



Hotline - Discussing Physical Abuse

1. Why did Nam's dad push him out of the way and grab the lawnmower? Would that be child abuse?
2. Nam said that he had to do chores, such as sweeping the basement. Is it child abuse to have to help around the house?
3. Nam didn't get to go out with his mom, but instead had to stay home with his dad. Would that be child abuse?
4. So do you think what happened to Nam was child abuse?
5. Why does Stephen know so much about child abuse?
6. Who is Shawn?
7. What is a counsellor? What do they do?
8. Do you remember some of the types of appropriate discipline that were mentioned during the puppet show? Can you think of any others? What are examples of inappropriate discipline?
9. Why does Stephen tell Nam that it is important to tell someone if abuse is happening to you?
10. Who did Stephen tell about his abuse?
11. Teachers are trained professionals who know how to help kids. Can you think of any other trained professionals that kids can talk to?
12. Who would you tell if child abuse happened to you?

Answer Key: Hotline - Discussing Physical Abuse

1. Why did Nam's dad push him out of the way and grab the lawnmower? Would that be child abuse?

No, we would consider what happened with the lawnmower to be an accident. Nam's Dad did not hurt him out of anger, nor was he trying to punish Nam. Nam's dad reacted quickly by pushing Nam out of the way when he saw that Nam was in danger. He did that in order to keep Nam safe. Nam knew he was not supposed to touch the lawnmower because it could be dangerous.

2. Nam said that he had to do chores, such as sweeping the basement. Is it child abuse to have to help around the house?

Chores are a normal part of growing up. They help us to learn responsibility, and they are our way of contributing to the household. It is not abusive for children to have some age-appropriate chores. That does not mean however, that a child should be expected to work long hours, to work without breaks, or be subjected to harm.

3. Nam didn't get to go out with his mom, but instead had to stay home with his dad. Would that be child abuse?

It is not abuse if you don't get to go everywhere your parents go, as long as you are left in the care of a responsible adult or caregiver. Parents are responsible to provide appropriate supervision to children. Nam is eight years old. And that is too young to be left by yourself. Kids under ten years of age should not be left alone.

4. Do you think what happened to Nam was child abuse?

No. None of the experiences Nam described would be considered acts of child abuse. Nam did the right thing, though, by asking questions when he wasn't sure.

5. Why does Stephen know so much about child abuse?

Stephen knows a lot about child abuse because it happened to him. He has also learned a lot through his therapy. Stephen's whole family has worked hard to learn about child abuse, so that they can understand why it happened in their family and so they can prevent it from happening again.

6. Who is Shawn?

Shawn is Stephen's counsellor. When Stephen first told about his abuse, he saw Shawn a lot. Now that Stephen and his family are doing better, Stephen sees Shawn less often. Stephen really likes Shawn.

7. What is a counsellor? What do they do?

A counsellor is a specially trained professional who listens and provides support to kids or adults in need. A counsellor is like a special person that you can tell anything to. Just like a doctor helps us when we are hurt physically, a counsellor helps us when we are hurt emotionally. There are different kinds of counsellors, including people called Social Workers. Every school has a social worker. Your school social worker probably visits your school for one half or full day each week.

8. Do you remember some of the types of appropriate discipline that were mentioned during the puppet show? Can you think of any others? What would be examples of inappropriate discipline?

Some appropriate forms of discipline include: grounding, time outs, loss of privileges such as tv or computer time, extra chores that are appropriate, loss of allowance, family meetings, rewarding positive behaviour and discouraging negative behaviour, setting of firm, clear limits and boundaries.

Some inappropriate forms of discipline include: hitting which causes pain, marks or injury, deprivation of meals or other basic needs (such as bathroom privileges), forced isolation, choking or hitting with objects, throwing objects, acts or physical or emotional cruelty, inconsistency and outbursts. Making a child ingest or swallow items such as hot sauce or soap is also inappropriate.

9. Why does Stephen tell Nam that it is important to tell someone if abuse is happening to you?

Telling is one way of getting help for a child and their family. Kids should have someone to talk to and someone that can help them. Kids shouldn't have to deal with abuse all by themselves.

10. Who did Stephen tell about his abuse?

Stephen told his teacher. His teacher reported the abuse and supported Stephen. She made it easy for him to tell.

11. Teachers are trained professionals who can help kids. Can you think of other trained professionals kids can talk to?

Social workers, therapists, counsellors, CYW's and police are also trained professionals. Medical professionals such as doctors, nurses and paediatricians are also people you can tell. Other helping adults might include coaches, scout leaders, babysitters, or family friends.