OVERVIEW

BIG IDEA
Child maltreatment stems from a lack of safe, stable, or nurturing relationships between parents and their children.

OBJECTIVE
7.5: Explain the role of safe, stable, and nurturing parent-child relationships to children's health.

AGENDA
1. Parent-Child Relationships
2. 3 Qualities
3. What is Child Maltreatment?
4. Child Maltreatment Facts
5. Scenarios

HOMEWORK
Research to identify one educational intervention that teaches parenting skills. Identify safe, stable, and nurturing components of the program.

LESSON **7.5**
Child Maltreatment

SUMMARY:

This lesson will help students explore the concepts of child maltreatment prevention through a close examination of risk factors and qualities of healthy relationships. First, students will brainstorm qualities that make relationships successful, then learn the CDC's recommendation of 3 critical qualities. Next, students will read about child maltreatment and its risk and protective factors. Finally, students will review scenarios depicting child maltreatment and identify which of the 3 qualities are missing.

STANDARDS:

NHES 2.12.1: Analyze how family influences the health of individuals.

MODULE 7: VIOLENCE   LESSON 7.5

Child Maltreatment

Obj. 7.5: Explain the role of safe, stable, and nurturing parent-child relationships to children's health.

DO NOW

Parent-Child Relationships

In the box below, list qualities of parent-child relationships that might be important to ensure a healthy environment for children as they grow and develop. List as many as you can!

NEW INFO

Three Critical Qualities

The CDC has identified SAFETY, STABILITY, and NURTURING as three critical qualities of relationships that make a difference for children as they grow and develop. They can be defined as follows:

- **Safety:** The extent to which a child is free from fear and secure from physical or psychological harm within their social and physical environment.
- **Stability:** The degree of predictability and consistency in a child's social, emotional, and physical environment.
- **Nurturing:** The extent to which a parent or caregiver is available and able to sensitively and consistently respond to and meet the needs of their child.

Source: CDC, *Essentials for Childhood* (http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/efc-01-03-2013-a.pdf)

DISCUSS

With a partner, discuss the following questions in relation to these qualities:

1. Did you include these qualities (or similar qualities) when you brainstormed in the box above?

2. Why do you think these three are promoted as some of the most important? Do you agree?

3. What additional quality do you think the CDC should promote as a critical part of relationships?

DO NOW: Set norms in the classroom for a respectful and sensitive environment for learning, since the issue of child maltreatment may have a personal connection for some students and may be an emotionally challenging topic to focus on in school.

NEW INFO: Ask students for examples of each of these 3 qualities. What does it look like to maintain safety in a relationship? Stability? Nurturing? What does it look like when these are missing?

DISCUSS: Ask students to share with the class the additional qualities they decided the CDC should promote. Students may offer suggestions such as love, honesty, etc. Ask students why these values are important? Are they essential to preventing child maltreatment? Why do you think the CDC did NOT elect to include them in it's list of CRITICAL qualities?

What is Child Maltreatment?

Child maltreatment includes all types of abuse and neglect of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caregiver, or another person in a custodial role (e.g., clergy, coach, teacher). There are four common types of abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect

Risk Factors for Child Maltreatment

A combination of individual, relational, community, and societal factors contribute to the risk of child maltreatment. Although children are not responsible for the harm inflicted upon them, certain characteristics have been found to increase their risk of being maltreated. Risk factors are those characteristics associated with child maltreatment—they may or may not be direct causes.

Risk Factors for Victimization

Individual Risk Factors

- Children younger than 4 years of age
- Special needs that may increase caregiver burden (e.g., disabilities, mental retardation, mental health issues, etc)

Risk Factors for Perpetration

Individual Risk Factors

- Parents' lack of understanding of children's needs, child development and parenting skills
- Parents' history of child maltreatment in family of origin
- Substance abuse and/or mental health issues including depression in the family
- Parental characteristics such as young age, low education, single parenthood, and low income
- Nonbiological, transient caregivers in the home (e.g., mother's male partner)
- Parental thoughts and emotions that tend to support or justify maltreatment behaviors

Family Risk Factors

- Social isolation
- Family disorganization, dissolution, and violence, including intimate partner violence
- Parenting stress, poor parent-child relationships, and negative interactions

Community Risk Factors

- Community violence
- Concentrated neighborhood disadvantage (e.g., high poverty and residential instability, high unemployment rates, and high density of alcohol outlets), and poor social connections.

Protective Factors for Child Maltreatment

Protective factors buffer children from being abused or neglected. These factors exist at various levels. Protective factors have not been studied as extensively or rigorously as risk factors. However, identifying and understanding protective factors are equally as important as researching risk factors.

Family Protective Factors

- Supportive family environment and social networks
- Nurturing parenting skills
- Stable family relationships
- Household rules and child monitoring
- Parental employment
- Adequate housing
- Access to health care and social services
- Caring adults outside the family who can serve as role models or mentors

Community Protective Factors

- Communities that support parents and take responsibility for preventing abuse

Source: CDC, Risk & Protective Factors for Child Maltreatment

NEW INFO: Ask students for examples of each type of abuse. Emphasize that the abuse does not have to be extreme to be considered maltreatment. For example, inappropriate touching is considered sexual abuse just as rape is also considered sexual abuse.

NEW INFO: There is research to support the first RF (supportive family environment and social networks) but research is still ongoing to demonstrate the efficacy of the other protective factors on the list in eliminating child maltreatment.

READ

Child Maltreatment Facts

Read the handout entitled "Understanding Child Maltreatment" and use the information to complete the chart below on child maltreatment.

What types of child maltreament exist?	
Why is it a problem?	
How does it affect health?	
Who is at risk?	
How can we prevent it?	

READ: Ensure a class set of copies of the 2-page PDF are made in advance. Source file can be found in the resources folder, or at: http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/cm-factsheet--2013.pdf

THINK

Parent-Child Relationship Scenarios

For each of the following scenarios, identify which quality the parent's actions are lacking: safe, stable, or nurturing.

1. Juanita leaves her 3-year-old at home while she goes over to hang out at the neighbors house. Usually she leaves her in the crib napping, but occasionally leaves her watching television. **Which quality of healthy relationships is missing?**

2. Brayden, the father, works late shifts at a local restaurant but likes to see his 1-year-old when he gets up. Marcine, the mother likes to go out with friends so she often leaves the older siblings in charge of putting the 1-year-old to bed. The child is typically allowed to stay up until Daddy gets home, which usually ranges anywhere between 10pm and 1am. Lately Brayden and Marcine have been having problems in their relationship, so Brayden will be away from home for weeks at a time. **Which quality of healthy relationships is missing?**

THINK: Answers:
1. Safe
2. Stable

More Parent-Child Relationship Scenarios

For each of the following scenarios, identify which quality the parent's actions are lacking: safe, stable, or nurturing.

1. Louis thinks that showing his 5-year-old son any physical or verbal affection will make him too "soft." He avoids hugs, tough, and loving words. He also thinks that the child should be raised to be tough, solving all of his own problems and fending for himself. **Which quality of healthy relationships is missing?**

2. Diana is a single mom with a 9-year-old son and 7-year-old daughter. She has been unemployed for several years. She relies on governmental aid to feed her children, but they often do not have a place to stay. Every few weeks, they move around to a new place--homeless shelters, homes of family members or friends, or occassionally a cheap place to rent for a month or two at a time. **Which quality of healthy relationships is missing?**

Parenting Skills

Research to find an educational resource that teaches parenting skills. The educational content may be found in a book, course at a local organization or hospital, on a website, through a program in your community, or more. Once you have analyze the program, identify how the educational intervention does (or does not) promote the following qualities:

Name of Educational Resource:

Description:

How does it promote the 3 qualities of healthy parent-child relationships?

Safe	
Stable	
Nurturing	

ASSESS: Answers:
1. Nurturing
2. Stable

HOMEWORK: The purpose of this homework assignment is to challenge students to examine the resources on parenting available in their community, local library, or online. There is a wealth of parenting advice and educational programs available. Some may focus on safe, stable, and nurturing relationships while others do not. Ask students to fill in the table based on what they observe, but if those elements are NOT present to indicate how that resource could be improved to include them.