




# **Definitions, Incidence, Indicators and Effects of Child Abuse and Neglect**



# Define the Problem



There is not a set of definitions for neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, or psychological maltreatment that is used consistently by local, state, and federal agencies or across the multiple disciplines that deal with this problem.



# Psychological Maltreatment Definition

- *Psychological Neglect* – the consistent failure of a parent or caretaker to provide a child with appropriate support, attention, and affection.
- *Psychological Abuse* – a chronic pattern of behaviors such as belittling, humiliating, and ridiculing a child.

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# Psychological Maltreatment

- Should be considered when...
  - ▶ Lack of attachment between infant and parent
  - ▶ Lack of responsiveness to environment
  - ▶ Failure to thrive
  - ▶ Parent is highly critical and negative toward the infant/child



# Child Neglect



Neglect is the chronic failure of a parent or caretaker to provide a child under 18 with basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care, educational opportunity, protection, and supervision.





# Child Neglect

- Should be considered when...
  - ▶ Significantly below height/weight for age
  - ▶ Inappropriate clothing for weather
  - ▶ Lack of safe, sanitary shelter
  - ▶ Lack of necessary medical and dental care
  - ▶ Reports no caretaker in home
  - ▶ Untreated illness or injury
  - ▶ Poor hygiene, including lice, body odor, scaly skin
  - ▶ Child abandoned or left without adequate supervision

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# Failure to Thrive


- Failure to thrive (FTT) is a condition in which children show a marked retardation or cessation of growth.
  - FTT can result from:
    - A medical condition
    - Environmental factors, or
    - Combination of medical and environmental factors
- 
- 



# Physical Abuse



Physical abuse is any non-accidental injury to a child under the age of 18 by a parent or caretaker. These injuries may include beatings, shaking, burns, human bites, strangulation, or immersion in scalding water, with resulting bruises and welts, broken bones, scars, burns, retinal hemorrhage, or internal injuries.



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# Physical Abuse

- Should be considered when...
  - ▶ History given by parent does not match injury
  - ▶ Child gives unbelievable explanation for injury
  - ▶ Child reports injury by parent
  - ▶ Child is fearful to go home or requests to stay at school, daycare, hospital




# Child Sexual Abuse



Child sexual abuse is the exploitation of a child or adolescent for the sexual gratification of another person.




# Sexually Abusive Behaviors

- 
- Voyeurism
  - Fondling
  - Child prostitution
  - Child pornography
  - Intercourse
  - Sodomy
  - Oral/genital stimulation
  - Verbal stimulation
  - Exhibitionism




# Child Sexual Abuse

- 
- Should be considered when...
    - ▶ Injury to genitals or other medical indicators
    - ▶ History of somatic complaints, including pain or irritation of the genitals
    - ▶ Sexually transmitted disease
    - ▶ Pregnancy in young adolescents





# Child Sexual Abuse

- 
- Should be considered when...
    - ▶ Frequent unexplained sore throat, yeast or urinary infection
    - ▶ Child reports inappropriate sexual behavior
    - ▶ Child engaged in highly inappropriate sexual behavior



# Effects of Child Maltreatment

- Effects range from mild to severe
  - Effects differ across forms of abuse
  - Most research on effects in childhood and adulthood
  - Effects differ at different developmental stages of infancy (I), childhood (C), adolescents (A)
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# Effects at Different Developmental Stages

<b>Infancy</b>	Psychological	Neglect	Physical	Sexual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of brain and cognitive development</li> <li>• Developmental delays</li> <li>• Physical impairment, disabilities</li> <li>• Sleeping disorders</li> <li>• Lack of physical development</li> <li>• Failure to thrive</li> <li>• Problem in attachments</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Childhood/Adolescence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enuresis, encopresis, pica</li> <li>• Low self esteem</li> <li>• Academic underachievement, cognitive problems</li> <li>• Impaired social development, withdrawal, isolation</li> <li>• Lethargic, sleep disorders, falling asleep</li> <li>• Running away from home</li> <li>• Aggressive behavior</li> <li>• Failure to develop empathy</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Adolescence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Suicidal gestures, acts</li> <li>• Antisocial behavior, delinquency</li> <li>• Drug or alcohol use</li> <li>• Frequent, indiscriminate sexual behavior</li> <li>• Eating Disorders</li> </ul>				

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# 2002 National Findings

- 3.19 million reports on 5 million children
- 896,000 child victims (12.3/1000 children)
- 60.5% neglect (includes medical neglect)
- 18.6% physical abuse
- 9.9% sexual abuse
- 6.5% psychological abuse

(overlapping cases, therefore does not equal 100%)

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# 2002 National Findings

- Boys (48.1) and girls (51.9) equally at risk for maltreatment
- Girls are 4 times more likely to be sexually abused
- Children 3 and younger are more likely to be maltreated
- Almost 2 children per 100,000 died from abuse

# 2002 National Findings

- 58.3% of perpetrators = female (NA=31)
- 41.7% of perpetrators = male (NA=34)
- 81% of perpetrators = parents
  - Mother alone: 47% neglect  
32% physical abuse
- Sexual abuse:
  - 29% non-relatives
  - 22% fathers alone
  - 19% other relatives
  - 30% other

(ACF, DHHS, 2002)

# Race/Ethnicity of Victims - 2002

Based on the number of children under age 18, the percentage of children abused compared to their percentage of the population:

	<u>% abused</u>	<u>% of population</u>
African American	26%	12%
Native American	2%	1%
White	54%	75%
Hispanic	11%	8%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1%	3%

# Referral Sources of Investigated Cases - 2002

## % of Referrals

- Professionals 56%
  - ▶ Teachers
  - ▶ Law enforcement
  - ▶ Social Services
  - ▶ Physicians
- Non-Professionals 44%
  - ▶ Family members
  - ▶ Neighbors
  - ▶ Other community members

# Child Abuse and Neglect

Etiological/Associated Factors	Neglect	Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse	Psychological Maltreatment
Domestic Violence	X	X		XX
Stress	X	X	X	X
One Parent Household	XX	XX	XX	
Lacking Education	XX	X		X
Substance Abuse	XX	X	X	X
Family Patterns	X	XX	X	X
Mental Disorders	X	X	X	X
Poverty	XX	XX	XX	X
Social Factors	X	X	X	X
Unknown	X	X	XX	X