

SOME FACTS ABOUT ABUSE

1. A child is abused in the USA, on an average, every two and a half minutes. That translates to the fact that somewhere in the world, a child is abused every six and a half seconds.
2. Abused children are more susceptible to sexual predators.
3. In the USA, approximately 4 children die each day as a direct result of abuse.
4. Abuse is not always visible, especially with adults. Adults would rather hide the signs of abuse than speak out about it.
5. Children find adults difficult to talk to about having been abused, because adults don't want to believe them. For adults, it is socially unacceptable to talk about their abuse.
6. Abuse knows no social barriers, no age barriers and no gender barriers.
7. Perpetrators make their victims feel that the victims are the guilty ones in abuse situations.
8. Abuse is not limited to just sexual abuse. It can be social, mental, physical, emotional, spiritual, financial, spatial and many other forms.
9. Emotional scars from abuse are, generally, a life sentence.
10. 1.64% of children under 4 years of age will be abused.
11. More children under 5 years of age (in the USA) die of abuse than from any other single cause.
12. Only 1 in 3 cases of abuse (estimated) are ever officially reported.
13. Fear is the main weapon used by the perpetrators of abuse against their victims.
14. To ask for help is not the weaker option and is not the cowards way out. It takes courage and strength to speak out.

TO REPORT ABUSE IN THIS REGION

To Contact the
Child Protection Unit
(Police unit)
in this area please call
02 6768 2999

Or you may report abuse at
any police station

Or to
Dept. of Community Services

CONTACT US

MAIL
P.O. Box 1032,
INVERELL. NSW. 2360.
Australia.

EMAIL
crinthsil@christianpeople.info

WEBSITE
<http://cryinginthesilence.christianpeople.info>

To ask for help is not the weaker option
It is not the cowards way out
It takes courage and strength
IT REBUILDS YOUR LIFE



Why We
Should
Report
Child
Abuse

ABUSE INFORMATION BROCHURE

FOR THE REGION OF

N.E. & N.W. NSW., Australia

A project that offers hope and dignity to the victims of
abuse and their supporters.

<http://cryinginthesilence.christianpeople.info/>

WHY WE SHOULD REPORT CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse is rampant the world over and yet, in most countries, it is ignored and even thought of as not actually existing.

Child abuse is one of the largest causes of death in children under 5 years of age in many western countries and this is a most alarming statistic and one that should be of concern to all of us who believe that children have a right to be children and live uncomplicated lives, free of unnecessary hardship and avoidable complications. It is estimated that at least one child in four will have suffered child abuse in a western country (similar statistics probably exist world wide), so that means that such a large number of children will grow up having been humiliated and sometimes permanently damaged in mind and/or body. That should not be acceptable to anyone.

It is extremely sad that many adults consider children to be just objects that they can use for their own sick pleasure, beating them, sexually using them and, sadly, sometimes even killing them, just so that they (the perpetrator) can have their moment of pleasure.

The other aspect of this is that around 90+% of abused children will continue that cycle when they become adults themselves, and so the process continues into the next generation.

Why does this happen?

Because no-one has told them that this behaviour is not normal. For many children, abuse has been an intimate and integral part of their lives since the day they were born and the many years of habitual abuse make them believe that this is the normal way to live and so they continue to keep that myth going into their adult years, making sure that their children will also feel the same way for when they grow up. This is not necessarily a deliberate action but rather an instilled one.

Because of the statistics quoted earlier, if you are not a victim of abuse then there is a very strong chance that many of even your closest friends are victims of abuse. However, the chances are that you will never know about these as there is a sub-culture in western society (in particular) that says we mustn't talk about such things because it brings shame to the family and to the community. While that may be true, up to a point, the cost to society of this horrendous, cowardly act cannot be measured. Whilst the monetary cost can have some measure, there is the social cost to the community. The two most common costs are suicide and social withdrawal.

Suicide: Some experts believe that child abuse (especially sexual and physical) can be listed as among the top three causes of suicide, especially in teenagers. This is alarming. Of course, the exact figure can never be known because so many victims of child abuse are actually not really aware that this is the cause of their depression and the subsequent action it can cause. So, even if they were to leave a suicide note, this aspect would most likely never be mentioned. This aspect relates to the fact that they are not aware that this is abnormal behaviour on behalf of the perpetrator.

Social Withdrawal: This is far more wide ranging than may at first appear to be the case. Because the child (and subsequently the adult) may feel "unacceptable" in society (without knowing why they feel that way), as a result they "withdraw" from many aspects of social interaction. In extreme cases of abuse, this can even mean total withdrawal from social interaction. Not only is this detrimental to the individual but it creates a tragic loss to the community. People who might otherwise be pillars in their community in some way, are lost completely to that community because of their fear of rejection and of becoming "unacceptable" to their peers. This second aspect is often used as an indicator (especially in children) that the person may be a victim of abuse. One aspect of adult abuse, in particular, is that the perpetrator may severely restrict (even totally) the social activity of their partner and/or children. Thus a once outgoing individual, suddenly "loses interest" in doing things or meeting with friends.

These are just two of the many outcomes of abuse in our community life. No matter what the outcome, abuse ultimately costs the community dearly, especially in small communities where everyone knows everyone. Yet, it is often in these communities that abuse can be happening unreported because no-one wants to offend anyone in the community.

What can be done about it?

About the best thing that can be done is that if you suspect or know about abuse, then report your suspicions to the authorities. They will accept that it is only a suspicion but once a report has been made, then they are in a position to follow it up. This becomes especially important if more than one person reports their suspicions. Most authorities (especially the police) will follow up on such reports and do so without revealing the source of information. In fact, in most western countries, it is actually possible to report such matters in a totally anonymous manner. This is a good thing in a small community because then no-one can point the finger of blame at someone for upsetting the equilibrium of the community.

It is much better to find that your suspicions are proved to be wrong than to have someone continue to suffer the ordeal with the potentially terrible consequences and the ongoing cycle that can, and does, happen.

Remember that the favorite weapon of an abuser is fear, especially where children are concerned. By one method or another they will instill so much fear into their victims that they will never report it to anyone because they are told that they will be punished or misunderstood if they do. For a young child that is a most powerful weapon and the perpetrator knows that, using it to their advantage to make sure their victim never says anything to anyone.

It is that fear that often leads to suicide because they feel so degraded, yet cannot talk about it, so they end up so depressed that suicide remains the only option.

What if the incident occurred a long time ago?

That does not make any difference. The general aspect of an abuser is that they do not change. Now it needs to be pointed out that some do abuse because there was some mitigating circumstances that caused the original incident to occur. However, on the whole, perpetrators remain perpetrators unless they are stopped. By not reporting an incident, even if it occurred 25-30 years ago (or even longer) you are allowing this person to go on destroying other lives, especially if they like to abuse children.

Reporting it may not bring about criminal prosecution for your personal release from the horror of that abuse, but your actions will most probably prevent other people having to suffer the same shame and fear that you went through. Some countries have quite lengthy periods after you become an adult to be able to report for prosecution, but even if that time has expired, do it for the sake of the potential victims that may still be within their reach.

Once authorities are aware of past incidents, they can watch the person more closely to check on any current potential victims and to prevent anything disastrous happening in the future.

The only way child abuse will be reduced is if people stop thinking about their personal feelings of shame and think of the countless others they are allowing to be potential victims like they themselves have been.

DON'T LET CHILDREN SUFFER THIS HUMILIATING IMPASSE ON THEIR LIVES