



The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

“Safe Touches” Creating a School Community to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse

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Agenda

- The NYSPCC
- Safe Touches NIH Research
- Partnership with The Horace Mann School
- Overview CSA Prevention Programs K-12
- Safe Touches – The Bronx Project
- Safe Touches Greece



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The Need for Safe Touches

- The most vulnerable age group is children between the ages of 7-13
- Very few parents actually talk to their children about sexual abuse
- The majority of child victims do not tell anyone about the abuse for at least a year
- Adults who were sexually abused as a child said abuse could have been prevented if they were more knowledgeable about the issue and resources available to them



Responding to NYC Schools

- NYSPCC built strong relationship with schools
- Responded to requests to train children, parents and teachers after crisis situations
- NYC Child Abuse Prevention Coordinator
- Chancellor's Office
- Guidance counselors, Teachers, Parent Associations



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Safe Touches Workshop

- Evidence-based, sexual abuse prevention program for children in grades K-3
- 45 minute interactive workshop
- Facilitators (2 clinicians) use puppets to help children learn and practice safety concepts
- Emphasis on perpetrator being someone familiar to the child, **not** stranger danger



Safe Touches Workshop

- Coloring book, reinforcing concepts of Safe Touches, sent home for parents to complete with the child
- Developed and implemented by The NYSPCC since 2007
- Thoughtful outreach to NYC school system to ensure positive response
- To date, it has reached over 22,000 children in NYC



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Key Learning Concepts

Children learn:

- The parts of the body that are considered private
- The difference between safe and not safe touches
- What to do if they feel not safe or confused
- Abuse is **never** the child's fault
- Not safe touches can happen to girls and boys and by someone they know and love
- Who to tell if they receive a not safe touch
- Keep telling until you are believed



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The Puppets





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Posters

- Private parts are covered by a bathing suit





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Private Parts of the Body

SCENE 2: THE PRIVATE PARTS OF THE BODY

- Your body is your own special property
- Private parts of the body are covered by bathing suits
- No one should touch you on your private parts in a way that makes you feel mad, scared, not safe, funny, or confused.



National Institutes of Health Research Project

- Randomized Controlled Trial
- NYC Public School System 2012-2014
- Pre and post test measures using CKAQ
- Significant findings regarding intervention group vs. control
- Articles published in American Journal of Public Health (2015) APSAC Advisor (2015)



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Safe Touches Study

Aims:

1. Determine the effectiveness of ST in facilitating knowledge acquisition
2. Assess short term retention
3. Fidelity Assessment



Study Significance and Design

- School-based prevention most widely used in U.S. but is it working?
 - Test knowledge gain and retention
 - Multi-cultural population
- Study included 2nd and 3rd Graders
- Determine difference between groups regarding recognition of not safe touches
- Evaluate knowledge gain right after workshop (immediate) and short-term (one month) after workshop



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Safe Touches Study Outcome Measures

Children's Knowledge of Abuse Questionnaire (CKAQ)

(Tutty, 1995)

- knowledge about CSA concepts and prevention skills
- 33 items scored “true,” “false,” or “don’t know”
 - 24 item inappropriate touch subscale (ITS)
 - 9 item appropriate touch subscale (ATS)

Fidelity Monitoring Tools

- Workshop – Data Collection
 - CKAQ Administration, Program Implementation, Post Classroom Information collected from teachers



Children's Knowledge of Abuse Questionnaire, (Tutty, 1995) Primary Outcome Measure

| T | F | ? | Example |
|---|---|---|--|
| T | F | ? | 1. You always have to keep secrets. |
| T | F | ? | 2. It's OK for someone you like to hug you. |
| T | F | ? | 5. Sometimes it's OK to say "no" to a grown-up. |
| T | F | ? | 6. It's OK to say "no" and move away if someone touches you in a way you don't like. |
| T | F | ? | 8. Even hugs and tickles can turn into not-safe touches if they go on too long. |
| T | F | ? | 10. If someone touches you in a way you don't like, you should tell someone you trust. |
| T | F | ? | 12. If someone touches you in a way you don't like, it's your own fault |



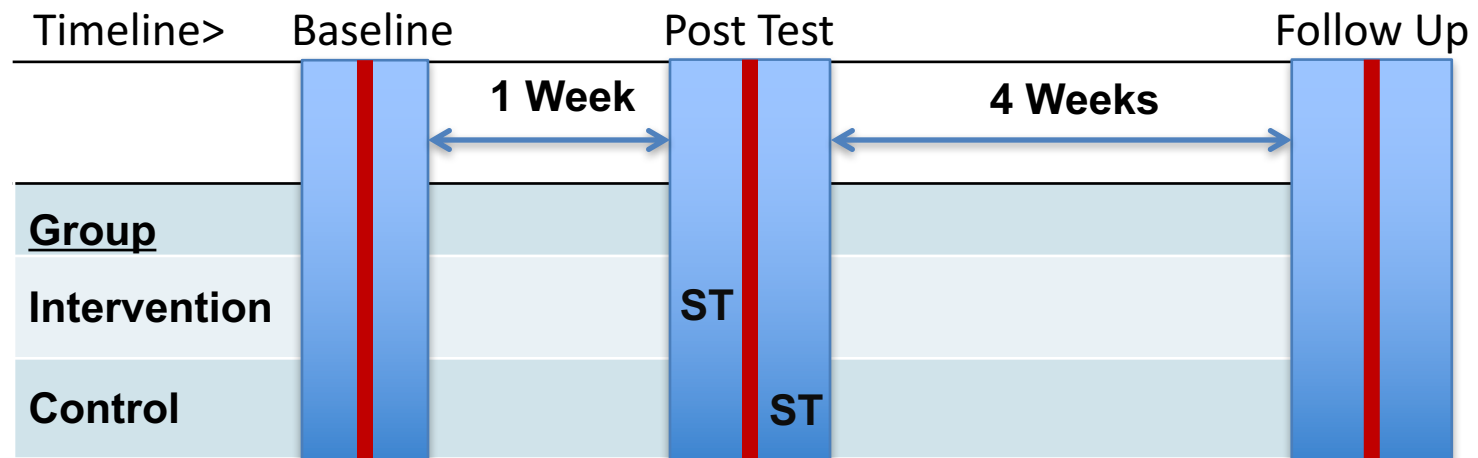
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Study Timeline

| = CKAQ administration

ST = Safe Touches Workshop





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Child Demographics

| | Intervention | Control | Total |
|----------------|--------------|---------|-------|
| N children | 219 | 273 | 492 |
| % second grade | 54.8% | 45.4% | 50.0% |
| % third grade | 45.2% | 54.6% | 50.0% |
| % male | 44.3% | 44.3% | 44.3% |
| % female | 55.7% | 55.7% | 55.7% |

Results

At Post Test, children in the Intervention group had significantly greater CKAQ scores compared to Control.

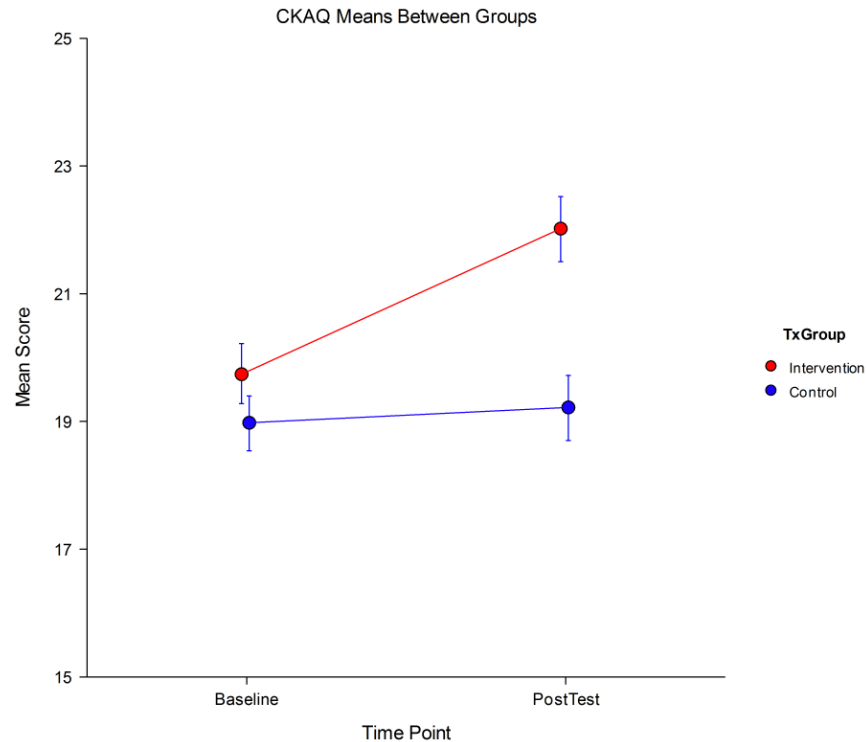


Figure 1: Mean scores at Baseline Post Test for children in the Intervention (N=195) and Control (N=242) groups.

Results

At a four-week follow up, children demonstrated retention of significant knowledge gains, relative to baseline CKAQ scores

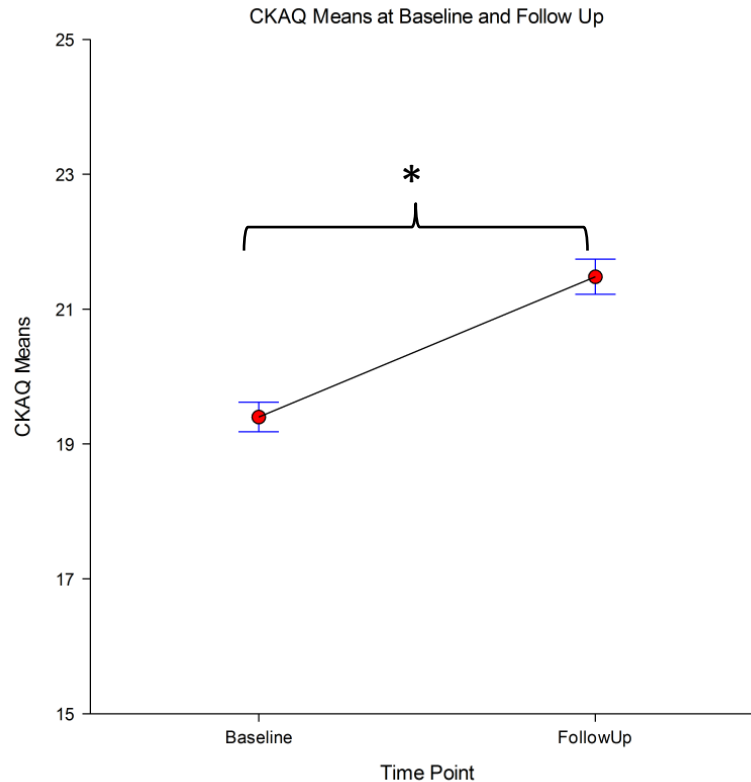


Figure 2: Mean scores at Baseline and Follow Up for all children completing both assessments, N = 411. $*t(410) = -9.92, p < .001$



Main Findings

- Children who received the Safe Touches intervention demonstrated statistically significant increases in knowledge of inappropriate touch.
- No significant knowledge gains were found for the control group.
- Knowledge gains were retained at one-month follow up
- Findings lend initial support to the efficacy of the Safe Touches program in improving children's knowledge of sexual abuse prevention concepts.



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The NYSPCC and The Horace Mann School Building a Safe School Community to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse



Support for a School

- Horace Mann
 - Prestigious private school in New York City
 - In 2012, reports of child sexual abuse from 1960's to 1990's
 - Sources reported abuse of 62 students by 22 staff members
 - Extensive press coverage
 - The NYSPCC reached out to offer assistance



The NYSPCC Partnership with Horace Mann

Comprehensive Support

- Policies and Procedures Review
- Safe Touches for K-3rd Grade
- CSA Prevention workshops for Lower, Middle and Upper Divisions
- Faculty/Staff Training
- Parent/Alumni/Board Training
- On-going Training to present



Kindergarten through 3rd Grade

Safe Touches: Personal Safety Training for Children

- Key Messages
- What is a “private part” and who is allowed to touch them and under what circumstances?
- Safe and not safe touches
- What to do if you receive a not safe touch
- Safe vs. not safe secrets
- It is NEVER their fault
- Keep telling until you are believed



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The Four Safety Tools

SCENE 9: THE FOUR SAFETY TOOLS

- Trust your feelings about whether a touch is safe or not safe
 - If someone tries to give you a not safe touch, say no!
- If someone tries to give you a not safe touch, try to walk away
- If someone tries to give you a not safe touch, tell a trusted adult



4th and 5th Grades in classroom - 50 minutes

- Private parts (diagrams of children in bathing suits)
- What is child sexual abuse?
- Safe and not safe touches
- Issues surrounding secrecy
- Assertive language skills
- Identifying who you would tell about a not safe touch
- Participatory exercises, video and case vignettes



4th and 5th Grades

- “What If” Questions
- What if a neighbor asks you to come into his house for a cookie but tells you to keep it a secret from your parents?
- What if your uncle/teacher/priest asks you to touch their private part?
- What if your Mom or Dad gives you a not safe touch, who would you tell?



Middle Division

Grades 6-8

- Two formats, group lecture (one hour) and small breakout sessions (50 minutes)

Group Lecture Covered:

- Facts and statistics on child sexual abuse
- Power dynamics
- Stages of grooming
- Why youth might not disclose
- Importance of telling an adult if it does happen



Smaller Breakout Groups for 6-8 Graders

- Myths vs. Facts activity
 - Boys can't get sexually abused
 - Most people who sexually abuse children are strangers
 - It's okay to tell an adult to stop if they are making you feel uncomfortable or confused



Upper Division

Grades 9-12

- One large group session (one hour) and smaller breakout groups (50 minutes)
- Legal consent Issues
- Grooming techniques
- Reasons why teens may have trouble saying “no” to or getting out of inappropriate or nonconsensual sexual relationships with adults?
- What to do if it happens to you



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CONSENT

IT'S SIMPLE AS TEA

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Going Forward

- Annual Training at Horace Mann for students in Kindergarten, 6th and 9th grades.
- Refresher courses for faculty and staff
- Horace Mann funds The NYSPCC to offer Safe Touches to children in grades K-3 in the public schools in the Bronx.



Safe Touches - The Bronx Project

- Funded by Horace Mann – opportunity to help prevent further abuse
- Offered to all children in the public school system grades K-3.
- We are starting our fourth year of collaboration
- Approximately 3,500 children taught Safe Touches each year.



Safe Touches Collaboration with Greece

- ELIZA Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children – primary child abuse prevention agency in Greece
- Stavros Niarchos Foundation
- One in six children in Greece are victims of CSA
- Three-year collaboration, started in Athens in April of 2016 with Train the Trainers



Collaboration with Greece

- Ministry of Education approved project for public school system
- Research component using CKAQ pre-post test
- Tool translated into Greek
- 200 children (K-1) completed pilot
- First graders showed increased ability to differentiate safe/unsafe touches
- 500 more to be enrolled during 2016



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Take-home Activity Booklets

My Body
Belongs to Me!



Write Your Name Here

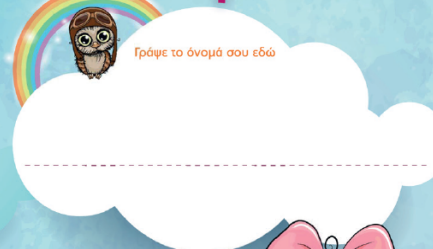


Safe Touches

Το σώμα μου
μου ανήκει!



Γράψε το όνομά σου εδώ





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Going Forward

- Phase II of the Greece Project developing Safe Touches Programming for Crete and rural islands
- Expanding NYSPCC research to test behavioral changes
- Promoting “train the trainers” sessions for Safe Touches and finalizing other CSA modules
- Developing web-based applications to reach more children and parents



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THANK YOU PENN STATE!