

WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS¹

Length: 2 hours



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1. INTRODUCTION

Objective:

Welcome participants and introduce the team of facilitators, the goal of the CAP-ESPACE program, the documents provided and the agenda of the meeting.

To liven up this section, see « La Boîte à outils », Part 1.

1.1 Facilitation Team and ESPACE Organization

Introduce the team of facilitators and explain that this workshop is linked to the one in which the children will soon be participating. Emphasize that their presence tonight is very important in order to continue the prevention of violence after the intervention by CAP-ESPACE.

Present your organization: for example, years in existence, territory served, number of individuals reached, etc.

State that our goal is not to judge, but to speak openly about violence. With children, CAP-ESPACE discusses violence between children, as well as adults' violence against children. With adults, we wish to encourage reflection about our own behaviours.

Although rare, when the facilitation of this workshop is executed by only one individual, give the following information:

*“This workshop is usually facilitated by two of us. Contrary to usual practice, I am the only facilitator today, but other resource people are available at the ESPACE _____ office to respond to specific needs. I will be available during the break and at the end of the workshop, but at any other time, you can reach us during office hours. Our telephone number appears at the end of the **Practical Guide for Parents** that you received. My colleagues are: X _____; Y _____; Z _____.”*

1.2 Goal of the Program

- The CAP-ESPACE program focuses on the prevention of all forms of violence, be it verbal, psychological, physical, sexual or neglect. There are three components: a staff workshop, a parents' conference and a workshop for children aged 3 to 12.
- The main objectives are to equip adults and children to identify violence, provide concrete measures to deal with it, and develop a support network. ESPACE needs you and the participation of the entire school (or day-care) to achieve these objectives.
- CAP-ESPACE encourages the development of self-confidence and autonomy.

CAP-ESPACE's approach sets itself apart from more traditional approaches that aim to control potential victims or aggressors. Traditional approaches that aim to control victims often convey "do not" messages: do not accept candy from a stranger, do not speak to strangers, do not get into a stranger's car, in short, do not do this or that, without providing possible solutions. In addition, being based on myths and biases (only 15 % of sexual assaults are by a stranger), these approaches promote fear. They breed helplessness and maintain vulnerability. Furthermore, the responsibility for the assault is thus easily transferred to the victim, who has not followed the "do not" rules.

When we attempt to control aggressors, we promote a false sense of security, since we cannot put all of them in jail and for a very long time. When they are caught, there have already been many victims.

1.3 Presentation of ROEQ Documents

❖ Pamphlet **For a Safe Childhood**

Focus on:

- ⇒ the fact that your organization is one of the 11 members of the ROEQ listed on the back of the pamphlet;
- ⇒ the Web site;
- ⇒ the awards received that are listed inside (add the *Rights and Freedoms Award* given by the Commission des droits de la personne et de la jeunesse in 2009);
- ❖ the ***Practical Guide for Parents*** supplementing the adult workshop;
- ❖ the list of local resources for adults and children;
- ❖ the evaluation form;
- ❖ the conference agenda;
- ❖ the questionnaire on different forms of violence against children (optional).

This workshop lasts two hours, including a 10-minute break. Invite participants to ask questions during the workshop.

1.4 Personal Situations

Given that the workshop tackles the prevention of violence, it is possible that some of you may feel the need to speak about a personal situation or one that concerns your child. We suggest that you come see us after the meeting or contact us at the office in the coming days. You can also contact one of the local resources listed in the handout.

IF NECESSARY:

If an individual says something that could hurt a person that has been a victim of violence, you could say something like: "Given the possibility that some of us may have been a victim of violence, it is important to choose our comments carefully out of respect for others."

2. ANALYSIS

Objective:

Make participants aware of:

- the abuse of power dynamic that underlies assaults;
- the different forms of violence;
- the analysis of vulnerability factors and the means to counter them.

To liven up this section, see « La Boîte à outils », Part 2.

2.1 Abuse of Power Dynamic

Beyond the spectacular situations that are portrayed in the media, there is violence that affects us all, violence over which we have power.

Violence against children is the expression of an abuse of power by an adult over a child or by a child over a more vulnerable one. This is why our analysis questions the inequalities of power between individuals, and our approach aims to empower children, adults and their milieus.

Our status as adults gives us power over children. This power accompanies our responsibility towards children to offer them structure and guidance, transmit values, and provide affection, etc. This power is therefore not negative in itself. It depends on how we use it. Most of the time we use it correctly to guide children. The problem arises when we use our power in a way that does not contribute to the child's well-being and that humiliates him or her rather than raising or enhancing their self-esteem. These abuses of power thus translate into acts of aggression.

IF NECESSARY:

If you think it is relevant or to respond to questions, you can explain that ESPACE organizations operate according to feminist and community values:

- The feminist movement establishes links between assaults against children and those against women by recognizing that all assaults against children are first and foremost acts of domination and oppression by an individual that holds power over the child. Thus, rather than being seen as an individual problem, violence against children is considered a social problem.
- The action of independent community organizations is characterized by the quest for social justice, the promotion of individual and collective autonomy, democratic functioning, and the commitment to social change.

2.2 Violence Against Children

To liven up this section, see « La Boîte à outils », Part 2.

Let's take a few minutes to discuss violence against children.

Does losing one's patience, spanking a child, or leaving him or her alone at home constitute violence or neglect? The boundary is often unclear. **There is a difference between a one-time gesture and repeated acts that affect the physical or psychological health of a child²; the impact is not the same.**

In times of stress:

- Instead of asking yourself: "What should I do?" Ask yourself: "What does the child need?" If a child just spilled a glass of milk or juice, for example, what should I do, yell at her/him? Do I rush over to pick up the mess? In both cases, he or she learns nothing. Yet, my role is to teach. So I ask myself: "What does he or she need?" He or she probably feels powerless and guilty. We must therefore give him or her the possibility of fixing his or her mistake. You can say: "Quick, hand me the dish towel, it's under the sink." I am not giving an order, but rather the information needed to fix the situation.³
- Ask yourself if you are helping or humiliating the child?
- For more complex situations, ask other people for advice: friends, a worker within the child's environment, etc.

IF NECESSARY:

If you wish to discuss different forms of violence during the workshop, you can do so with the help of the **Guide** or the document entitled *Différentes formes de violence* in the complément d'information. You can also refer parents to pages 4 and 5 of the **Guide** or simply supply the "Different forms of violence" as a handout.

For those who would like more information on the subject of spanking, the ROEQ published its position in a 2007 article (see complément d'information). You can distribute copies, along with the Justice Canada brochure entitled: ***What's Wrong With Spanking?***⁴

² *Visage de la violence, La violence contre les enfants*, Department of Health and Social Services of Quebec, 2001-2002

³ This example was inspired by a passage in an article published in *La Presse* on June 16, 2008. Silvia Galipeau interviewed Isabelle Filliozat, French clinical psychologist and psychotherapist (our translation).

⁴ To receive free copies of the brochure, contact the : National Clearinghouse on Family Violence. Telephone: 1-800-267-1291 or 613-957-2938. Email: ncfv-cnivf@phac-aspc.gc.ca.

2.3 Children's Vulnerability and Empowerment

To liven up this section, see « La Boîte à outils » Part 2.3.

Three major factors make children vulnerable to assault:

- 1) a lack of information;
- 2) their dependence on adults;
- 3) social isolation.

Children lack information about assaults

Children generally have little or misleading information about assaults and even less about their rights. Adults often have difficulty with the subject; they do not want to scare the child, or they are misinformed. They could, for example, not know that the “mean stranger with candy” does not roam the streets, as opposed to the known and often loved aggressor that lives with or around the child. The following actions can help.

To counter the lack of information:

- Provide children with information that will help them identify and recognize violence and how to deal with it;
- Foster adult awareness of this problem, and equip them to identify violence and to handle disclosures.

Children are dependent on adults

It is natural for children to depend on adults to be fed, educated, loved and socialized. This dependence should incite adults to be protective, but some use it against the child by inflicting psychological or physical wounds. From children's point of view, they see themselves as adults see them, that is to say, needing adults to solve their problems and protect them. The following actions can help.

To counter dependency:

- Inform children of their rights;
- Provide them with ways to deal with danger;
- Develop their assertiveness (saying no);
- Develop their ability to use critical judgement rather than asking for blind obedience.

IF NECESSARY:

If questions arise about “developing their ability to use critical judgement rather than asking for blind obedience”, you can ask questions without waiting for answers: “Do I ask my child to obey the babysitter at all times, or do I allow him or her to question some commands? Do I allow my child to question some of my behaviours? Does my child have the right to express his or her disagreement?” And so on.

Children are vulnerable to assaults because they are isolated

Being unaware of resources available and of their rights, children will not seek help from a service worker within their day-care or school, file a complaint with the police, CLSC or Youth Protection. With friends, children often consider themselves buddies and not as individuals that can help each other. The situation is more complex for children that are victims of violence when the aggressor has told them to keep it a secret. We rarely see a child call the police or Youth Protection. The following actions can help.

To counter isolation:

- Develop peer support between children and with adults;
- Ensure that adults and children are aware of the resources that are available to them;
- Help children identify adults that they can trust in their entourage.

3. CHILDREN’S WORKSHOP: STRATEGIES TO COUNTER VULNERABILITY

Objective: Inform adults on how the subject is broached with children in order to reassure them, and enable them to continue doing prevention in the same way, using similar language. Make sure they understand the importance of empowering children to prevent abuse.

Given that it is impossible to watch children at all times, the CAP-ESPACE program has been designed to decrease children’s vulnerability and empower them.

CAP-ESPACE focuses on **assertiveness**, **peer support** and **internal strength** to prevent violence. Let's see how this is done by taking a look at the children’s workshop.

Present the workshop in which the children will soon participate.

For this section, see « La Boîte à outils », Part 3.

3.1 Description of Children’s Workshop

General information for all levels

- CAP-ESPACE visits the milieu (day-care or school) as a whole, including all children and adults.
- The workshops are adapted to different age groups, but their content is the same.
- Three individuals will facilitate the workshop for each group (or class). The role of the primary facilitator will be shared among these individuals. There will be role-plays that will also be acted out alternating facilitators.
- Role-plays and discussion: negative version in which the child has his or her rights taken away; positive version in which the child keeps his or her rights.
The role of the victim in the role-plays alternates between a girl and a boy.

We give more information to the parents given that they will not be attending the children's workshop.

3.1.1 For Parents of PRESCHOOLERS

Main components of the workshop for preschoolers

- ❖ The workshop is held over three days: 20 to 30 minutes of facilitation, followed by meetings with the children, up to a maximum of one hour per day.

Content:

Day 1:

- The three rights using corresponding pictures and gestures (explain briefly);
- A child's toy/snack is taken away by another child (bullying and taxing);
- Review and search for solutions: saying "no", asking friends for help, confiding in a trusted adult;
- Assertive "NO" exercise;
- Free period at the end of day 1 with the facilitation team interacting with the children.

Day 2:

- Role-play with dolls: children who keep their rights when a person they do not know very well wants to show them puppies in his or her car;
- Same solutions as day 1;
- Safety rules, self-defense accompanied by yell;
- Individual meetings with the facilitator of their choice for children who so wish. The goal of these meetings is to get feedback from the children after the workshop, to review, and refer to parents or to other resources, if necessary.

Day 3:

- Song: "Head and shoulders, knees and toes";
- Naming different parts of a girl's body and a boy's body using a poster.
- Three Role-plays:
 - A child is pushed and tickled by his or her older sister;
 - A child's rights are taken away by her uncle who manipulates her by offering a gift in exchange for hugs and kisses (fondling, good and bad secrets, eliminating a child's guilt, responsibility of the aggressor);
- Same solutions as day 2;
- Identifying three trusted adults;
- A child confides in a trusted adult to get help;
- Certificates;
- Individual meetings.

3.1.2 For Parents of Children in ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Main components of workshop for children in elementary school

- The classroom workshop lasts between one hour and one hour and fifteen minutes.
- Individual meetings and activities period

Content:

- ❖ The three rights: safe, strong, free;
- ❖ Rules are necessary to protect my rights and the rights of others;
- ❖ A child is bullied by another child. Exploitation tactics: repeated gestures, humiliating comments, seeking approval of others against the victim, climate of fear, she pushes her, the person who bullies is trying to humiliate the other;
- ❖ It is often possible to keep our rights using simple means: saying “no”, asking friends for help, confiding in a trusted adult. Sometimes, we may need to react physically and therefore need self-defense;
- ❖ We do not give out personal information to strangers on the Internet. We can arrange meetings with friends by telephone;
- ❖ A child's rights are taken away by a person she or he knows (neighbour/coach/uncle): exploitation, seduction, isolation and guilt tactics. “He mixes everything up, he is trying to manipulate Leo to make him do what he wants”;
- ❖ **Cycles 1 and 2:** a child is offered a gift by somebody close (an uncle) in exchange for hugs and kisses: fondling, good and bad secrets, blackmailing, manipulation, eliminating a child's guilt. The same solutions are given;
- ❖ **Cycle 3:** Boyfriend/girlfriend relationships between children (exploitation) where the desire to be cool and to discover the pleasures of loving and being loved are up against manipulation, jealousy and threats;
- ❖ Identifying three trusted adults and keep telling until somebody believes you;
- ❖ Guy is in a difficult situation and wants to confide in his trusted adult;
- ❖ Certificate;

- ❖ Individual meetings with the facilitator of their choice for children who so wish. This allows children to share their comments, to review, and referrals can be made to parents or other resources, if necessary;
- ❖ Activity period: the children are invited to draw or write.

3.2 Possible Reactions

Adults sometimes fear that a program like ours will have a negative impact on children: fear, aggressiveness, etc. We looked at these fears and the results of our research show that they are unfounded. The results are from research⁵ done with parents of children from grades 1 to 3 who had participated in CAP-ESPACE workshops.

The research results are available and you can ask questions at the end of the presentation (see suggested supplement to workshop for adults: research on the CAP-ESPACE program, May 2001).

IF NECESSARY:

Depending on reactions, questions and time available, the following information can be given to equip adults to deal with certain reactions by their children.

Children may change their behaviour after the workshop; they are most likely testing their new-found knowledge. For example, children could use their self-defense tips even if they are not in danger. Should this occur, tell them that you are happy to know that they are able to defend themselves and to say no if need be. Then, you can reiterate the information received in the workshop by bringing up others' rights, which are just as important as their own, and remind them of the rules at home, at school and when playing sports. Self-defense is useful when we are in danger, when somebody is trying to hurt us and we are stuck. We use it to get away and go get help.

⁵ HÉBERT, MARTINE; GAGNON, FRANCINE. *“Analyse des retombées du programme ESPACE, Enfant victimes : quand la vie n’est pas un conte”*, Association québécoise Plaidoyer-Victimes, 2001, pages 25 to 31.

4. EVERYDAY PREVENTION AND POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

Objective: Make adults aware of the everyday gestures and attitudes that make children stronger and that underlie effective prevention at home.

Each day we can provide our children with most of the skills they require to deal with various situations that can arise throughout their lives, including violence.

To liven up this section, see « La Boîte à outils » Part 4.

4.1 Prevention is more than simply talking about violence...

(See *A Practical Guide for Parents*, pages 8 to 10.)

It is also:

- Encouraging the development of a child's self-confidence, autonomy, strength and assertiveness;
- Creating moments of closeness and complicity;
- Building relationships based on respect.

We make our children strong when we show them how important they are by treating them as people deserving attention and respect. You do so each time you:

- show your child that you love her or him;
- talk with your child and take the time to listen;
- show your child that you trust her or him;
- help your child become responsible;
- allow your child to see that you are not perfect.

Every opportunity to increase their self-esteem, their trust in their own judgement, and their ability to react should be used.

4.2 Constructive and Reassuring Information

Prevention also means giving children constructive and reassuring information on the prevention of violence.

(See *A Practical Guide*....., chapter 2.)

- Present pages 11 to 17 of the **Guide** and briefly highlight the main guidelines to generate parents' interest to read the booklet.

Supervision of Internet use:

Highlight the importance of supervising the time the children spend on the Internet. For example, to make supervision easier, set up computers in family areas.

For those interested in more tips, refer them to the list of provincial resources (see complément d'information).

4.3 Positive Discipline

Positive discipline helps develop self-esteem and assertiveness. Assertive children are less vulnerable to violence.

In order to develop, children need a predictable environment and significant emotional relationships.

The five “Cs”

Establish rules that are...

1. **Clear and comforting:** Easy for children to understand, they convey the values that you wish to pass on, for example, self-respect, respect of others and of the environment, development of healthy lifestyles, etc.
2. **Concrete and realistic:** They reflect expected behaviour. They are formulated in a positive way. For example, instead of saying “Stop screaming”, say, “Let's talk softly, the baby is sleeping.”
3. **Consistent and predictable:** They do not fluctuate according to the adult's mood and are limited in number, because children aged 6 to 12 years old can integrate and apply five to six rules at once.
4. **Coherent:** It is essential that the adult practices what he or she preaches, demonstrating by example. For example, If I expect my child to make his or her bed in the morning; I have to make mine!

5. **Consequences that are logical:** Consequences are ways to learn and grow. For children to learn to assume the consequences for their actions, there should be a logical relationship between the behaviour deemed inappropriate and the consequence.

Example for **preschoolers:**

- The time the child keeps playing instead of getting ready for bed when he or she has been asked to do so is subtracted from the time for a fun activity before turning off the lights (reading, television, songs, etc.).

Example for **elementary school children:**

- Your children are aware that one of the household rules is that they must wear their bicycle helmet when riding their bikes. Your 10-year-old son comes home from school without it. You can tell him: “You know that it is dangerous to ride your bike without a helmet. Since you have ignored this safety rule, you will now have to walk. I will put your bike away until Monday, and then you can use it when you decide to wear your helmet.”

Given that rules can have exceptions, they must be firm, but not set in stone.

For example:

- During the week, when homework is done, the children can play video games or on the computer for a short period of time. You can be more lenient on weekends, during a movie night or if you decide to offer a reward, a privilege, etc.

Remember that the consequences are ways to learn and that learning does not have to be painful.

Emphasizing good behaviour

Building on strengths and successes is more efficient than trying to correct mistakes and failures. However, we sometimes forget to emphasize and appreciate behaviours that we would like them to repeat, but rather insist on what bothers us. A child can repeat a behaviour simply to get our attention. Stop giving too much attention to unwanted behaviours, and put the emphasis on wanted behaviours by regularly congratulating and smiling. This communicates a clear and constructive message.

- For example: “You worked hard, you picked up most of your toys and all of your clothes. I will help you clean up the rest of your room, and then we can have lunch”.

How to stop giving too much attention to unwanted behaviour? By asking these two questions:

- 1) Is the behaviour dangerous (for the child or for others)?
- 2) Will the behaviour have an impact on his or her life or on their family’s?

If the answer to both these questions is no, you can ignore the behaviour. If the answer to one or both of these questions is yes, it is better to give it some attention.

Describing the behaviour and not the child

It is easier for children, and adults as well, to do better if they are presented with specifics such as:

- Telling the child what he or she did wrong or was inappropriate, with compassion if necessary;
- Telling them what you expect, repeating it often if necessary;
- If useful, share your feelings with the child.

Examples for **preschoolers**:

- “When you scream in my ear, I don’t like it. I want you to speak softly to me.”
- “You got up from the table without permission. I know it is difficult for you, but the household rule is that you must remain seated during a meal.”
- “It is forbidden to throw a ball in the house. The ball must be rolled on the floor or else take it outside.”

Examples for **elementary school children**:

- “When you do not tell me where you are, I worry. I want you to call me before going over to a friend's house after school.”

Developing self-esteem...

- By using logical consequences that take the form of making amends. This implies asking the child to repair damage caused through a constructive gesture. Fixing their mistake reduces the guilt while helping the child take responsibility. For example, when a child says mean things about another child, ask them to find three nice things to say about this person. A child who is physically violent can fix his or her wrong by being kind, carrying the school bag of the injured child, or play a game with his or her younger brother, etc. A child that plays or reads when it is time to get ready to leave and makes his parents late can help put the dishes away or set the table to give time back to his or her parents.
- By giving the child the chance to win back a lost privilege through good behaviour for a predetermined period of time, you are showing them that mistakes are allowed and that wrongs can be righted, and that he or she is forgiven. The possibility of regaining the privilege helps the child see the adult as being flexible and caring.
- By offering a supportive presence and encouraging the expression of feelings and emotions.
- By giving them responsibilities that are adapted to their age, temperament, and helping them, if necessary.
- By highlighting their strengths and successes, and by suggesting ways to confront difficulties.

Offering choices

Encourage children's active participation by offering them simple choices. This gives them a sense of freedom with regard to activities needed for a healthy lifestyle. For example:

- "Remi, it is time to get washed, do you prefer a shower or a bath?"
- "Do you prefer judo or swimming lessons? Do you prefer lasagna or shepherd's pie for dinner?"

Figuring things out on their own

In some cases, children learn better if they are left to their own devices. For example, if a child refuses to wear mittens to go outside, let her/him go without mittens for a few minutes. He or she will get cold and realize that it is better to wear mittens. Of course, you must ensure the child's safety.

When the situation is too much for me

When my anger gets the better of me, I can use the "3 Bs".

- Back away:** I am angry, I am aware of it and I back away.
- Breath:** I think about it and find an acceptable way to express my anger.
- Behave better:** I am calm, I can talk about it and find solutions.

Remember that it's about increasing the number of times we congratulate them, without exaggerating.

I congratulate them for situations that are somewhat challenging. If I congratulate my child constantly or for things that he or she has done for a long time, it no longer has the desired impact.

Positive discipline is not magic as each child is different and each situation is unique. A technique could work very well with one child while not at all with another or on a given day. A particular situation may represent greater difficulty and require exterior help.

Let's remind ourselves that it is about multiplying the occasions to recognise the successes and efforts of the child.

Refer those who wish to further explore this subject to the Parenting for Life brochure entitled ***"Yes, You Can! Positive Discipline Ideas for You and Your Child."*** Bring copies to distribute.

5. CLUES TO FIND OUT IF A CHILD IS A VICTIM OF VIOLENCE

Objective: Make adults aware of stress indicators and of the possibility that a child has been a victim of violence.

To liven up this section, see ,« La Boîte à outils », Part 5.

5.1 How to Know If...

Bruises or marks can be signs of violence. However, not all violence leaves visible traces.

We intuitively sense when a child we are close to is in a stressful situation. Sudden changes in a child's behaviour are often a sign that something is wrong: sudden anger, fatigue, apathy, nightmares, aggressiveness, starting to wet the bed again, withdrawal, etc. It is our role as adults to find out what is happening and to offer help.

Stress in children is usually caused by:

- **A new situation:** moving, starting school, arrival of a newborn in the family, etc.;
- **Difficult moments:** exams, divorce, loss of a loved one, arguments, etc.

However, it is possible that the reason for the stress is that they are the victim of violence.

Reactions to violence vary from one child to another. They depend on:

- ✓ age;
- ✓ personality;
- ✓ type of violence;
- ✓ frequency and how long it has been going on;
- ✓ relationship between victim and aggressor;
- ✓ presence or absence of significant people in child's entourage.

Also, it is easy for some children to reveal things, while others can be silent or lie for different reasons, such as:

- fear of not being believed;
- fear of punishment;
- guilt;
- protection of the aggressor.

Conclusions should not be drawn without checking with the child.

IF NECESSARY:

For those interested in the list of stress indicators in children, the organization can offer copies (see complément d'information) or refer these individuals to the following publication: ***"Filing a report with the DYP is already protecting a child. When and how to file a report?"***
 Abandonment: page 9. Negligence: page 11. Mistreatment: page 12. Sexual abuse: page 13. Physical abuse: page 15. Serious behavioural issues: page 16.

For those wishing to receive further information on lying, see complément d'information.

5.2 How to Verify Your Suspicions

Take the first step by sharing your suspicions and worries, while respecting the child's pace and needs.

Example of a situation in which an adult explores his or her doubts

"Listen, it seems like something is wrong and I am worried. Would you like to talk about it? We might be able to find a solution together."

Despite our concerns, it is better to avoid harassing the child and instead create a climate of trust and openness. The child will feel respected and will feel more inclined to open up.

If the child does not open up, it may be because the problem can be solved without our help. However, if the situation persists, we can express our concern once more.

6. WHEN A CHILD CONFIDES IN YOU

Objective: Demystify the intervention by offering guidelines.

Some problems that children share can seem relatively small. Others will appear more serious. No matter what the problem is, for the child it is important. Every disclosure requires attention in order to help the child to the best of our ability.

To liven up this section, see « La Boîte à outils », Part 6.

You will find further information for this section in the *Practical Guide for Parents*, pages 22 to 27. Invite parents to learn more about this by reading chapters 3 and 4.

Guidelines:

- Start by putting the child at ease by listening to her/him in a quiet and discrete setting;
- Believe what he or she is saying without judging;
- Control, to the extent possible, your reactions. This will help calm the child. If you are angry or sad, tell the child that you are feeling like this because of the situation, not because of him or her;
- Reassure the child. For example, “It is good that you decided to talk about this, it takes courage, you have the right to feel safe, what is happening is not your fault”;
- Validate their emotions, without introducing your own;
- Ask the child how you can help, and if he or she has any ideas to solve the problem. This restores their control of the situation;
- Let the child share their version of the facts, without influencing them. As their confidence grows, you will learn more;
- Respect their pace, ask simple and open questions (who, what, when, where);
- Do not make promises that you cannot keep.

If the problem is easy to solve

- Establish an action plan with the child, in other words, the steps to be taken.
- Provide support throughout the process.

If the problem is more complex

- Determine if the child is safe. Do you have considerable or little time to act?
- If the child is in danger, explain what is to come, that other people will probably become involved;
- During this difficult time, the child will need comforting, and you may as well.

The situation can seem difficult to resolve. It is therefore important to let the child know that you will not abandon them, that he or she will receive the necessary help, if not from you, then from someone else.

7. LOCAL RESOURCES

Objective: Inform the adults of the existing resources within their community, give them a sense of the importance of seeking help when necessary, and demystify certain resources like Youth Protection.

Seeking help from those around us or from outside organizations, if necessary, is important. Who can help us if a child confides in us?

To liven up this section, see « La Boîte à outils », Part 7.

People close to us: Sharing our concerns with them can help.

The child's day-care or school setting: Very often, there are individuals within the day-care or school that can advise us. With the help of the parents, identify them.

Community organizations and support groups: They are there to respond to different needs. To find them, you can contact ESPACE or your CLSC. They can help you or refer you to other resources.

Health and Social Service Centers (CSSS): hospitals, CLSC, etc. Find out what services are offered.

Director of Youth Protection (DYP)

Since children depend on adults, it is our duty to protect them. We must not only protect our own, but all children. This is the reason there is the Youth Protection Act.

If you have doubts about whether or not a situation must be reported, contact DYP at the same number as for reporting a case.

IF NECESSARY:

If individuals share their bad experiences with Youth Protection, explain that there have been some unfortunate experiences with reporting, but that is not always the case, and it is by using the services that we validate the public's need for these services.

For further information on the Youth Protection Act and reporting, refer to the document entitled: *Loi de la protection de la jeunesse et signalement* (see complément d'information).

Refer adults to the guide for reporting entitled: *"Filing a report with the DYP is already protecting a child. When and how to file a report?"*⁶ It is also available online at: <http://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/acrobat/f/documentation/2008/08-838-01A.pdf>.

Police Services

If we want the aggressor to be arrested, we must contact the police. This will help protect other children. Even when you do not want to file a complaint, it is recommended to contact the police; they may be looking for information.

Resources Within Your Milieu

Depending on the time left, present a few important regional or provincial resources. For example, resources for children that are concerned with online bullying, offering psychological support, etc. Keep in mind the accessibility of the resources, as financial or travel means vary from person to person.

⁶ This guide takes into account the July 9, 2007, amendments to the YPA. This document is edited by the communications services of the Department of Health and Social Services of Quebec.

8. CONCLUSION

Objective: Sensitize adults to the importance of getting involved.

Adults can ensure that children are:

- better informed about violence;
- less dependent on adults to meet their needs;
- less isolated from resources.

Adults have the power to change things through what are often simple words and actions. Simply being attentive can make us an important person in a child's life and make a difference.

This paragraph refers to resiliency or the ability to overcome an obstacle, which is often linked to a person being present in the child's life that he or she knows they can turn to and count on.

9. WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Objective: To receive feedback from workshop participants in order to make changes, if necessary.

For this part, use your organization's choice of questionnaire (14 or 16 questions).

Ask parents to take a few minutes to fill out the evaluation sheet. Comments are appreciated. They allow us to make adjustments to the workshop, if necessary.

Thank participants for coming and remind them of your availability to answer any questions, as well as the possibility of reaching you at the office for support for any situation involving children and violence.

END OF WORKSHOP