CHILD PROTECTION BULLETIN

STATE CHILD PROTECTION SOCIETY, ASSAM

MONTHLY BULLETIN OF ACTIVITIES CONCERNING CHILD PROTECTION IN ASSAM

EDITORIAL

Vulnerability is all about self-protection. Can a child provide for its basic needs? Can a child defend him/herself against a physical assault? Can a child get away from a dangerous situation? For that matter, does a child even know when a dangerous situation is developing? Is a child totally dependent on others? These are questions that provide some boundaries to the idea of self-protection. Here are some of the indicators that help us judge child vulnerability: Age, physical disability, Mental disability, provocative, powerless, defenseless, etc.

In today's world children can also be vulnerable to online abuse. This is a new type of vulnerability as we are living in a technologically advanced world. Children have to be monitored in the use of internet. So that a proper and appropriate use of internet is done by them.

For a caregiver understanding a child is very important. While dealing with children we should always remember that we are dealing with very fragile human beings. Therefore, while communicating with children a caregiver has to look into many things. Inspite of being angered by the behavior of a child the caregiver should be able to manage his/her own anger and have a friendly approach in dealing with any sort of the problem of the child.

The Child Protection Bulletin of this month should help the reader to identify the vulnerability of a child and also manage his/her anger while communicating with a child inspite of any behavioral problem of a child.

Editorial Board,
State Child Protection Society, Assam

VULNERABILITY AND CHILDREN

'Vulnerability' is generally a highly contested term, and in regard to childhood in particular term area range of possible positions about the extent to which children are conceptualized as vulnerable, merely by virtue of being children. Children may be viewed as vulnerable because of their size, their fragility when little and because they are still being 'formed'.

However, vulnerability is a relative concept, and therefore needs to be understood in different contexts. Socially, children may be vulnerable because of their age and dependence on adults for different services including their socialization into the adult world. Politically, they are vulnerable because they do not have a right to vote. Legally, they may be vulnerable because they are denied the exercise of certain rights that adults enjoy and hence require special measures to safeguard those rights. For example, children coming in contact with the law, whether as a victims of crime or as children in conflict with the law cannot on their own enter into a legal contract with a lawyer to represent them in a court of law. However, if they are to be treated as citizens with equal rights, some measures will have to be taken to help them access the right to legal representation. Children can be vulnerable to various child protection issues like-child abuse, child labour, child trafficking and other kinds of exploitation.

CHILDHOOD VULNERABILITY

ONLINE ABUSE

What is online abuse?
Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyber bullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online). Children can feel like there is no escape from online abuse – abusers can contact them at any time of the day or night, the abuse can come into safe places like their bedrooms, and images and videos can be stored and shared with other people.

Types of abuse
Bullying online or cyber bullying
Cyber bullying is an increasingly common form of bullying behaviour which happens on social networks, games and mobile phones. Cyber bullying can include spreading rumours about someone, or posting nasty or embarrassing messages, images or videos. Children may know who's bullying them online – it may be an extension of offline peer bullying - or they may be targeted by someone using a fake or anonymous account. It's easy to be anonymous online and this may increase the likelihood of engaging in bullying behaviour.

> *We owe our children - the most vulnerable citizens in any society –*
> *a life free from violence and fear.*
> *— Nelson Mandela*

Cyber bullying includes:
- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- 'trolling' - the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

Online grooming

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking. Children and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed or that what has happened is abuse. Groomers can use social media sites, instant messaging apps including teen dating apps, or online gaming platforms to connect with a young person or child. They can spend time learning about a young person's interests from their online profiles and then use this knowledge to help them build up a relationship. It's easy for groomers to hide their identity online - they may pretend to be a child and then chat and become 'friends' with children they are targeting.

Groomers may look for:
- usernames or comments that are flirtatious or have a sexual meaning
- public comments that suggest a child has low self-esteem or is vulnerable.

Groomers don't always target a particular child. Sometimes they will send messages to hundreds of young people and wait to see who responds. Groomers no longer need to meet children in real life to abuse them. Increasingly, groomers are sexually exploiting their victims by persuading them to take part in online sexual activity.

Child sexual abuse online
When sexual exploitation happens online, young people may be persuaded, or forced, to:
- send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
- take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone
- have sexual conversations by text or online.

Abusers may threaten to send images, video or copies of conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other

sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the sexual abuse has stopped.

Online Safety
What children do online and through social networking
Children and young people go online to connect with friends, and make new ones, to browse the internet for information, chat with others and play games. They may:
- search for information or content on search engines like Google and Bing
- share images and watch videos through websites or mobile apps like Instagram, Pinterest, Vine and YouTube
- use social networking websites like Facebook and Twitter
- write or reply to messages on forums and message boards
- play games alone or with others through websites, apps or game consoles
- chat with other people through online games, BBM (Blackberry Messenger), game consoles, webcams, social networks and tools like Whatsapp

When online, children and young people can learn new things, get help with homework, express themselves creatively and connect with friends and family. There are also risks, but by understanding and talking about the dangers you can help keep your child safe online.

Understanding Anger

Violence of all types is today quite frequent and greatly problematic, both domestically and internationally. It is especially important therefore to understand anger, hostility, and anxiety and their permutations because all are sometimes major ingredients in violence of all types. As clinicians, we devote a considerable portion of our thinking and practice to unearthing, clarifying, and tracing early the manifestations of anger in our patients. In depression we look for evidence of anger behind the saddened aspect; in histrionic disorders we experience angry seductiveness; in sexual disorders we see angry dependency; in marital problems we unearth distorted patterns of communication, particularly involving anger. We interpret the presence of anger, we confront anger, we draw anger, we tranquilize anger, and we help the working through of anger. Patients fear their angry feelings because they are sometimes connected with violence. However, other related feelings, hostility and anxiety, may be even more destructive.

Anger, Hostility and Communication
Hostility, like anger, is an affect, a behavioral manifestation, or both-one can feel hostile or be hostile. The critical distinction between anger and hostility is that hostility always has a destructive component, whereas anger may not. "Feeling hostile" always involves the wish or intent to inflict harm, pain, or actual destruction on another person or creature. "Being hostile" always involves inflicting or trying to inflict some type of destruction, psychological or physical, upon another. Anger, however, does not necessarily involve destructiveness, harm, or pain to another. In animals, flight and fight are the only alternatives in the face of threat or significant obstruction, but humans can employ complicated communications. Anger is particularly suited for communication. The physiologic concomitants of anger and the state of motoric readiness they produce are
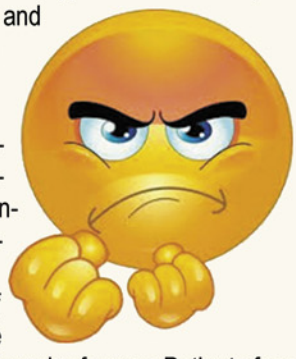
> *"Children have never been more vulnerable to online predators, and many advocates recommend monitoring or restricting computer usage as a first line of defense for keeping your child safe."*
> *- Manny Coats*

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involuntary and discernible phenomena. Muscle tension, vascular changes, and involuntary voice change (although this may be consciously controlled) are minimally present. This is true even when a person is unaware that he or she is angry, so that an observer can infer it. For humans, therefore, anger is an alerting phenomenon for the individual and for others that provides a basis for communication.

Destructive thoughts and words, of course, are themselves associated with anxiety and guilt because of social prohibitions, fear of loss of control, and other factors. Furthermore, since anger is itself socially unacceptable in varying degrees, experiencing anger produces anxiety in its own right. Suffice it to say that both anger and anxiety arise out of a diffuse state of arousal in the face of perceived threat, pain, or obstruction. Since anxiety is more disruptive and more uncomfortable than anger, it seems reasonable to assume that anger is a defense against anxiety or, at the very least, a preferred reaction. If we direct our attention to the sense of threat, fear, and insecurity when confronted with an irrationally angry person, his rationality usually returns quite rapidly and his anger subsides. Serious consequences such as violence may be averted.

Glimpse of District Level Awareness Campaign on Child Trafficking, Child Marriage & POCSO Act, 2012

Two days training programme for counselers of DCPUs and Govt. run Child Care Institutions-31st March & 1st April 2017

Visit of Smti Maneka Sanjay Gandhi, Union Cabinet Minister for Women & Child Development to Assam :

Capacity Building Training of Special Juvenile Police Unit of Western Range-7th April 2017

> *"It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men"* - *Frederick Douglass*

Status Report on the functioning of the Juvenile Justice Boards and Child Welfare Committees in Assam for the month of March 2017

Sl. No.	Districts	Juvenile Justice Boards			Child Welfare Committees		
		No. of cases instituted	No. of cases disposed	Total case pending	No. of cases instituted	No. of cases disposed	Total case pending
1	BAKSA	Cases are jointly dealt with Nalbari JJB			5	5	0
2	BONGAIGAON	1	0	10	4	3	16
3	BARPETA	12	2	128	27	9	65
4	CACHAR	6	9	29	7	9	8
5	CHIRANG	2	2	26	4	4	16
6	DARRANG	1	3	67	4	4	16
7	DHEMAJI	3	6	22	4	4	4
8	DHUBRI	15	7	107	5	3	13
9	DIBRUGARH	1	4	33	12	16	5
10	DIMA HASAO	1	3	19	0	0	0
11	GOALPARA	2	8	73	13	13	22
12	GOLAGHAT	7	6	18	1	9	9
13	HAILAKANDI	3	4	26	2	2	5
14	JORHAT	25	11	62	3	3	6
15	KAMRUP (M)	5	10	41	83	87	69
16	KAMRUP (R)	6	7	48	38	31	50
17	KARBI ANGLONG	4	4	59	3	2	5
18	KARIMGANJ	0	0	53	1	1	48
19	KOKRAJHAR	5	0	133	4	4	17
20	LAKHIMPUR	7	0	15	11	8	12
21	MORIGAON	4	3	18	8	5	10
22	NAGAON	5	21	174	22	22	30
23	NALBARI	2	2	25	10	7	62
24	SONITPUR	7	6	90	4	4	3
25	SIBSAGAR	2	5	18	9	9	19
26	TINSUKIA	2	5	37	4	4	61
27	UDALGURI	2	1	29	9	3	41
	Total	**129**	**127**	**1360**	**297**	**269**	**641**