same way.

3. CARING FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Learning Outcome:

The caregiver can identify, describe, and demonstrate supportive responses while caring for the needs of children and youth who have experienced abuse or neglect.

- Handout #19 Exercise: Impacts of Abuse/Neglect on

Children and Youth

- Handout #22 Abuse-Related Accommodation
- Handout #23 Healing Process
- Handout #24 The Role of the Caregiver
- Handout #25 Case Studies: Caring for Children and Youth Who Have Experienced Abuse/Neglect
- Handout #26 Skill Practice Directions

Instructions:

Many of the behaviors that have been identified in earlier sections of the module may have been useful to children as they attempted to make sense of the abuse that happened to them. For those who are caring for these children or youth, responding to the behaviors in supportive ways can be very difficult.

The section will look at:

- How children and youth might try to make sense of the abuse.
- The healing process.
- Responses caregivers might give in order to be supportive.

Children or youth who experience abuse or neglect are “survival beings.” When we think back to the effects of abuse and neglect on children and youth, we can see that many of the behaviors that children and youth develop as a result of abuse and neglect are ways to survive.

Review Handout #22, “Abuse-Related Accommodation,” to introduce Briere’s (1992) concept of abuse-related accommodation. It is important to recognize and acknowledge the child’s drive to survive. Many of the behaviors seen may make sense if we think of them as survival mechanisms or strategies that the child uses to cope with the abuse or neglect they have experienced.

Refer to Handout #23, “Healing Process.” The process must proceed according to the child’s timeframe rather than according to someone else’s timeframe. The process is based on the child’s needs. The cyclical nature of the process and when events trigger a child, he may cycle back to an earlier stage in order to resolve some issues. When that happens it is important for caregivers to validate the child’s experience and to be patient with the process.

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We acknowledge that this can be a difficult time for caregivers as they may experience the child's pain and feel as though they don't know what to do. This is a time to be particularly aware of the need for self-care as was discussed in the Effects of Caring module.

Review Handout #24, "The Role of the Caregiver." The caregiver is crucial to the healing process and the role falls into three categories (Croll, p. 221):

- Building relationships.
- Creating routines that support healing.
- Guiding behaviors in ways that teach. This will be built upon in the module "Guiding Behavior of Children and Youth."

Exercise 1:

Recall effective communication and listening skills from the "Communication Skills and Self Awareness" module that are crucial when establishing relationships. Highlights from that module include:

- attending skills
- listening with empathy
- using open questions
- summarizing.

Recognizing that behaviors serve a purpose for the child can help caregivers to guide and support the child to find ways to get her needs met in appropriate ways.

In order to support a child's healing and to guide him to develop appropriate behaviors, it is very important for us, as caregivers, to draw on our communication skills and the integrity of the relationship we have with the young person.

Refer back to Handout #19, "Exercise: Impacts of Abuse/Neglect on Children and Youth." Refer your attention to the section "Positive Messages" and "Positive Actions or Interventions."

The following exercise will provide you with an opportunity to consider positive messages and positive interventions that caregivers might use in supporting a child and in guiding his behavior.

A reminder that many of the behaviors we see come from the despair and hurt that children feel when they are abused or

neglected by people from whom they expected love and caring.

- child neglect
- physical abuse/neglect
- sexual abuse.

- Brainstorm what messages a caregiver might give to a child demonstrating some of the behaviors.
- Brainstorm what actions or interventions a caregiver might do in guiding the child to behave in appropriate ways.

For example: If a 4-year-old child experienced emotional abuse and now isolates herself by sitting in a corner of the couch with her eyes down, then a caregiver might say, "I like it when we spend time together," and invite the child to sit next to her while she reads a story.

Review the following points:

Type of Abuse and Behaviours	Positive Messages	Positive Actions or Interventions
Emotional abuse - isolates self.	"I like it when you sit with me."	Read a story to the child.
Physical Abuse - acts aggressively towards another child.	"I can see that you are angry but you are not to hit Johnny."	Separate the children.
Sexual abuse - child covers up body with layers of clothing and tells you she feel "dirtied" by what happened.	"I'm sorry that happened to you, it wasn't your fault," or "I can understand why you feel that way. It wasn't your fault."	Allow the child space and demonstrate willingness to talk when she wants to.
Neglect - child hoards	"You can have a snack when you want one."	Show the child where the snack food is.

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ords and actions must occur with empathy, caring, and an appreciation for the fact that the behaviors helped the child survive the abuse or neglect. It will take time for the child to give up the behaviors.

Exercise 2:

Pick a case study from Handout #25, “Case Studies: Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Abuse and Neglect.”

Review and make notes of how you as the caregiver may respond to the situation by referring to Handout #26, “Skill Practice Directions.”

Summary Remarks:

It is important to move to supportively challenging self-perceptions and guiding the behaviors of children and youth in a teaching/coaching manner. This is the focus of the module “Guiding Behavior of Children and Youth.”

A trusting relationship is essential to the healing of a child or youth who has experienced abuse/neglect. Such a relationship is built through safe and secure daily interactions and strategies used to guide behavior in ways that teach.

4. WHEN A CHILD DISCLOSES ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Learning Outcome:

The caregiver can identify, describe, and demonstrate how to support a child who is disclosing an abusive and/or neglectful experience.

Materials:

Handouts

- Handout #27 How Children Tell Us
- Handout #28 Steps to Take When a Child Discloses Abuse or Neglect
- Handout #29 Case Studies: When a Child Discloses Abuse
- Handout #30 Case Study Role Plays

Overhead

- Overhead #13 When a Child Discloses: Discussion Questions

Instructions:

This section will:

- Review types of disclosures caregivers may hear.
- Consider what a caregiver must do when she hears a disclosure.

When abused children begin to feel safe, they may reach out to someone they trust by telling them about the abuse that has occurred. There may be little bits of information or even hints from the child. Sometimes the child will pour out the whole story all at once.

Sometimes this information will constitute a “new disclosure,” one which was not the original reason for the child coming into care. At other times, the information is “additional” and supports the original reasons for the child coming into care. Regardless, both the “new disclosure” and the “additional” information should be reported to the child’s worker.

Review Handout #27, “How Children Tell Us.”

Using Handout #28, “Steps to Take When a Child Discloses Abuse or Neglect,” briefly review the 11 tasks for caregivers.

Exercise:

Choose a case study from Handout #29, “Case Studies: When a Child Discloses Abuse

Role play the scenario out in your mind.

Answer the following:

1. What would it be like being the child?
2. What would it be like hearing the disclosure?

Ask yourself what supports you can put in place for yourself so that you can continue to respond to children when they disclose.

Remember the difference between “new” and “additional” information and the need to report to the child’s worker.

Summary Remarks:

When a child discloses, our immediate reaction is a key factor in helping the child tell the information. We need to be calm,

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focused, and available to the child. Follow the 11 steps in the Handout #28, "Steps to Take When a Child Discloses Abuse or Neglect," remembering to help the child tell you enough to establish that abuse did occur and to help support the child. It is essential this information be recorded and shared with the child's worker as soon as possible.

Handout #31 Suggested Resources provides you with further sources of support.

Children and youth in care need to experience a relationship with someone who is absolutely crazy about them. They have experienced a lot and do not need to carry the stigma of "damaged goods." Caregivers need to focus on the young person's strengths and look for ways to create opportunities for him to build on these.

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