

Getting Back on Track

A group work programme promoting children's resilience through promoting parents' resilience and strengths



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Impact of Disclosure



- extreme disruption to normal family life
- increased need for a support network
- significant level of distress – panic, numbness, shock, denial, anger
- symptoms of PTSD and depression

Impact cont.

- parents who are experiencing high levels of distress have been noted to be less supportive of their children and to have more difficulty in following through with interventions to help the child.

Why work with parents?

- children's emotional and behavioural adjustment following abuse is associated with the reactions and support they receive from their parents
- parental support is the best predictor of resiliency in sexually abused girls (*Spacarelli and Kim 1995*)
- children with supportive caregivers generally exhibit fewer symptoms of distress after abuse

Parental Concerns



- difficulties in the relationship between mother/parents and child
- difficult communication between parents and their children
- uncertainty about how and when to talk about the abuse with their children
- anger
- uncertainty about court process and outcome
- issues around punishment of perpetrator

Parental Concerns cont.

- unknown long term impact of abuse on their children
- guilt about not having been able to prevent the abuse
- loss of trust
- depressed, withdrawn or angry behaviour of their child – is this “normal” or abuse related?

"Getting Back on Track"



A group programme for parents of children referred to the Child Protection Unit was developed as a response to the perceived need of parents to feel supported to enable them both to cope with the abuse of their child and to help them to help their children deal better with abuse related issues.

Session Outlines



Session 1: Introductions

Session 2: Impact of disclosure

Session 3: Myths of sexual abuse; perpetrator tactics

Session Outlines cont.



Session 4: "The system"

Session 5: Impact of sexual assault on the children

Session 6: Saying good bye – final session

Follow-up session

Strengths



- patience
- determination
- acceptance that it had happened
- an ability to look forward and see that things will get better
- a strong will
- independence
- belief in God and family

Strengths cont.



- good communication
- protective
- developing knowledge and understanding about child sexual assault
- maintaining normal lifestyle/routine
- commitment to stopping cycle of abuse
- sense of humour
- self care

Parents Speak

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Evaluation

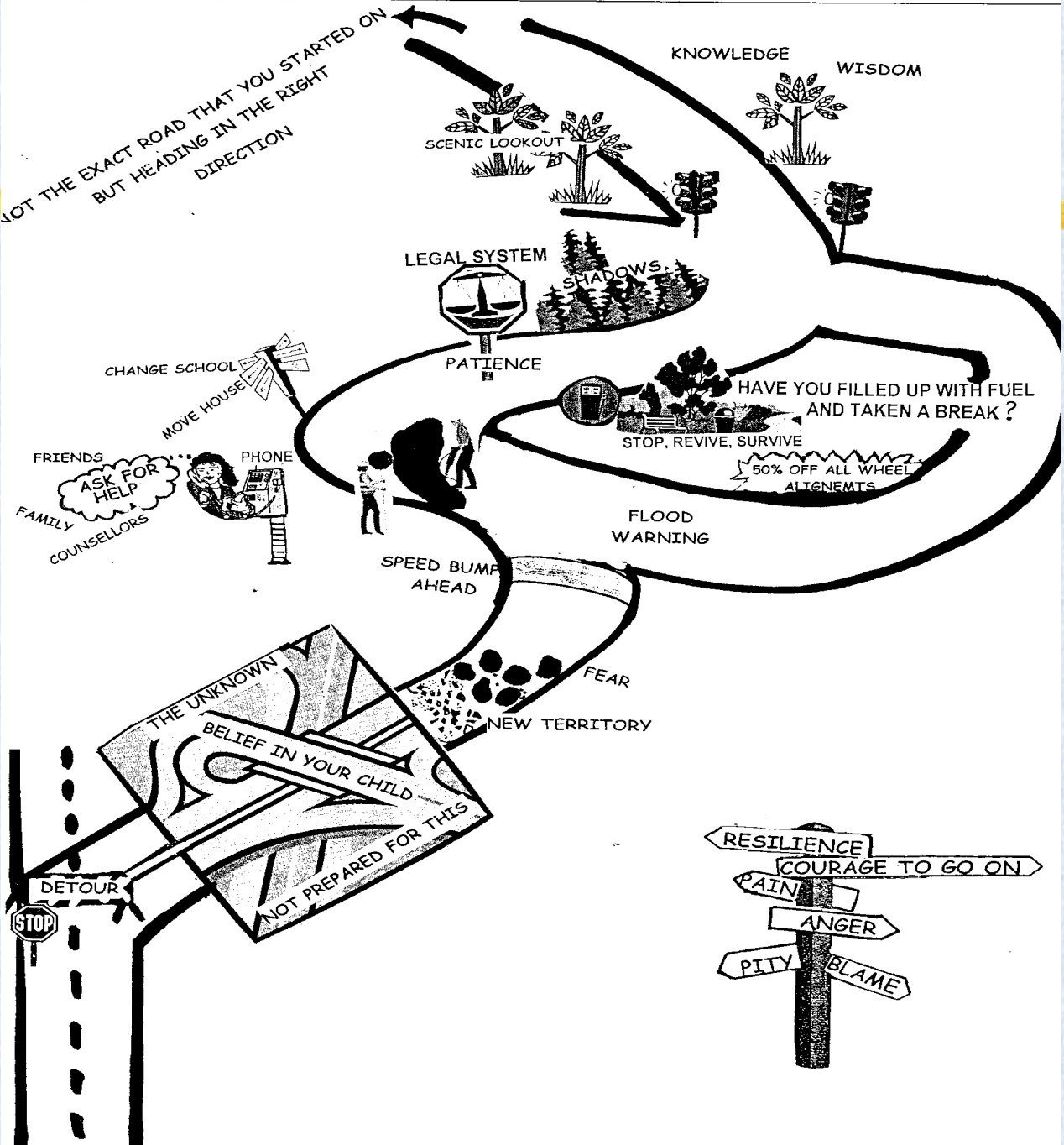


The value of the group for parents is:

- feeling listened to and understood
- being able to share their experiences and express feelings openly and honestly
- giving and receiving advice and support
- sharing knowledge about the impact of sexual assault on children and families as well as regarding the process which may be put in place after the disclosure of abuse

GETTING BACK ON TRACK

NOT THE EXACT ROAD THAT YOU STARTED ON
BUT HEADING IN THE RIGHT
DIRECTION



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