

45 pc abused kids from joint families

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Survey conducted by Chennai-based Tahir confronts myth that boys are not sexually abused

If you think child abuse takes place only in nuclear families and not in joint families, you're mistaken. A survey conducted by the Chennai-based Tahir, a centre for the prevention and healing of child sexual abuse victims, reveals that child abuse is far more prevalent in joint families than in nuclear families.

Briefing reporters at a media conference here on Saturday, Vidya a founder-trustee of Tahir said the survey was conducted on 211 school children of various schools within the Chennai Cor-

poration zone limits, of whom 817 were male and 1384 were female.

The survey revealed that 45 per cent of the children surveyed (141 children) of joint families were abused whereas 42 per cent (168 children) of nuclear families were abused from a total of 2011 children surveyed.

The survey also revealed that 42 per cent of the children had faced abuse at least once in form.

The data collection also confronts another myth that sexual abuse does not happen to boys and that it occurs only among the poor and illiterate. "Child sexual abuse takes place in all socio-economic strata in similar proportions," she added.

Children are abused through various acts including exhibitionism, voyeurism, touching of the private parts, forcing them to watch pornography.

Speaking about abusers, she said children's abusers were often strangers, but persons known to the child which include family members or teachers, neighbours and domestic help.

She said for most children disclosure of abuse and seeking help were traumatic. They often did not know who to approach and felt guilty about the abuse.

Dr Sanganya Rajaram said Tahir had made an e-book 'My personal safety workbook', which will help children resist abuse. The book will also be translated in Kannada and Tahir will approach schools for its circulation.

For more details visit to www.tahir.org