

# **Our Lesson: Safe Relationships**

## **Type of intervention**

A school-based child sexual abuse prevention program designed to be delivered by psychologists and teachers (psychological counselling and guidance teachers) and primarily seeking to develop self-protection skills of secondary-school-age children.

## **Target group/s, level/s of prevention and sub-group/s:**

Primary and secondary prevention working with early adolescents

## **Target population**

Early adolescents (10-13 years).

## **Delivery organisation**

The program was developed by Duygu Eslek and Türkan Yılmaz Irmak at Ege University, Turkey. The approach was designed with consideration of adolescent's cognitive, physical, and emotional development. For this reason, topics such as adolescence, sexuality, establishing safe relationships, and gender were included in the program content. In addition, as adolescents frequently use the internet, there are also modules on the abuse situations that may occur in the online environment and media literacy topics.

## **Mode and context of delivery**

School-based sessions delivered by both psychologists and teachers. These include role play, dancing, group games, power point presentations, mindfulness exercise, and craft activities.

## **Level/Nature of staff expertise required**

Teachers are trained to deliver the program over whole two days by the researchers. This training includes the types and signs of CSA, responding to disclosures, reporting CSA, CSA prevention, resilience, and the program content.

## **Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)**

Each module includes two sessions which are delivered over the course of a week. All six modules are covered over six weeks.

## Description of intervention

The program is formed of six modules. The education was implemented as 6 modules, 80 minutes per week for 6 weeks. The modules of Introduction and Adolescence (physical, emotional and social development), Sex, Gender (gender stereotype, sexual orientation), and Relationships (safe romantic and friendship relationships), Sexuality and Value of Body (genitals, sexually transmitted disease, masturbation, reproduction, contraceptives), Abuse and Protection Methods I (say no, run away, scream, say an adult, good and bad secrets), Abuse and Protection Methods II (examining abusive vignettes with problem solving strategies), Internet-related Abuse and Protection Methods (media literacy, sexting, e-grooming, safety tips about personal info) were presented within interactive education sessions. The modules ended with mindfulness activities.

## Evaluation

Eslek and Yılmaz Irmak (in press) developed a CSA prevention program entitled “Our Lesson: Safe Relationships” for early adolescents. A total of 232 adolescents and their parents participated in the study. The program consisted of six modules such as sex, gender, and relationships, abuse, internet-related abuse and protection methods. It was implemented for six weeks, 80 minutes per week. It was found that the education group's knowledge and skills of protection from sexual abuse and its knowledge of sexuality, adolescence development, and gender issues increased statistically from pre-test to post-test, while the scores of the comparison groups did not differ significantly. There was no statistical difference among the groups in the topics of internet-related abuse, establishing safe relationships, and being able to say “No” from pre-test to post-test. According to parent and adolescent reports, the program has no negative side effects. Overall, the results suggested the effectiveness of the program in protection from sexual abuse.

“Our Lesson: Safe Relationships” was developed and adolescents gained more knowledge and skills to protect themselves. Because of teachers’ role in children’s development, it is important to implement a teacher-delivered child sexual abuse prevention program. The sample of the study consisted of 378 adolescents attending 5th and 6th grade and their parents. Adolescents' knowledge and skills to protect themselves are expected to increase after teacher implementations. The analysis of the study is still ongoing/ The results of the study has not been completed.

## References

Eslek, D., & Yılmaz Irmak (in press). Evaluation of the effectiveness of the “Our Lesson: Safe Relationships” program in preventing child sexual abuse. *Turkish Journal of Psychology*, 89

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RATING: PIONEERING