

ChildLine Schools Service UK



Type of intervention



Classroom setting

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

Children and Young
People (Victims)

Primary prevention

Children (6-11 Years) | Male & Female | Classroom Setting | English

Target population

Primary school children in the upper two years of primary school (aged 9 to 11 years old) throughout the UK and the Channel Islands. The service aims to reach all primary schools.

Delivery organisation (e.g. LFF UK, Prison Service of England and Wales)

The ChildLine Schools Service, which operates in the UK and the Channel Islands, is part of ChildLine, a free confidential helpline dedicated to children and young people, which is managed by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).

Mode and context of delivery

ChildLine Schools Service is a primary prevention programme which aims to help young people understand and recognise abuse in all its forms; give them confidence to talk about abuse and show them who is ready to listen and offer them support. It is delivered through primary schools in two stages – firstly through an assembly and subsequently in a smaller interactive classroom session. It is supported by written materials. It is delivered by volunteers from the local community.

Level/Nature of staff expertise required (e.g. professional background)

The sessions in schools are delivered by volunteers who are specially selected and trained. No professional background is required. The volunteers are trained and supervised by staff from the ChildLine Schools Service, who come from diverse professional backgrounds such as social work, education, youth and communities services.

Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

The programme consists of one assembly session lasting usually 30 minutes for the top two years in the primary school. This is followed by a classroom-based interactive session in smaller groups lasting usually 50-60 minutes.

Description of intervention

ChildLine Schools Service aims to give children the knowledge to prevent abuse by enabling them to:

- understand abuse in all its forms, including all forms of bullying, and help them to recognise the signs of abuse
- know how to protect themselves from all forms of abuse
- know how to get help, and where to go for support (including ChildLine).

It does this through a two stage process.

Stage 1: Assembly

Children are introduced to ChildLine and then undertake an exercise – ‘Sack of Worries’ - to think about things that children may be concerned about. Definitions of types of abuse are explained in an age-appropriate manner during this exercise. Children are then encouraged to consider different sources of help, such as teachers, family, friends and ChildLine. Children then watch a short film of what happens if you contact ChildLine. Key messages are recapped, and workbooks provided for children to take away.

Stage 2: Workshops

One to two weeks after the assembly, ChildLine volunteers return to deliver a smaller interactive classroom-based workshop to each class. This is a chance to work more closely with the children to reinforce the key messages, and to lead some small groups on exercises relating to sexual abuse and to neglect. Children are provided with their own ‘Buddy Kit’ where they can write or draw the people that make them feel safe and happy.

The key messages are a) abuse is wrong and it is never a child’s fault b) if they have any worries or concerns about what may be happening to them, they should always tell a trusted adult, including ChildLine.

This model of intervention was introduced following an evaluated pilot that tested 4 different delivery models in 94 schools. It is designed to be age-appropriate and to engage children of different abilities and learning styles. Before delivery to the children, pre-delivery agreements are entered into with each school.

Evaluation

A comparative study of 4 different delivery models was carried out in 94 schools before this model was selected as the most effective. An evaluation of the intervention was carried out in 2012/13 which showed that:

- 79 per cent of children correctly identified abusive scenarios
- 81 per cent of children correctly identified situations which were not abusive.
- 99 per cent of schools felt their pupils' knowledge of child abuse and bullying was enhanced by the ChildLine Schools Service
- 91 per cent of schools identified that their pupils were now more aware of who to talk to if they felt unsafe.

See ChildLine Schools Services Annual Report, NSPCC, 2013 for more information.

References

Contact details

Website: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection-schools/>