
Personal Safety Education: A Summary of Support

Why is child abuse prevention important?

Child abuse reports from Johnson and Wyandotte Counties reflect an increasing concern about the number of children who are abused in our community. During the 1990's, child abuse reports increased by 33% nationally. Child abuse not only has devastating immediate effects, but abused children are more likely to suffer from mental illness, to require special education in school and to become juvenile and adult criminals. These victims also have greater rates of teenage pregnancy, drug abuse and alcoholism.

Why should schools be concerned with prevention?

Child abuse and neglect affects academic performance.

Maltreated children compared to the general student population:

- More absences
- Lower test scores
- Lower grade point averages
- Higher likelihood of dropping out
- Higher grade retention rates

What can schools do to help?

How schools can create an abuse-free and safe environment:

- * Have clearly defined policies for reporting suspicions of abuse and neglect, and support staff for reporting.
- * Provide in-service training to school personnel to recognize potential victims and improve the quality of response to victim disclosures.
- * Select and facilitate quality personal safety programs in school.
- * Promote schools as family support systems.

How can Sunflower House help?

Sunflower House offers a full menu of prevention services...

- ❖ Staff In-Service Training
- ❖ Parent Education on Personal Safety
- ❖ P.S. It's My Body! Curriculum
- ❖ P.S. Happy Bear
- ❖ Resource Library

Personal Safety Programs: Q & A

Are personal safety programs successful?

Research clearly demonstrates that children who participate in comprehensive personal safety programs are:

- 1) More likely to disclose ("tell an adult") about abuse, which increases the likelihood they will receive help.
- 2) Less likely to believe the abuse is their fault, which reduces their self-blame.

Do communities support personal safety programs?

In a national survey by Prevent Child Abuse America, 90% of the public agreed that elementary schools should offer programs to help children resist abuse.

97% of teachers surveyed by the National Center on Child Abuse Prevention indicated personal safety programs as valuable.

Why choose *P.S. It's My Body!* programs?



P.S. It's My Body! was developed locally based on research-based recommendations for high quality prevention programs. The resulting benefits of *P.S. It's My Body!* are...

Grade-specific learning units provide developmentally appropriate lessons.

Key concepts and skills can be reinforced through "booster lessons" with more than 100 supplemental activities in the curriculum.

Activities emphasize reporting as a core skill, and incorporate role-playing and behavioral rehearsal.

Parent involvement is encouraged through parent meetings and take-home newsletters and activities.

Staff training is available to prepare the protection system in advance.

Sunflower House presents engaging material for young children with concrete messages, through the P.S. Happy Bear play.

Curriculum lessons include other protective factors: self-esteem, bullying, sexual harassment, communication skills & assertiveness.

Flexible design of the curriculum allows the program to be easily integrated into school curriculum.

For more information contact:

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