TACKLING

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

(CSA)

DEFINITION

Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) is the use of a child for sexual gratification by an older or more powerful person.

The offender is usually an adult, but could also be a more powerful child.

SHATTER THE MYTHS

- The biggest misconception about Child Sexual Abuse is that “this does not happen to people like us who are from ‘good families’.” CSA affects children from all sections and classes of society.
- It happens to both boys and girls.
- It is a widespread problem in India today.

SOME UNPLEASANT FACTS

Source: Bitter Chocolate by Pinki Virani

- Official Police Figures: 40% of girls and 25% of boys in India are sexually abused as children.
- Tulir conducted a survey amongst 2200 11th standard children in Chennai and 42% were found to be victims of child sexual abuse.
- In a study of 600 adult women from 5 different states in India, 47% of the women said they had been abused when under 12 years of age, 35% abused between the ages of 12- 16 years. (Rahi)
- One out of ten children is being sexually abused in India at any point of time (WHO).

USE OF FORCE

- IMPORTANT: Physical force is **not necessary** to engage a child in sexual activity.

- The majority of abusers are known to and trusted by the child. An abuser could be a family member, a relative, a neighbour, a doctor, a teacher - anyone in a position of power vis-à-vis the child.

- Sexual Abuse is often termed as a “special secret” or “teaching a child how to be grown up” by the abuser. If the child ever threatens to reveal this “secret”, s/he is threatened or intimidated into silence.

SILENCE IS NOT THE ANSWER

No one should find out what XYZ has done to our child. No one will believe that such a highly respected man did such a thing. We must hush up this incident and keep our family honour intact.

I cannot be exposed. Parents will never let this incident come to light, so my status in society will be unaffected. The law cannot touch me since there is no evidence. I have nothing to fear, I don't have to change.

Why are my parents not punishing XYZ? Look at how they are talking and laughing with XYZ as though nothing is wrong! Maybe that means what happened was my fault. Maybe I am to blame. Or can it be that my parents don't have the courage to stand up for me and protect me?

soundofsilence.hyd@gmail.com

http://geocities.com/lets_fight_CSA

SO WHAT CAN WE DO?

- BE AWARE THAT SEXUAL ABUSE CAN HAPPEN TO ANY CHILD.
- Always know the adults your child spends time with. Do not trust an adult merely because he/she is a family member / neighbour / old person / female person.

EMPOWER YOUR CHILDREN

- Teach your children about safe and unsafe touches. Do not be embarrassed to teach them the correct names for their private parts. If they are abused, they should be able to tell you where they were touched.
- Children, provided with accurate information at an early age, can learn to avoid or stop sexual advances. An unprepared child may be too confused or ashamed even to admit an assault has taken place.

- Above all, teach your child to say ‘NO’ and run away if he/she receives an uncomfortable touch.

- A child’s greatest fear is that s/he was responsible for the abuse. Emphasize that it is not the child’s fault and there is no need to be scared or feel guilty.

SHATTER THE SILENCE

- Speak about this problem in your own community. Communicate to your family and friends that this danger is real.
- Also make it clear to them that the offenders must be denounced. Remember silence helps the abuser, while speaking out against it helps the child know that it was not his/her fault.
- If you or someone you know is an adult survivor of child sexual abuse, it is important to begin the healing process. You can find out more at Askios.

- **Display our poster** (next page) in your child's school / local school.

- Convince your child's school / local school management to have a **Parent-Teacher Meeting** to discuss this issue.

BE AWARE OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Nov 19 is World Day for Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse

When our children confide in us about abuse, we will believe them.

I will talk to my children about sexual abuse and safe touching.

I will not feel scared or guil
if I receive a touch that mak
me uncomfortable. I will tel
trusted adult about it.

I can say 'Dont Touch Me' even to someone I know, love or respect.

I will never force a child to have sex.

We will not tolerate sexual abuse or harassment of any kind in our community and will denounce the offender, no matter who he / she is. Because...

IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO KEEP A CHILD SAFE

xual Abuse affects both boys and girls from all classes of society. Choose to learn more about Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) at http://geocities.com/lets_fight_

LET'S KEEP OUR CHILDREN SAFE

- IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO KEEP A CHILD SAFE.
- LEARN MORE AT http://geocities.com/lets_fight_CSA
- CSA groups providing information and/or counselling:

- Askios (Bangalore)
- SPARSH Foundation (Bangalore)
- VISHWAS Society (Bangalore)
- Tulir (Chennai)
- RAHI (Delhi)
- IFSHA (Delhi)
- Ankuram (Hyderabad)
- SOS (Hyderabad)
- Elaan (Kolkata)