

## **Statistics for Child Sexual Abuse**

1. One in 4 girls and one in 7 boys will become victims of child sexual abuse by the age of 18. These are reported numbers. (Browne, A & Finklehor, D. (1986). **Impact of child sexual abuse: A review of the research, Psychological Bulletin, 99, 66-77**)
2. The average age for the onset of a sexually abusive relationship is 6-8 years old. Reports of molestation of very young children are increasing. More than 33% of all child victims are 5 years old or younger. Children as young as one week old have been molested. (Sexual Assault Center. Seattle: Child Protective Services, Seattle: Department of Health and Hospitals, City of Boston, 1984)
3. Child sexual abuse is seldom a one-time occurrence. Abusive relationships last an average of 4 years. (National Center for Prevention of Child Abuse. 1979)
4. 65-75% of prostitutes were sexually abused as children. (Boyer & James. 1982: Enablers Study, Minneapolis. '980: C. Henry Kempe Center. Denver)
5. 90% of children who are victimized know their offender. Many times, it is someone the child loves and trusts, such as a parent, a coach, a minister, a relative, or a neighbor. (Kilpatrick, D., Saunders, B., & Smith, D. (2003). **Youth victimization: Prevalence and implications. U.S.Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice report.**)

## **What We Know About Sex offenders**

1. Sex offenders can be anyone and are experts on leading double lives. Known convicted sex offenders have been doctors, dentists, preachers, priests, rock stars, business men, coaches, teachers, and prosecutors.
2. Sex offenders can be male or female.
3. Sex offenders groom their victims and their family members by getting their victims to trust them by doing kind things for them and supplying things their victims/families need or want – money, attention, gifts.
4. Sex offenders choose children they have access to, who can be manipulated, who will be less likely to tell, and if they do tell, they will be the kind of kid who will be less likely to be believed.
5. Sex offenders play games with their victim, like wrestling, tickling, back rubbing, etc. to get the victim familiar to their touch. These touches may or may not be sexual at first but will become sexual over time. These touches are often presented as innocent and accidental.
6. Sex offenders prefer to isolate the child, but can offend the child with other people in the same room.

## **The Emotional Impact of Child Sexual Abuse**

1. Causes the victim low self-esteem, which causes self-hate, poor body image, etc.

2. Depression and withdrawal have been documented in children as young as three.
3. Self-destructive tendencies such as cutting behaviors, substance abuse, extreme body art/piercings, risky Behaviors, and abiding anger/rage.
4. Personalities can become aggressive or withdrawn.
5. Perfectionism

All of the problems above can happen immediately as children, and carry on into adulthood. The following are immediate short-term impacts that children often exhibit.

6. Age regressive behaviors, like bath-rooming issues during the day when they have been successfully potty trained already and bed wetting at night.
7. Reverting to babyish behaviors such as thumb sucking, fear of the darkness, baby talk, or developmentally inappropriate clinginess.

### **The Social Impact of Child Abuse**

1. Problems with authority.
2. Problems with peers.
3. Problems with violence.
4. Long term health issues

**Tennessee is a mandated reporter state.** That means anyone 18 years of age and older **MUST** report any SUSPECTED abuse of children. You do not have to know “for certain”. If you suspect abuse of a child and do not make a report, and later the abuse is discovered, you can be charged with a crime for not reporting. There is a 24 hour, 7 days a week phone number to call to report a suspicion of child abuse, child sexual abuse.

For more information on reporting child abuse and signs and symptoms: <https://children.sworpswebapp.sworps.utk.edu/html/children/jtf/resources.html>

For additional information about support in the Tennessee Community you are in, please access our resource information guide listed by county located on this website.