ABUSE

Program Target: To raise awareness about abuse in all its forms.

What to do: Invite a guest speaker who is knowledgeable about abuse (ideally, a Christian family counselor who works with abuse victims and survivors would be an excellent choice, if you have such a resource person in your community) to visit your group and give a presentation of about ½ hour. The presentation should cover:

- different types of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional, etc
- effects of abuse on children and youth
- how to get help if you're being abused
- how to help a friend who is a victim of abuse
- domestic violence/partner abuse (with a view to helping youth, especially teen girls, make wise choices in relationships to help them avoid being trapped in a relationship with an abuser)
- other topics as the presenter deems appropriate

A few weeks before this meeting, announce that it will be taking place and provide an opportunity for youth to confidentially write and submit anonymous questions they may wish to have the presenter discuss. After the presentation, open the floor for a question-and-answer time. The presenter can also take questions from those turned in ahead of time, if any.

Preparation Time:
Make sure your guest has been invited at least a month in advance, and begin immediately promoting the meeting in your church and community.

Bible Text: Psalm 27:10

Song Service:
"I Cast All My Care Upon You"
"He Will Carry You"

Vesper or Closing Thought:
As you present this meeting, you won't know the secrets some group members may be hiding, which may include abuse within the family. Others may finally see an opportunity to help a friend who they know is caught in an abusive situation. Knowing that these thoughts may be running through the minds of some of your audience, close the meeting by sharing the message that God loves and cares for each of His children and it is not His will that they suffer at the hands of an abuser. Help is available and God will give them courage and strength as they find it.