

Student's Name

Professor's Name

Course

Date

### Child Abuse and Neglect

#### **What is child abuse and neglect?**

Different people and organizations have defined child neglect and abuse in various ways

Washington state legislature defines abuse and neglect as injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child by any person under circumstances which indicate that the child's health, welfare, and safety is harmed. Abuse and neglect does NOT include the physical discipline of a child as defined in (RCW 26.44.020)

NSPCC a leading child's NGO defines child abuse as is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be a lack of love, care, and attention. (NSPCC)

#### **What are the causes of child neglect and child abuse?**

Mental health problems and drug and alcohol abuse may lead to parents neglecting their children in most cases they are not in control of themselves and are often under the influence of drugs or alcohol so much that they do not know what is happening in the lives of their children.

Poverty and lack of adequate resources may render children neglected since their parent may not be able to afford basic commodities like food, clothing, and shelter. This happens mostly in developing countries such as some African countries.

Trauma has also been reported as a cause of child abuse. Most parents who suffered child abuse as children themselves tend to subject their children to child abuse some of them is because that is the way they think children should be treated. ("Child Abuse And Neglect - Causes Of Abuse And Neglect, Effects Of Abuse On Children, Prevention Of Child Abuse")

Domestic violence is also a cause of child neglect. When marriages are abusive and violent mostly for women, they end up being depressed and get their feelings out by neglecting or abusing children sometimes unintentionally

### **What are the signs and symptoms of Child abuse?**

Signs of child abuse are classified into two categories, general signs and specific signs general signs are exhibited across the board and suffered by a majority of children experiencing any form of abuse while specific signs are exhibited by children experiencing a particular type of child abuse the general signs include:

Slower than usual development, where the child does not exhibit skills and capabilities of children their age. Some children even regress, losing skills they had already acquired

Mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and entertainment of suicidal thoughts. ("Child Abuse And Neglect-Symptoms")

*Specific signs may include:*

### **1. Signs of emotional abuse include but not limited to**

Children suffering from emotional abuse may exhibit extremes in behavior they may turn out to be extremely passive or extremely aggressive. In most cases, they will be excessively withdrawn and afraid to do something wrong for fear of the parent. They are also not attached to their parents or caregiver in many instances

### **2. Signs of physical abuse**

Children who have frequent and brutal injuries might be suffering from physical abuse for their caregivers. These children will often be paranoid and afraid as if something bad is always going to happen to them. Wearing inappropriate clothing could also be a sign of physical abuse for example when a child is wearing long sleeved clothes on a sunny day they might be hiding marks from physical abuse.

### **3. Signs of sexual abuse**

Trouble walking or sitting in children could be a sign of sexual abuse. The child could be experiencing pain. When a child puts in a lot of effort to avoid somebody, in particular, it could be a sign of sexual abuse. Children who display so much knowledge about sex and sexuality especially below the age of 12 years could be experiencing sexual abuse.

*Signs of child neglect*

1. The children who suffer neglect may exhibit characteristics of being too underweight or overweight because nobody cares about what they eat.
2. Children who are sick and tired all the time may also be exhibiting signs of neglect
3. Poor personal hygiene and dirty children is a sign of neglect

4. When clothes are not fitting, are tattered and inappropriate for the weather for instant not wearing warm clothes during a rainy day that is a sign of neglect
5. Children who are frequently late or absent from school may be exhibiting signs of neglect(HELPGUIDE.ORG)

### **How many children have died due to abuse and neglect?**

It is no easy to quantify the actual number of children who have died due to child abuse or neglect, but several statistics show that the number of children who die as a result of abuse and child neglect is a substantial number. According to The National Centre for Fatality Review and Prevention, It is reported that more than 1,700 children in the U.S. die of child abuse and neglect each year, and the actual number of abuse and neglect deaths is estimated to be much higher than that reported by vital statistics data. ("Child Abuse And Neglect – The National Center For Fatality Review And Prevention"). According to Childhelp.org America loses on average four to seven children every day to child abuse and neglect (Childhelp).another report carried out by <https://www.theepochtimes.com> indicate that America loses about eight children to abuse and neglect every day(Moreno, Denisse). Finally, the independent magazine in Britain reports seemingly lower cases on death due to neglect in the UK; it states that about 100 children die every year because of child abuse and neglect and about two every week in the UK (Garner, Clare)

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