

Alcoholism linked to sexual abuse

Alcoholism and drug-abuse counselors are discovering that many of their clients were victims of sexual abuse as children. They are also finding out that some of their clients are child abusers themselves. A workshop on this subject was held at Maple Grove Facility in West Bloomfield. The workshop was sponsored by the Michigan Office of Substance Abuse Services (OSAS), the National Council on Alcoholism — Michigan Division and the Institute for Identity Development in Flint. Professional counselors attending the workshop learned how to deal with clients experiencing both substance-abuse problems and involvement in sexual abuse as a victim or an offender.

"SEXUAL ABUSE is a social taboo. People simply do not talk about it," said Carole Cooper, director of the Identity Development Institute and a co-organizer of the workshop.

"Not sharing such a traumatic experience with a counselor allows the problem to fester, and it blocks successful recovery from alcoholism or drug addiction. Such deeply rooted problems must be dealt with if treatment is to be effective."

Chemists at OCC

Oakland Community College's Southfield campus will host the American Chemical Society's Two-Year College Chemistry Conference on Friday and Saturday.

Tamar Susskind, OCC science instructor and program head, said the conference is an exchange of ideas among chemistry teachers and administrators in two-year colleges. Four such conferences are held each academic year.

This meeting will stress "New Dimensions in Chemical Education and Our Environment." The campus is at 22322 Rutland.

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'Victims and offenders of child sexual abuse can never change what happened, but they can learn to change their thoughts about what happened.'

— Carole Cooper

Explaining the relationship between substance abuse and child sexual abuse, Ms. Cooper said, "Alcoholism and drug addiction often result when people seek an escape from reality. A key to successful recovery is learning to face reality with the help of skilled counselors and letting go of painful incidents in the past.

"Victims and offenders of child sexual abuse can never change what happened, but they can learn to change their thoughts about what happened."

Ms. Cooper stressed the importance of dealing with a client's alcoholism or drug addiction first. The fog must clear before a counselor can help the client deal with such a gut-level issue as sexual abuse," she said. "Ideally, the entire family could become involved in counseling sessions."

ACCORDING TO Ms. Cooper, several myths in the public mind about child sexual abuse need to be dispelled.

"Victims are not at fault and should not blame themselves," she said. "Offenders are usually family members or friends, not strangers. Isolated inci-


dents are rare, abuse happens frequently and generally gets worse. All segments of society experience abuse cases.

"The problem of child sexual abuse is not getting worse in my opinion," Cooper added. "People are just talking about it more openly, and that becomes an all-important first step toward helping deal with this issue. Keeping such nightmares bottled up inside for years can only create further problems. Alcoholism and drug addiction are common examples of what can result."

She said information on child sexual abuse is available from local Child Protection Services by calling a national toll-free hotline number for Parents Anonymous at 800-421-0353 or writing to the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, 332 S. Washington Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60604.

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 The correct response is (a, stay in your car.
 Most mountain lightning storms begin quickly and end the same way. You should be able to wait it out without much discomfort.
 One of the safest places to be during a lightning storm is inside an automobile. Lightning follows the path of least resistance, and if it should strike the vehicle it will travel through the metal body to the ground without bothering those inside.
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 c. Seek shelter under the trees.
 d. Seek shelter on the lee side of a hill.


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