

The Long Term Effects of Child Abuse



Child abuse is one of the most common and concerning issues faced by societies worldwide. According to some recent studies, about five children lose their lives due to child abuse. Emotional and physical abuse have become very common. Regardless of the form and the perpetrator of the crime, child abuse can have serious, long-term effects on little ones.

The worst thing is these effects often stay even if the crime ends. The Children's Bureau reports that approximately 678,000 children in the USA alone were abused in 2018. Take a look at the effects of child abuse so you can recognize them:



Alcohol & Drug Use

The psychological effects of child abuse often lead to tobacco, drug and alcohol abuse in adolescence and adulthood.

Physical and sexual abuse increases the likelihood of high school students using marijuana, alcohol, and other illicit drugs.

A USA study revealed that 28% of physically abused adolescents consumed drugs compared to 14% of non-abused ones.



Behavioral Problems

Child abuse often causes behavior problems in adolescence and childhood. Children who are mistreated at an early age are more likely to develop negative behavior in adolescence, including sadness, aggression, depression, etc.

An international study conducted in the USA reported that children, maltreated in multiple developmental periods, showed more behaviour problems than children abused in only one developmental period.



Developmental Problems

Child abuse is associated with bad school achievement and delays in language development.

There is a strong association between child abuse and poor academic performance.

Abuse in the early years of life negatively influences the developmental capacity of young infants.



Relationship Problems

Abusing babies and young infants makes them experience insecurity and/or disorganized attachment difficulties with their primary caregiver.

Children who experience an insecure attachment early in life with their parent or caregiver, who should be the primary source of comfort and safety, will associate that relationship as a source of danger, fear and anxiety. This can also impact the child's ability and willingness to trust others later into their adolescence and adulthood.



Violence & Criminal Activity

Child abuse can increase the risk of inflicting pain on others and developing violent and aggressive behaviors in adolescence. Exposure to family violence is one of the most common consistent predictors of youth violence.

A National Institute of Justice study reports that abused adolescents are 11 times more likely to be arrested for criminal behavior.



Physical Health Issues & Problems

Child abuse can be hazardous for physical health. Exposure to one such experience doubles the odds of children having overall poor physical health at the age of 6 years.

One common form of child abuse is shaken baby syndrome. It causes health problems, such as brain damage, hearing loss, spinal cord injuries, speech difficulties and even death.

Child abuse leads to many adverse consequences for adolescents and children. In addition to the effects discussed above, some other experiences may include homelessness, suicidal behavior, trauma, etc.

How can you help support or volunteer for the cause?
Visit [ForTheChildren.org](https://www.ForTheChildren.org) to learn more.



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