Child Abuse

The Hidden Epidemic
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5 children die every day as a result of child abuse.
Instructional Objectives

- Analyze reasons for the high rate of child abuse.
- Describe the types of abuse and neglect.
- Determine warning signs for each type of abuse and neglect.
- Become aware of the risk factors for child abuse and neglect.
- Analyze ways of breaking the cycle of abuse.

STOP
CHILD ABUSE
IT'S EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS!
Definition of Abuse and Neglect

- Child abuse and neglect is defined as being any physical or mental injury, act of sexual abuse or exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of any child under the age of 18.
Types of Child Abuse & Occurrence

1. Neglect – 59%
2. Physical Abuse – 10.8%
3. Sexual Abuse – 7.6%
4. Emotional Abuse – 4.2%
5. Medical Neglect – 0.9%
6. Other – 17.4%
Child Neglect – Most Common Type of Abuse

Neglect is a pattern of failing to provide for a child’s basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene or supervision.
Warning Signs of Neglect in Children

- clothes are ill-fitting or dirty
- hygiene is consistently poor
- untreated illnesses and physical injuries
- frequently unsupervised
- frequently late or missing from school
Physical abuse
Physical Abuse

- physical abuse involves physical harm
- many physically abusive parents and caregivers insist that their actions are simply forms of discipline—ways to make children learn to behave
Warning Signs of Physical Abuse in Children

- frequent injuries
- always watchful and “on alert,”
- injuries appear to have a pattern
- shies away from touch
- Wears inappropriate clothes
In physical abuse, unlike physical forms of discipline, the following elements are present:

- unpredictability
- lashing out in anger
- using fear to control
They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel.
Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can severely damage a child’s mental health or social development, leaving lifelong psychological scars.
Examples of Emotional Child Abuse include:

- constant belittling
- calling child inappropriate names
- telling a child he or she is “no good"
- frequent yelling
- ignoring or rejecting a child as punishment
- limited physical contact with the
- exposing the child to violence or the abuse of others
Warning Signs of Emotional Abuse in Children

- excessively withdrawn
- shows extremes in behavior
- appears detached from parent /caregiver
- acts inappropriately adult or inappropriately infantile
In most cases, the abuser is someone the parent or child knows, and is often trusted by the child and family.
Sexual abuse

An act which forces, coerces, or threatens a child to engage in sexual activity.
Warning signs of sexual abuse in children

- trouble walking or sitting
- displays knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to his or her age, or even seductive behavior
- makes strong efforts to avoid a specific person, without an obvious reason
- doesn’t want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities
- an STD or pregnancy, especially under the age of 14
- runs away from home
Risk factors for child abuse and neglect

- domestic violence
- alcohol and drug abuse
- untreated mental illness
- lack of parenting skills
- stress and lack of support
How do you know when you’ve crossed the line?

- unable to control your anger
- feeling emotionally disconnected from your child
- meeting the daily needs of your child seems impossible
- others have expressed concern
Breaking the cycle of child abuse

Tips for changing your reactions:

• learn what is and is not age appropriate
• develop new parenting skills
• take care of yourself
• get professional help
• learn strategies to get your emotions under control
The cycle can be broken.
Sources

- www.helpguide.org
- www.preventchildabuse.org
- www.childhelp.org

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