

Case study 6

Neglect is a form of child abuse that involves failing to provide a child with the basic necessities for physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. It can take many forms, such as not providing adequate food, shelter, or medical care, failing to supervise a child or leaving them in dangerous situations, or denying them love, attention, and affection. Neglect can have serious long-term consequences for a child's development and well-being, and it is important to recognize the signs of neglect and take action to protect vulnerable children.

- **Description:** David is a 9-year-old boy. His teacher noticed that he was becoming increasingly withdrawn and disengaged in class. He no longer participated in class discussions or social activities with his classmates, and his grades had begun to slip. Upon further investigation, the teacher discovered that David was being teased by his classmates for wearing worn clothes and shoes and for not having a proper lunch prepared. The teacher also learned that David's parents often failed to give money for school trips.
- **Keywords:** bullying/teasing/disengagement/withdrawing

Needs-solutions action plan

Steps for supporting children at school who have been neglected (abused)

Action	Process
Report (when absolutely certain)	Follow the policies and instructions provided by the educational institution where the child is attending.
Reach out	Speak to parent/s and urge them to find the best possible solutions to support both the child and the parent/s.
Refer	Determine what services are available and what resources can be used to support the child at school (Psychologist, nurse, social worker etc.)
Introduce	Adjust the curriculum to include activities that will help the neglected child in the healing process. Activities should reflect decision-making capabilities, teamwork as well as recognizing and expressing feelings.
<i>Example:</i> My decisions so far (activity)	

Purpose: To highlight life's important decisions and to further enhance each pupil's sense of identity by examining decisions taken at different steps in their lives.

Duration: 60 mins maximum.

Materials: newsprint, crayons, pens.

1. Introduction - we are going to discuss different decisions which you have made in your life. Some decisions are more important than others. Can you suggest any decisions that you have had to make? Get examples from students (joining a club, choosing a hobby, summer camp). Who were the other people involved or who influenced you in making the decisions?

2. Listing decisions made - ask students to individually write down decisions they have made, starting with when they were little children. Encourage them to include as many decisions as they can think of.

3. Lifeline - ask each student to take a sheet of newsprint and a supply of pens or crayons. Vary the following instructions according to the age/ability level of the group.

I want to draw a line (picture) that represents your life up until now. Put in the decisions made as you grew up. If they were difficult decisions, use different colours to represent them. If the outcome was good for you maybe that meant that life had moved upwards and your line could show that, or if it was bad, maybe you need to go downwards or into a valley. Perhaps the decision took a long time to make. What would the line look like then? Indicate, with a different colour, who influenced you in making each decision.

4. Sharing in small groups - divide the class into groups of three to share their lifeline. Suggested discussion points:

What decisions were the most serious ones?

What were the consequences of the decisions?

If you had made alternative decisions, how would your life be different?

Who were the other people involved?

5. Large group - take feedback from small groups. Ask students to identify a number of very important decisions they made and also some, where the consequences were not too important. Conclude the class.

Promote

Lessons promoting social-emotional development can help in reducing bullying towards neglected and rejected children in the classroom. Use activities discussing tolerance and empathy.

Example:
Lesson: Sticks & Stones

Objective: To design ways to address bullying behaviours

Introduction

Bullying can be verbal or non-verbal, physical or non-physical. Bullying can be direct, like hitting, teasing, or making threats. It can also be indirect, like rumours, manipulation, isolation and exclusion. A bully might be one person acting out independently, or a clique or group of people picking on someone out of a need to increase their popularity or to seem more cool.

Procedure

1. Ask students what they think about the saying "Sticks and stones can break my bones, but names can really hurt me." Has anyone heard another version of this saying? Which is truer? Ask students to take a moment to reflect on their experiences. Have they ever had someone say something to them that hurt their feelings? Has someone ever hurt them physically or tried to scare them? Have they ever hurt someone by something they said or did?
2. Teachers might want to provide students with their own personal examples of a time they were a victim or a witness to bullying or they hurt someone's feelings. If students feel comfortable, allow them a few moments to share their experiences aloud. And/Or read a book about bullying like *This is Our House*, *Hey, Little Ant*, *Mr Lincoln's Way*, *Say Something* or *Simon's Hook*.
3. Give each student a light grey paper "stone." Have students write a behaviour that could hurt someone or make them feel bad such as calling someone an ethnic name, or tripping someone. Younger children can draw a picture.
4. Have them wrinkle up the "stone" and then try to smooth it out. Explain that once someone has been hurt, it is never forgotten. You cannot remove the hurt. The wrinkles will always be there.
5. Hang stones on the wall to create a wall of intolerance or have students sit in a circle and pile the rocks up in the middle. Ask students to think about ways to prevent these things from happening. Create a class list of ideas.
6. In turn, have each student select someone else's stone off the wall or from the pile. Read your stone and imagine that this happened to you or a friend of yours. What could you do about it? Pair and share your ideas.
7. Together as a class make a poster or some other product (PowerPoint, video, letter to newspaper) explaining something positive everyone could do about bullying.

Links for more information:

https://rhyclearinghouse.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/docs/1424-The_Role_of_Educa

[tors_in_the_Prevention_and_Treatment_of_Child_Abuse_and_Neglect.pdf](#)
<https://minds-in-bloom.com/rejected-or-neglected-child-in-your/>
<http://www.teachpeacenow.org/sticksandstones.html>
https://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/Decision_Making.pdf
<https://www.dese.gov.au/download/2562/thinking-wisely-decision-making-wheel-australian-blueprint-career-development/19736/document/pdf>