

Child Sexual Abuse

To understand our rights, safety and physical boundaries, awareness sessions were conducted by the Student Counsellor, Ms Merlyn M Fernandes for Classes 5 to 8.

In this article, I will explain my understanding of CSA.

Child Sexual Abuse is of two types:

1. Physical sexual abuse
2. Non-physical sexual abuse

Physical Sexual Abuse: This abuse involves physical contact with the body. For example, groping, rape, inappropriate hugging and kissing. In India, no child under 18 can give consent to physical intimacy. It is not only girls who get sexually abused but also boys. Touching a person inappropriately on their private parts may seem fun for some children but it is considered an offence. No one must put their hands on another child.

Non-Physical Sexual Abuse: This involves abuse without physical contact. For example, someone exposing their private parts to others, forcing someone to undress in their presence, showing adult content videos or pictures, making lewd gestures, passing lewd comments, and inappropriate text messages are considered non-physical sexual abuse.

POCSO - We were also made aware of the POCSO Act. This act applies to everyone who is under 18 in India. This Act defines the sexual crime against children and the punishment for the offenders.

Childline - Childline 1098 is a service by the Ministry of Women and Child Development to help children under 18 report cases of abuse.

The offender

- Can be of any gender
- Is mostly known to the victim - 90% of the cases
- Can be an adult or someone under 18 years of age

We should not blame ourselves when we experience sexual abuse but inform trusted adults in our lives like parents, teachers and counsellors.

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