

Shouting at children can be as damaging as physical or sexual abuse, study says

Level 1: Elementary – Teacher’s notes

Article summary: The article talks about new research about the effects of verbal abuse on children.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Synonyms and antonyms

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- Students discuss the question and write their answers into the mind map. You can draw the mind map on the board and write general answers students can agree on.

2. Key words

- Ask students to do the exercise individually and compare their answers in pairs or small groups.

Key:

- shout
- drug
- jail
- abuse
- verbal
- negative
- twice
- half
- hurtful
- proud

- Before reading the article carefully, students use some of the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they understand and know how the words are used in other contexts.

Key:

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| 1. proud | 4. double |
| 2. abuse | 5. drugs |
| 3. half | 6. hurtful |

3. Comprehension check

- Students answer the questions based on the information in the article. They may do this in different ways, e.g., in item 1, they may say, ‘Children are in danger of hurting themselves, using drugs and going to jail’ or similar.

Key (suggested answers):

- that it can hurt a child as much as any abuse
- verbal abuse
- using cannabis and going to jail
- 51% said it happened weekly, and one in 10 said daily.
- “you’re useless”, “you’re stupid”, “you can’t do anything right”
- “I am proud of you”, “you can do it”, “I believe in you”
- Because it is common, but few adults are aware that their words matter.

4. Key language

- Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs. As an extension activity, ask students to find synonyms/antonyms for other words in the article.

Key:

- synonyms
- antonyms
- synonyms
- antonyms
- antonyms
- synonyms

- Allow the class to try out some of the words above in contextualised sentences. Monitor and assist students as you walk around the class. Allow time for feedback so students can share some of the sentences they have written.

5. Discussion

- Students discuss the statements related to the article and give their reasons and justifications for each answer, referring to their own experiences wherever possible.

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6. In your own words

- a. Ask students to research positive communication techniques for adults or children.

- b. Students could then present their reports to the class. Encourage students to share the information they’ve gathered and their opinions about the issue. Encourage students to use some of the given phrases in their presentations when stating facts and their opinions.