Sexual Abuse and How It Affects Children

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Why Should We Care?

How does sexual abuse from parents affect children mentally and physically? We want to know what kind of thoughts go through children’s heads and what emotions they feel. Does every child who is a victim from abuse turn out the same way? How do they cope with the abuse they receive from their parents?

Children in an abusive household don’t usually ask for outside help. They are confused about how to deal with this situation where they have to get away from the people who were supposed to be family and where home is supposed to be a safe haven. A way those children can get help is if they reach out for it despite their fear or if someone reaches out for them. Through a sociological perspective, the child would be too frightened of getting caught telling on his parents which might lead to more abuse so that prevents them from getting any outside help, leaving them to suffer in silence.

Mental Effects

Children who were sexually abused or adults who were sexually abused as a child have always experienced long-term effects afterwards. One of the long-term symptoms they develop is traumatic sexualization. According to the article, “The construction and validation of the Sexual Abuse Survivor’s Symptom Scale: A comprehensive instrument to assess the long term effects of child sexual abuse on an adult, female, clinical population,” traumatic sexualization is when a child’s feelings and attitudes towards sex becomes misshapen and improper due to sexual abuse. They explain to us that in the future, people who suffered from child sexual abuse have difficulty maintaining a relationship especially when it comes to sexual relationships with their partners. They would avoid any form of intimacy from having trust issues and trying to prevent flashbacks from their sexual abuse as a child. In the article, “Prevalence of domestic violence, child physical abuse, and child sexual abuse in children with a diagnosis of Reactive Attachment Disorder or Deprivation/Maltreatment Disorder,” it also discusses the effects of childhood sexual abuse. It tells us that people who are victims of child sexual abuse are prone to depression, which leads to suicide and self-mutilation. Children in an abusive household don’t usually ask for outside help. We also need to let them know that they aren’t alone and that they aren’t the only ones who have gone through such situations.

How Sexual Abuse Can Follow The Victims Through Life

Association of Childhood Sex Abuse With Drug Dependence And Psychiatric Disorders in Adult Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nongenital</th>
<th>Intercourse</th>
<th>Any Sexual Abuse</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drug Dependence</td>
<td>Alcohol Dependence</td>
<td>Major Depression</td>
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<td>General Anxiety Disorder</td>
<td>Two or More Disorders</td>
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<td>2.83</td>
<td>5.78</td>
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Increase in Sexual Abuse and Long Term Effects

A functionalist would say that the society would work together to abolish or to prevent sexual abuse. The society wants to work together to make the society the best it can be.

A conflict theorist would say that if there is power and control, there would be no sexual abuse happening. They want social order, and want social inequality. They would have the power to determine whether there is sexual abuse or not.

An interactionist perspective would study the victims who have been sexually abused and then help them by communication from the studies they made from the victims.

Physical Effects

There are four trauma-causing factors that victims may experience, which are traumatic sexualization, betrayal, powerlessness, and stigmatization. (Yezina, 2013). One of the main trauma-causing factors, betrayal, is defined as when the trust in the offender who broke the relationship and in other adults who are perceived as not having protected the child from being abused, who had been the caregivers of the child, is gone. Studies show that sexually abused children have a higher chance to commit criminal acts than their non-abused counterparts. Neurotic disorders can occur after the event of sexual abuse, including mistrust in others, and a trauma of any sexual activities. The victim can never truly get over the ordeal of what had happened to them because it was such a major event.

Conclusion

Throughout our research we found some ways that sexual abuse from parents affects children mentally and physically. We found that there are four mental effects. They are trauma-causing factors that victims may experience, which are traumatic sexualization, betrayal, powerlessness, and stigmatization. Also we found that neurotic disorders can occur after the event of sexual abuse. Physically and mentally the people who are victims of child sexual abuse are prone to depression, which leads to suicide and self-mutilation. Children in an abusive household don’t usually ask for outside help. They are confused about how to deal with this situation where they have to get away from the people who were supposed to be family and where home is supposed to be a safe haven. A way those children can get help is if they reach out for it despite their fear or if someone reaches out for them. Children going through such things should not be afraid to talk; it may be hard but keeping it bottled inside won’t help. We also need to let them know that they aren’t alone and that they aren’t the only ones who have gone through such situations.

References

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