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Research exercise: Advocating for Vulnerable Children

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Advocating for Vulnerable Children

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Bullying in Education

Children with disabilities are already facing challenges in the academic environment, when they are bullied at school it can directly effect their education. Higher rates of absenteeism, a decrease in grades, and loss of interest in academic achievement are just a few consequences of being bullied. Teachers often use restraint and seclusion disciplinary techniques on students with disabilities

Effects of Abuse

- mental trauma
- severe muscle injury
- extensive blood clotting
- whiplash
- hemorrhaging
- negative self image
- depression
- likely to injure themselves
- worsening of existing medical conditions

Prevention

Societal & Community Level:

Help others see disabled children as valued and unique individuals
Promote inclusion of children with disabilities

Family Focused:

Increase parent knowledge of child development and issues specific to the child's disability
Strengthen parent-child interactions
Organize parent support groups

Child Focused:

Helps children learn how to protect themselves
Teach children about their, and others' bodies and sexuality
Reduce children's social isolation
Maximize children's communication skills and tools

Introduction

The Child Abuse Prevention, Adoption and Family Service Act of 1988 contains specific mandated directed towards efforts to protect disabled children from abuse and neglect.

However, this legislation is only the beginning of nationwide, state, and local initiative to offer effective and appropriate abuse prevention and intervention for disabled children.

The Facts

Children with disabilities are 2 to 3 times more likely to be bullied than their non-disabled peers. Total Reported Disabilities in the United States: 1.2% out of 44 states

Bullying based on a student's disability is considered harassment.

Harassment includes: verbal insults, threats, or physical assault



Abuse by Parents

Abuse in the home often happens because of increased stress on parents:

- Medical Expenses
- Increased needs and support by parents
- Stress of educating children with disabilities
- Isolation from extended family or community
- Less child care facilities willing to take children with disabilities

Children with disabilities are easier targets for abuse because often times they have added troubles with communication of their needs.

Protection of Disabled Children

The Individual With Disabilities Act (IDEA) ensures that a free appropriate public education is made available to students with disabilities

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Article 1

