

EDUCATIONAL GUIDE FOR ABOUT FACE

Grades: *College/adult/mature secondary students*

Course Application: Psychology, Sociology, Social Work, Nursing, Education, Community Mental Health and Criminology/Justice,
Estimated Time of Completion: 83 minutes (film length); additional time for discussion

I. SUMMARY

Viewing the documentary, *About Face*, will provide students the opportunity to explore a myriad of educational, mental health and sociological issues within the context of a vivid case-study. This lesson will encourage students' understanding of: childhood trauma, physical impairment and disfigurement, parental abandonment and peer rejection. The goal is to encourage students to develop a sense of understanding and compassion for children who face significant trauma and child abuse, and to increase their awareness of the factors that facilitate resilience. The film also provides an opportunity to analyze sociological factors that contribute to mental health crises and barriers to treatment accessibility. Topics of substance abuse, post-partum psychosis and family culture are also addressed. This lesson facilitates education of community-based helpers such as social workers, mental health professionals, teachers and nurses. By educating these groups, the lesson serves a broader goal of raising awareness regarding the need for child abuse prevention programs and community mental health services.

II. OBJECTIVES

- Students will analyze the influences of childhood trauma on human development.
- Students will discuss barriers to services within community mental health and educational systems.
- Students will identify resiliency factors in children.
- Students will recognize environmental correlates of child abuse.
- Students will identify community supports and services that mitigate substance abuse.
- Students will identify the stigma associated with mental illness and address ways to reduce stigma within communities.

III. MATERIALS NEEDED

- About Face DVD
- Suitable materials for research
- Computer with Internet access
- Television/DVD player or computer projector
- Paper and pencil

IV. PROCEDURES

The DVD format lends itself to a variety of instructional settings. Film viewing can take place within a classroom, theater or individual setting. Analysis and discussion of film-related topics could be presented in one or more of the following styles:

- 1) Panel of experts
- 2) Small group discussion
- 3) Large group facilitated discussion
- 4) Topic-related research presentations
- 5) Lecture format
- 6) Reaction paper with follow up discussion
- 7) Webinar with national consultants
- 8) Interactive session with Affinityfilms staff

V. POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION:

- Community mental health services
- Severe childhood trauma
- Childhood burns Bullying
- Peer rejection Educating abused children
- Family reunification Maternal Abandonment
- Cycle of abuse
- Child abuse Postpartum depression/psychosis
- Substance abuse
- Effects of scarring Self-esteem
- Legal issues of the Mentally Ill Restitution
- Physical disabilities/disfigurement Resiliency factors



VI. SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION/WRITTEN RESPONSE

- 1) What is the prevalence of child abuse as a result of untreated post-partum psychosis and/or other mental illnesses (definition and statistics)?
- 2) What are the barriers to accessing mental health services?
- 3) What is your reaction to the legal and social service response to Gwen's case?
- 4) What factors contribute to childhood resiliency in cases of abuse?
- 5) How did Gwen's family and community support/not support her healing and growth as a child and an adult?
- 6) Describe how each of these factors influenced Gwen's ability/inability to cope: scarring, peer interactions, parental abandonment, searching for family, the burn conference, employment, finding her sister, family reunification, making the film.
- 7) What personal feelings were evoked as you viewed the film?
- 8) How has the film inspired you in your professional development or your commitment to community involvement?

VII. LEARNING STANDARDS:

National Health Education Standards and Performance Indicators (grades 9-12)

http://www.aahperd.org/aahe/natl_health_education_standards.html

HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARD 1: Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health through:

- Describing the interrelationships of mental, emotional, social, and physical health throughout adulthood.
- Proposing ways to reduce or prevent injuries and health problems
- Comparing and contrasting the benefits of and barriers to practicing a variety of healthy behaviors.

HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARD 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology and other factors on health behaviors through:

- Analyzing how family influences the health of individuals.
- Evaluating how the school and community can impact personal health practice and behaviors.
- Analyzing how the perceptions of norms influence healthy and unhealthy behaviors.

HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARD 4 – Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks through:

- Analyzing how interpersonal communication affects relationships.
- Describing healthy ways to express needs, wants, and feelings.
- Describing strategies for solving interpersonal conflicts without harming self or others.

HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARD 8 – Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family and community health through:

- Demonstrating how to influence and support others to make positive health choices.
- Working cooperatively as an advocate for improving personal, family and community health.

VIII. EXTENSIONS AND ADAPTATIONS FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS:

- Student essays could be posted in the classroom or shared with peers.
- Speakers from social service and mental health agencies, justice officials, and/or burn survivors would be valuable assets for class presentations.
- Students could organize a drive to collect toys and books for children hospitalized on the burn unit or for programs support abused children

IX. RELATED RESOURCES

Child Abuse Prevention Association <http://www.childabuseprevention.org>

National Alliance on Mental Illness <http://www.nami.org>

National Institute of Mental Health <http://www.nimh.nih.gov>

National Mental Health Association <http://www.nmha.org>

Postpartum Support International <http://postpartum.net>

World Burn Foundation <http://www.burnfoundation.com>