
UNIT: Decisions That Affect Children**LESSON:** Challenging Times**TIME:** 4-6 days

COMPETENCIES:

1. Identify and discuss some possible stresses of childhood (e.g., divorce, lack of adequate financial resources, moving, prolonged illness, death, working parents, new siblings, peer pressure, physical or emotional neglect, family members with special needs, etc.). (Options 2, 3, and 6)
2. Discuss the possible short-term and long-term effects of challenging situations on children. (Options 2 and 3)
3. Identify and explore positive, healthy strategies for coping. (Options 4 and 6)
4. Describe the various types of child abuse and identify the symptoms of each. (Options 5 and 7)

OVERVIEW/SUMMARY:

Abuse is intentional physical, mental, or emotional hurt to a person. Child abuse is a tragic and very serious problem in our society. It affects people of all races, religions, cultures, and economic status. It is vital that we take measures to end this violence. Many factors, including child abuse, may cause stress in children's lives. These factors may include divorce or separation, poverty, moving, prolonged illness, pressure to achieve, difficulties in school, death in the family, working parents, new siblings, peer pressure, or family members with special needs. Children who are experiencing high levels of stress may have difficulty learning to interact appropriately. Children need help in coping with these crises in their lives.

MOTIVATOR:

Have the students take the "STRESS TEST FOR CHILDREN." Have the students pretend they are children. As each item is read, have the students place a mark next to any applicable experiences they have had during the past year. Then use the "STRESS TEST FOR CHILDREN--KEY" transparency and have them total their scores. As a class, discuss where they are on the scale. Stress can have serious effects on children.

LESSON OPTIONS/SUPPLIES:

OPTION 1

BOOK: The Quilt Story, ISBN #0-590-43890-5, The Good Stepmother, The Homeless Hibernating Bear, Never Talk to Strangers, For Every Child a Better World, Now One Foot, Now the Other.

OPTION 2--Competencies 1 and 2

CHILDHOOD STRESS: The teacher should present the information "CHILDHOOD STRESS" to the class.

OPTION 3--Competencies 1 and 2

STRESSORS: Using resources available in the classroom, assign small groups of students a childhood stressor to research. (TEACHER NOTE: You will have to provide resource materials to aid students in this presentation.) Have students present the stressor to the class, discussing the short-term and long-term effects of the stressor. They should also identify methods of coping and dealing with the stressor. Stressors may include:

divorce or separation	death
poverty	working parents
moving	new siblings
prolonged illness	peer pressure
pressure to achieve	physical neglect
school difficulties	emotional neglect
pressure to achieve	family members with special needs
competition	

OPTION 4--Competency 3

GUEST SPEAKER: Invite an expert on child abuse (physiologist, counselor, social worker, etc.) to talk about child abuse, the types of abuse, symptoms, and resources available to parents and children involved in child abuse. Be sure to include what they should do if they believe child abuse is occurring.

OPTION 5--Competency 4

ABUSE: Present the information "Abuse."

OPTION 6--Competencies 1 and 3

BAG LUNCHES: Complete the activity as explained in "BAG LUNCHES."

OPTION 7--Competency 4

VIDEO: Show an appropriate video on child abuse. There are many excellent videos available; check with the Family Support Center or other local agencies. Some suggestions:

"Come in from the Storm" series (20 minutes each):

1. The China Doll (emotional abuse--divorce)
2. The Diary (physical abuse)
3. The Necklace (sexual abuse)

"Rachel and Marla" (physical and emotional abuse)

RESOURCES:

"Come in from the Storm" series
 Teen Entertainment Education
 7777 Alvarado Rd., Suite 113
 LaMesa, California 92041
 (619) 698-9567

"Rachel and Marla"
 MTI/Coronet
 1-800-777-8100
 \$325, 24 minutes

The Hurried Child--Growing Up Too Fast, Too Soon"
 David Elkind
 ISBN: 0-201-03967-2

TEACHER NOTE: You may wish to utilize the following resources to aid you in providing material for student's research in Option #1. These resources may also have suitable videos and films you could show your class.

County Human Services Department
 Family Support Center
 Local hospital community education department
 County Child Abuse Prevention Council
 School district special services department
 March of Dimes
 Articles from magazines
 Pediatricians
 Social Services

Key Facts About Children in Utah
 757 E South Temple, Suite 150
 SLC, Utah 84102
 Fax #364-1186
 Phone # 364-1182

"Teach Your Children How to Protect Themselves"
 Transcript from Oprah
 1-800-777-8398
 Fax # 1-201-992-9303
 \$4 each