

A Study on the Effects of the animation “A Good Boy” and “Daughter” on StreetChildren in 5 different localities

A Good Boy was formally launched September of 2005. It is the second animation by Stairway Foundation, and deals with the issue of Child Sexual Exploitation, in particular, Pedophilia. Although we can use the animation in any setting, the story being portrayed puts it in a position wherein it can be used effectively with children on the streets, as they can readily relate their situation with “Jayson” (the boy in the story). “Daughter”, which was created earlier (2004) deals primarily with the issue of Incest and is considered by many as a very powerful story. Childhope Asia Philippines, an NGO working with Street Children in Metro Manila and a partner of SFI is currently utilizing the animations for their street education program. Using their mobile education van, “A Good Boy” and “Daughter” is being shown to children on the streets. Having such a set-up, ideas were floated regarding formally measuring the effects of the animation on the street-children. In particular, the effects to be measured were on Street Children’s knowledge and attitude regarding Child Sexual Abuse, and personal safety after viewing the animations “A Good Boy” and “Daughter”. For the said evaluation, three phases were identified covering **5 program areas with an initial agreement of 10 street children per area for a total of 50 subject Street Children**;

Target Areas:

1. Binondo, Manila
2. Divisoria, Manila
3. Sucat, Parañaque
4. Commonwealth, Quezon City
5. Novaliches, Quezon City

Phase 1 - deals with establishing baselines

Phase 2 – deals with providing the inputs
(thru the viewing and processing of the animation)

Phase 3 – deals with re-measuring the baselines established in phase 1

There were certain criteria’s in selecting the target street children They should be aged 11-16, and they must not have any prior viewing session of the animation nor any session regarding personal safety and child sexual abuse. Having these criteria’s, we are then standardizing the “test group” (having a close age range, and common levels knowledge-wise on CSA and personal safety) and limiting outside factors that may interfere with the results of the study.

Essentially, to say that the animations does have a substantial effect on street children, phase 3 must register significant changes compared with the baseline from phase 1 which can then be attributed as a direct result of viewing the animation together with the processing of the street ed (because of their status of not having any prior viewing sessions). Let us now elaborate on the processes and results per phase.

A. Phase 1

The baseline being measured in this phase involved the following:

1. Children’s Knowledge and Attitude regarding Child Sexual Abuse
2. Children’s Knowledge and Attitude regarding Personal Safety

It was decided that specific tool to be used was an FGD (Focused Group Discussion). The Street-Educators assigned, together with a staff from SFI conducted the FGDs. The questions revolved around their concept of Abuse and Child Sexual Abuse, and what-if situations (i.e. what if an adult wants to touch you, and in return, he will give you money,

what would you do?). (see attachment 1 – the FGD guide). As with establishing any baseline, no inputting whatsoever was done, even if the children gave incorrect answers, corrections were not made. Summarized are the results of the initial FGDs per target area;

1. Pre-FGD : Divisoria Group:

Venue and Date: Binondo Church, Binondo, Manila/ March 29, 2006

Number of participants: 9 street children (8 male, 1 female)

Concepts and Attitude on Child Abuse and Child Sexual Abuse:

When asked what their concept of child abuse is, and to what they would relate the word abuse, the children gave answers such as these: *inflicting pain, heartache, life is going to be wasted, they are hurting me because I am not fighting back, I feel angry*. Statements such as these connote that the children associated child abuse with negativity. One of the children also said that when her teacher (from the non-formal ed) deducts a star from him (star being the rating being given to children), that was for him, abuse. But when asked about child sexual abuse, they said that they didn't heard of the word before. When asked, "if a child is raped, do you consider this as abuse?", the children said that yes, that was abuse, thus, we can say that although they don't know the exact word, they do know the basic idea that there is such a thing as sexual abuse. But when asked regarding touching, the children gave answers such as these: "Touching is still abuse, but when the child allows it, we cannot say that it is abuse" "touching even the private body parts is alright as long as it is being done by a family member". We can thus see that their concept of child sexual abuse when it comes to family members becomes quite blurred. Touching by a family member for them, even if done on the private body parts is not abuse.

Concepts and attitude on personal safety

When it comes to personal safety, a "what –if scenario" was done. The children were asked first what their favorite toy was. The scenario was then brought up – "If an adult stranger comes up to you, and then says that he wants to touch your private body part, what would you do?" The children all answered with a resounding "No, they won't allow". But when the scenario was changed, that the adult would offer their favorite toy in exchange for the touching, 5 out of 9 of the children said that they would allow the adult to touch them since he was giving them their favorite toy, whilst the rest still insisted that they won't allow the adult. We can see thus that when material things are brought into the picture, the children's judgments were affected. When presented the scenario "what if an adult touches your private body parts and succeeds, what would you do?", the children answered that "they would run", but when asked the follow up question "after running, what would you do afterwards, they all answered that they would do nothing afterwards. We can see that their concept and attitude on personal safety still lacks.

2. Pre-FGD: Binondo Group:

Venue and Date: Binondo Church, Binondo, Manila/ March 29, 2006

Number of participants: 10 street children (7 male, 3 female)

Concepts and Attitude on Child Abuse and Child Sexual Abuse:

The children in this test group gave the following answers when asked what their concept of abuse was: Angry, an obedient boy, a boy who doesn't follow his mother, a lazy boy, a child is being hit by a baseball bat, heartache, a child is beaten

up". Some of the children still show some confusion regarding abuse, but most of them still associate the word "abuse" as something negative. When asked about the word "Child Sexual Abuse", all of them had no idea what it meant, or what to associate it with. They also said that Rape is abuse, but touching and peeping isn't. 3 from the group said that touching is abuse, but when your brother does it or your father, it isn't abuse anymore. The same with the other group, sexual abuse becomes quite confusing when a family member is involved.

Concepts and attitude on personal safety

The same "what-if scenario" was done. It was different with this group, the children said that they would not let the adult touch them even if they would be promised to be given a new toy or even money. When asked what they would not go with the said adult, but when asked what they would do afterwards, they said that they would do nothing. The group was unusually silent with the discussion.

3. Pre-FGD: Sucat Group:

Venue and Date: Jollibee, Sucat, Parañaque/ March 29, 2006

Number of participants: 11 street children (7 male, 4 female)

Concepts and Attitude on Child Abuse and Child Sexual Abuse:

Asked about their concept of abuse, the children gave the following answers: Beating up, kicking a child, peeping, rape, substance abuse by children, banging my head against the wall, me being placed in a sack, hold-up. Like the other groups, we can see that they still associate abuse with negative things. When asked about child sexual abuse, the group exhibited a certain level of knowledge regarding this, They associated CSA with rape, touching the private body parts, holding the balls of young boys, peeping. They also said that adults using sexually explicit words towards children cannot be considered as CSA because no touching were involved and you cannot masturbate as opposed with peeping.

Concepts and attitude on personal safety

When asked with the what if scenario, majority of the children said that it was wrong for an adult to touch their private body parts, and when money or toys were brought into the picture, 5 out of the 11 children said that they would still not allow the adult to touch them, while the rest said that its alright since they will be getting something in return. One of the boys in the group readily admitted that he accepted cash from an adult in exchange for oral sex, and he considered it not inappropriate at all. The group was then asked what they would do if the one who approached them was a foreigner, they said that they would go with him because they usually do good things to children. When asked what they would do if an adult somehow manages to touch their private body parts, most of them said that they would run away from the adult, nut one of the children said that he would just let it be, because he doesn't want to cause any trouble for the family.

4. Pre-FGD: Commonwealth Group:

Venue and Date: Commonwealth Ave., Near commonwealth market,/ March 31, 2006

Number of participants: 10 street children (9 male, 1 female)

Concepts and Attitude on Child Abuse and Child Sexual Abuse:

They related abuse with concepts like “beating me up, slavery, pain, being stabbed, my parents don’t love me. When asked about CSA, they also cited the same concepts, but included answers like prostitution, touching, peeping, rape. This group exhibited a relatively high level of knowledge regarding activities which can be included in CSA. When asked, who can touch their private body parts, the children answered that nobody can touch their private body parts except their fathers and mothers, and that this was not sexual abuse.

Concepts and attitude on personal safety

With the same scenario, the children said that they wouldn’t allow other adults to touch their private body parts except their parents. Asked if a stranger approached them and asked for them to come with him, they said that they wouldn’t come with the stranger individually, but if they were a group, they would (except for 2 children from the group who said that they would still come. Also, if the one asking for them to come was a woman, they would, as “women” don’t sexually abuse children. When asked what they would do if an adult asks to touch their private body part, several of the children teased two other boys and said that the two offered their private body parts to an adult in exchange for money (two which the two didn’t react at all) . When asked if their private body parts were touched by an adult, what they would do, 7 out of the 10 respondents said that they would do nothing more since “the act was already done”.

5. Pre-FGD: Novaliches Group:

Venue and Date: Jollibee Novaliches, Quezon City/ March 31, 2006

Number of participants: 10 street children (10 male)

Concepts and Attitude on Child Abuse and Child Sexual Abuse:

Before the start of the session, we had to encourage 5 of the children to sober up a bit by washing their faces because they were still “high” with rugby. Even after that, it was evident during the session that they were still “high”. The children in this group were quite interesting to handle, coupled with the effects of rugby, they were also very vocal and opinionated. They equated abuse with pain, other more powerful kids hurting them, repeated sin committed against a person, enslaving others, abusing rugby, using “video karera”, receiving scolding from parents, being victimized by syndicates. When asked about Child Sexual Abuse, only 4 out of the 10 respondents answered correctly. They said it was rape, sexual harassment, prostitution, touching the private body part, and at this instance several of them teased one of the boys and said that he offered his private body part to an adult in return for money, of which the teased boy denied vehemently.

Concepts and attitude on personal safety

Using the same “what-if” scenario, the children said that if an adult ever wanted to touch their private body part, they wouldn’t allow it, but if they were offered money, 6 out of the 10 respondents said that they would accept it because they really need it. When asked what they would do if an adult somehow manages to touch their

private body parts, they said that they would just run away, but not tell anybody since they have already ran away from the person.

B. Phase II

1. Questions and Observations during the processing:

After establishing baselines, the street educators per area scheduled viewing sessions of “A Good Boy” and “Daughter”. Immediately after each viewing, the animations were processed by the street educators. With “A Good Boy”, the children related much on the fact that Jason uses rugby, which were their own experiences on the streets. The processing revolved around the definitions of Child Sexual Abuse, and on personal safety, focusing on the touching rules. Frequently asked questions on “A Good Boy” were the following: “What happened to Jason when the waves swallowed him?”, “What was the meaning when Jason turned into a Girl and the mirror cracked in front of him?” With “Daughter”, there were questions like those from “A Good Boy”, but they readily admitted that they knew others like daughter. After watching the two animations, and after the processing, there were several disclosures from the children of each group, some suspected cases and some really not that expected.

3. The animations as tools for discussing Child Sexual Abuse and Personal Safety

The Street Educators were also asked how the animations helped them as tools for discussing the issue of CSA and personal safety to children. They said that it helped them tremendously, because in terms of inputting, they always have a reference to go back to for certain key concepts on CSA and Personal Safety. They also mentioned that it would have been more difficult to discuss CSA and personal safety without the animations. Over all, the street educators really felt that the animations were really effective tools, and most of all, the children enjoyed it!

C. Phase III

Post evaluation was done **at least** a week after the viewing and processing of the animations, in order to test the recall of the animations with the children. To compare change, the same parameters were also measured (concepts and attitude towards CSA and Personal Safety). In terms of methodology, the FGD from Phase I was integrated into “chat” (*kwentuhan*) session with the children regarding the two animations. Below are highlights of the post-evaluation session per area:

1. Post-FGD: Divisoria Group:

Venue and Date: Binondo Church, Binondo, Manila/ May 12, 2006

The children were asked to recall the story of “A Good Boy” and “Daughter”, and they all loudly retold the story scene by scene. Each was asked what happened to Jason and Daughter, and they all readily said that they were sexually abused, which indicated that they now have concepts regarding what Child Sexual Abuse is. Asked what they would have done if they were in Jason or Daughter’s place, the children said that they would resist what they would have happened to the two, and that they would tell trusted adults about it. They then enumerated the trusted adults they were

talking about, citing their parents, relatives, Childhope, the Brgy, and finally, the Police. The question “what if the child wants to be touched, is it sexual abuse?” was asked again, and the children said that it is still wrong because the adult should know that it is wrong. The what if scenarios from the pre-eval sessions were repeated, using the same progression of scenario’s. All the children said that even if they would be given money or gifts, they would still refuse the advances being offered.

2. Post-FGD: Binondo Group:

Venue and Date: Binondo Church, Binondo, Manila/ May 12, 2006

The same process was used with the Binondo Group. They all readily recalled scene by scene the animations which indicated a high recall value for the film. As with the first group, they all identified the things that happened to Jason and daughter as being sexual abuses. Asked what they would have done if they were in Jason or Daughter’s place, the children said that they would resist, shout, and run away, then tell concerned adults about the incident. They also said that if an adult was to touch their private body parts in exchange for money, food or toys, they still wouldn’t accept it no matter what.

3. Post-FGD: - Sucat Group

Venue and Date: Jollibee, Sucat, Parañaque / May 12, 2006

Upon showing them the manuals of Daughter and A Good Boy, the children automatically recalled the two animations, and told the story from start to end. They all said that what had happened to Jason and Daughter were really happening to children today. With the same line of questions, they said that if they were in Daughter or Jason’s place, they would not allow it to happen, and that they would tell someone about it. They also said that it is not alright for an adult to touch one’s private body part. It is interesting to note that the boy (actually, a teen already) that readily disclosed that he had an experience before wherein an adult touched his private body part in exchange for money, was now, unusually quiet during the post eval session. They also said now that even acts like saying sexually explicit words to children can be considered as sexual abuse. With the “what if” scenario, the answer were the same as with the first two groups.

4. Post-FGD: – Commonwealth Group

Venue and Date: Tropical Hut, Quezon City Memorial Circle / May 13, 2006

This was a particularly interesting session; the mood was different, all because of the rain. Although it was quite chilly that day, you wouldn’t feel the enthusiasm from the children dropping one bit. As with the Sucat Group, seeing a glimpse of the animation manuals sent them to a frenzied discussion of the animation they saw before. Discussion on sexual abuse was now, not a labored thing, they could provide answers readily referring always to the animation. As with the first three groups, the answers were quite the same regarding touching of private body parts.

5. Post-FGD: – Novaliches Group

Venue and Date: Jollibee Novaliches. Quezon City / May 13, 2006

As opposed to the pre-eval session, none of the children for the session were high with rugby anymore. Even though they were all sober (I could tell from the smell), their noisiness' didn't falter just one bit. Discussion about A Good Boy and "A Good Daughter" (as repeatedly said by the group) was very lively, they all recalled details of the two animations. This was the group wherein 6 out of 10 from the pre-eval said that they would let someone touch their private body parts in exchange for money. Presented with the same scenario, they all answered that they wouldn't let others touch their private body parts even if they were offered a large amount of money. As one of the boys said, "hindi ako papayag, kasi sa akin lang ito" (*I wouldn't allow it, because this is only mine*) (referring to his private body part). Asked, what if someone manages to touch them, they said that they would tell their parents, relatives, kuya Christian (of Childhope), Stairway the brgy, or the police.

D. Insights, Reflections and Conclusions

The study, although really not a formal research (in academic standards), tries to consciously measure change brought about by innovative and I would dare say, *revolutionary* materials such as A Good Boy and Daughter by SFI. Based on baselines established, and results of the post evaluation, we can really see that change did happen at the cognitive (knowledge), and the affective (attitude) level. Generally, for the whole population of the test group, during the pre-FGD, knowledge of sexual abuse was very limited or non-existing at all. Even if they manage to say rape, or sexual harassment, they cannot still pinpoint that such acts constitute a very specific kind of abuse. Attitude on the other hand, manifests itself generally towards having the conscious effort to protect oneself, but when material things are brought into the picture, the whole attitude changes. We can clearly see that after viewing and processing the animation, knowledge on child sexual abuse increases, and attitude regarding CSA and personal safety changes for the better. The fact that the post FGDs were done at least a week after the animation viewing, and that the children still actively recalls every detail, shows that our animations succeeds in bringing the message to children. Disclosures from children after viewing also show the potential of the animations as effective tools for encouraging disclosure. More than this, the animations as effective tools for prevention by raising awareness and changing attitude of children regarding child sexual abuse and personal safety is empirically validated through this activity. I for one, is quite pleased with the results, I know, and believe personally that we have one of the most potent tools in terms of educating and conscientizing people on child sexual abuse prevention. Results from this further bolsters this belief.