

Module I – Child Abuse and Maltreatment

CO-HAPPINESS – Happy and Safe in Community



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Aim of Module 1

The aim of this module is to

- Clarify the definitions of different forms of child abuse and maltreatment
- Increase the understanding of the various forms of child abuse and maltreatment through theoretical framework as well as how to recognise abuse
- The aim is also to increase understanding about the needs the victims of abuse has

Learning outcomes

After completing this module

learners should be able to

- Define the concept of child abuse and maltreatment
- Name the forms of abuse and maltreatment and identify signs revealing abuse and maltreatment
- Understand the mechanism of child and adolescent mental trauma

Content

1. What is child abuse?
2. Definition of different types of abuse and maltreatment
3. Research evidence and risk factors
4. Epidemiology

Key facts



- 5 children die every day as a result of child abuse
- One in 5 women and 1 in 13 men report having been sexually abused as a child
- Consequences of child maltreatment include impaired lifelong physical and mental health
- Preventing child maltreatment requires a multisectoral approach
- Effective prevention programs support parents and teach positive parenting skills
- Ongoing care of children and families can reduce the risk of maltreatment reoccurring and can minimize its consequences.

Definition of Child abuse

In 1999, the WHO Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention compared definitions of abuse from 58 countries and drafted the following definition:

“Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”

Definition of child abuse

Child Welfare Act

“The physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a child under the age of 18 by a person who is responsible for the child’s welfare under circumstances which indicate that the child’s health or welfare is harmed or threatened.”

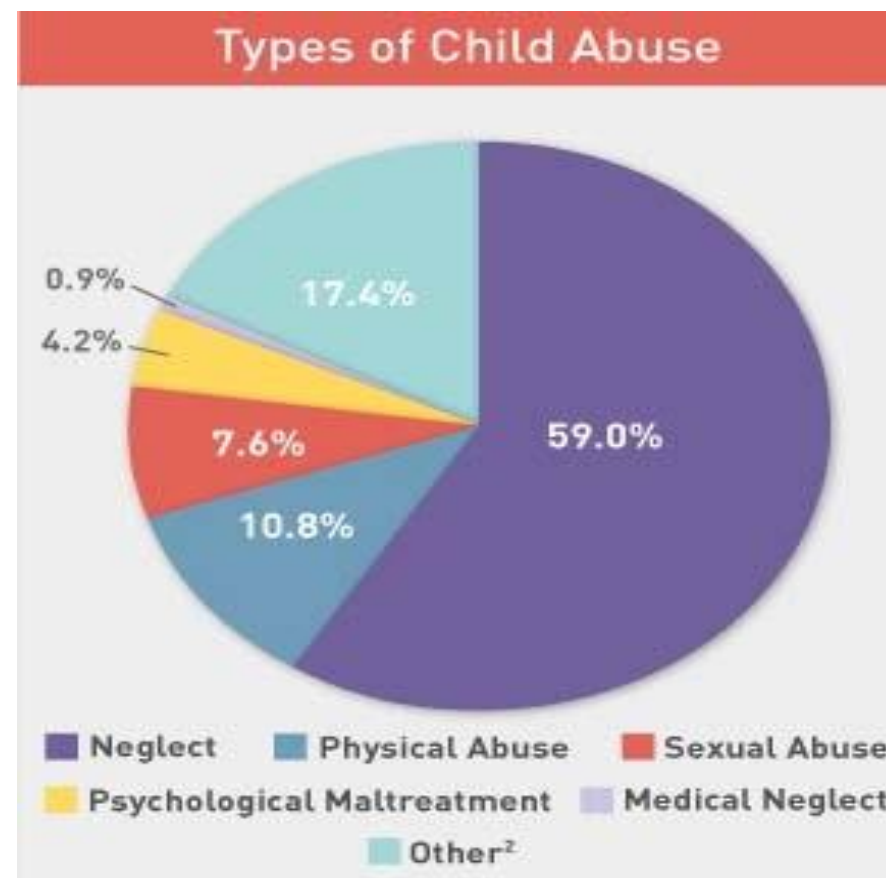
Definition of child abuse

Other definition

“Any behavior directed toward a child that endangers or impairs a child’s physical or emotional health and development”

Main types of Child Abuse

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect



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 or others, with resulting bruises and welts, fractures, scars, burns, internal injuries or any other injuries.

World Health Organization (WHO):

Acts that result in actual or potential physical harm, resulting from an interaction that is within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust

UNICEF:

Persons under 18 years of age who suffer occasional or habitual acts of violence

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a person uses power over a child, and directly involves the child in any sexual act, involves the child in pornography, or forces the child to witness sexual acts

Involvement of a child in sexual activity that he/she does not fully comprehend, is not able to give consent to, and that violates the laws or taboos of society

Sexually Abusive behaviors

Voyeurism

Fondling

Child prostitution

Child pornography

Intercourse

Sodomy

Oral-genital stimulation

Verbal stimulation

Exhibitionism

Emotional Abuse

Failure to provide a developmentally appropriate, supportive environment, so that a child can establish a stable and full range of emotional and social competencies “commensurate with his or her personal potential”

It's Not Physical...

IT'S ALL I OUGHT TO SEND YOU AWAY!
YOUR FAULT! HOW COME YOU'RE SO STUPID?
WHY ARE YOU **YOU'RE UGLY**
SO NEEDY?
YOU **NOBODY COULD EVER LOVE YOU!**
IDIOT!
YOU'RE A MISTAKE
WHY CAN'T YOU DO ANYTHING RIGHT?
I WISH YOU HURRY UP YOU
MISERABLE
Shut up! **WERE BRAT!**
GET OUT OF  **DEAD**
MY FACE YOU MADE ME SAY IT

But it's still CHILD ABUSE .

Neglect

Failure to provide for a child in all domains: physical and mental health, education, nutrition, shelter, and safe living conditions, when the resources are reasonably available to the family or caretakers

The difference between abuse and neglect is that abuse represents an action against a child while neglect represents a lack of action for the child

Research evidence

What aspects makes a difference:

- Who committed the abuse; effects are generally worse when it was a parent, step-parent or trusted adult than a stranger
- Age of the child when the abuse happened : younger is usually more harmful
- Trusted person's response when confiding: doubting, ignoring, blaming and shaming responses can be extremely harmful - even more than the abuse itself
- Whether or not violence was involved, and if so, how severe, how long the abuse went on

Continues..

- Whether the abuse involved deliberately humiliating the child
- How "normal" such abuse was in the extended family and local culture
- Whether the child had loving family members, and/or knew that someone loved her or him
- Whether the child had some good relationships - with siblings, friends, teachers, coaches, etc.
- Whether the child had any relationships in which "negative" feelings were acceptable, and could be expressed and managed safely and constructively

Risk factors for child abuse

Community/societal

High crime rate
Lack of or few social services
High poverty rate
High unemployment rate

Child-related

Prematurity
Low birth weight
Handicap

Parent-related

Personal history of physical or sexual abuse as a child
Teenage parents, Single parent
Emotional immaturity, Lack of parenting skills
Poor coping skills , Low self-esteem
Personal history of substance abuse
Known history of child abuse
Lack of social support, Lack of preparation having a new infant (multiple young children)
Domestic violence
History of depression or other mental health problems
Unwanted pregnancy, Denial of pregnancy

Recent studies on epidemiology

Germany 2016: 2510 participants, ages of 14 and 94 years in 2016

- over 10% of participants reported at least moderate emotional neglect
- more than 20% at least moderate physical neglect

Balkan region—Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Greece, Romania, Serbia, and Turkey

- 42,194 children at the ages of 11, 13 and 16 years participated
- For all countries, over 50% of the sample reported a lifetime prevalence for both experiencing psychological and physical violence.

continues..

Epidemiology...

- Canadian researchers had a pioneering role in collecting incidence data on reported child maltreatment.
- The findings show a decrease in rates of reported child sexual abuse
- Policy changes had an obvious impact on incidence rates: A new category "risk of future maltreatment" helps to identify and support families before violence happens
- Lessons learned in Switzerland: by valuing agencies context-specific knowledge and expertise instead of viewing them as mere providers of data it came possible to collect accurate data of the number on child maltreatment and abuse incidents.
- Data collecting happened in co operation between researchers and child protection practitioners
- Model highly recommended to all countries



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**STOP
CHILD ABUSE
IT'S EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS!**

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