



SEXUAL VIOLENCE FACT SHEET

Sexual Abuse has major implications for both men and women. Research indicates that by age seventeen, 9% of boys and 22% of girls have been victims of sexual abuse. Victims of child Sexual Abuse are vulnerable to further violence as youth & adults.

- **Childhood trauma** has emerged as a **strong and independent risk factor for suicidal behavior** in adolescents and adults. (Browne and Finkelhor, 1986; Paolucci et al., 2001; Santa Mina and Gallop, 1998)
- Compared with physical abuse and neglect, child sexual abuse was found to carry **the greatest risk of depression and suicide**, independently of environment and parent and child characteristics. (Brown et al., 1999)
- After controlling for family dysfunction, significant associations were found between **child sexual abuse and higher rates of major depression, anxiety disorder, conduct disorder, substance use disorder, and suicidal behavior**. Those whose abuse involved intercourse had the highest risk of disorder. (Fergusson et al., 1996)
- After controlling for family dysfunction, significant associations were found between **child sexual abuse and higher reports of domestic violence, rape, sexual problems, mental health problems, low self-esteem, and problems with intimate relationships**, child sexual abuse involving intercourse was associated with the highest risk of disorder. (Fleming et al., 1999)
- After controlling for family dysfunction, significant associations were found between **child sexual abuse and increased rates of personality disorders** during early adulthood. (Johnson et al., 1999)
- **Among those sexually abused as children, odds of suicide attempts were 2-4 times higher among women and 4-11 times higher among men**, compared with those not abused, after controlling for other adversities. (Molnar, Berkman et al., 2001)

- After controlling for family dysfunction, significant associations were found between **child sexual abuse and higher levels of psychopathology, along with higher rates of substance abuse and suicidal behavior.** A dose-response relationship was found with those suffering the most severe forms of abuse having the greatest level of psychopathology. (Mullen et al., 1993)
- After controlling for family dysfunction, significant child sexual abuse and meeting diagnostic criteria for **at least one lifetime psychiatric disorder, especially substance abuse disorders, major depression, phobia, panic disorder and antisocial personality.** (Stein et al., 1988)
- Victims of sexual abuse are at **increased risk for further sexual assault,** such as rape; and **show a high risk for substance abuse and prostitution.** (Foss 1999)
- Estimates of the prevalence of [child sexual abuse] among prostitutes range from 57% to 85%. (Prostitution Research and Education)
- Studies suggest that the incidence of PTSD among prostitutes is likely to be high. First, **most people working as prostitutes have a history of childhood physical and sexual abuse** (Belton, Simons & Whitbeck, 1991; Giobbe, 1990; Bagley & Young, 1987; Silbert & Pines, 1981; James & Meyerding, 1977). Second, sexual and other physical violence is a frequent occurrence in adult prostitution (Hunter, 1994; Vanwesenbeeck, 1994; Baldwin 1993; Silbert & Pines, 1983). Third, the present dissociative symptoms, which often occur in conjunction with PTSD, have been noted among people working as prostitutes (Vanwesenbeeck, 1994; Ross, 1990; Silbert et al., 1982b).
- **More than half of the substance abusers entering addiction treatment report a history of physical or sexual abuse** (N=700) (Pirard 2004).
- **42% of 228 drug dependent women reported childhood sexual abuse** (Haller 2004).
- **70% of the female and 56% of the male drug users had been sexually abused as children.** 40% of the male and 50% of the female participants had a history of severe sexual abuse with sexual intercourse (N=100) (Schafer 2000).
- Upon intake, 58% of female (N=59) and 45% (N=11) of male victims of child sexual abuse identified substance abuse as presenting symptoms. 77% and 64% identified flashbacks 69% and 36% identified anxiety. (PACE April 2007).