

Understanding child abuse and neglect

Written by Administrator

Monday, 25 April 2011 20:27 - Last Updated Sunday, 07 September 2014 20:41



Child Abuse Hotlines:

- To get help or report abuse in the US or Canada, call the [Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline](#) at **1-800-4-A-C HILD (1-800-422-4453)**.
- In the UK, call 0800 1111 ([NSPCC Childline](#)).
- Australia: 1800 688 009 ([Child Abuse Prevention Service](#))
- New Zealand: 0800-543-754 ([Kidsline](#))
- Or visit [ChiWorld.org](#) for a list of other international child helplines

Child abuse is more than bruises or broken bones. While physical abuse is shocking due to the scars it leaves, not all child abuse is as obvious. Ignoring children's needs, putting them in unsupervised, dangerous situations, or making a child feel worthless or stupid are also child abuse. Regardless of the type of child abuse, the result is serious emotional harm.

Myths and facts about child abuse and neglect

MYTH #1: It's only abuse if it's violent.

Fact: Physical abuse is just one type of child abuse. Neglect and emotional abuse can be just as damaging, and since they are more subtle, others are less likely to intervene. .

MYTH #2: Only bad people abuse their children.

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Fact: While it's easy to say that only "bad people" abuse their children, it's not always so black and white. Not all abusers are intentionally harming their children. Many have been victims of abuse themselves, and don't know any other way to parent. Others may be struggling with mental health issues or a substance abuse problem.

MYTH #3: Child abuse doesn't happen in "good" families.

Fact: Child abuse doesn't only happen in poor families or bad neighborhoods. It crosses all racial, economic, and cultural lines. Sometimes, families who seem to have it all from the outside are hiding a different story behind closed doors.

MYTH #4: Most child abusers are strangers.

Fact: While abuse by strangers does happen, most abusers are family members or others close to the family.

MYTH #5: Abused children always grow up to be abusers.

Fact: It is true that abused children are more likely to repeat the cycle as adults, unconsciously repeating what they experienced as children. On the other hand, many adult survivors of child abuse have a strong motivation to protect their children against what they went through and become excellent parents.