



NEWS BULLETIN

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RESOURCE CENTER “ CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION”

Number 2, Year 1

February, 2006

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Child sexual abuse Essence

A central characteristic of any abuse is the dominant position of an adult that allows him or her to force or coerce a child into sexual activity. Child sexual abuse may include physical contact, penetration and also non-contact abuse such as exposing children to pornographic materials.

There are a lot of forms and cases of child sexual abuse, which do not leave any signs:

- **The sexual abuse** is using the child for sexual satisfaction.
- **Verbal sexual abuse** – offensive words, threats, public humiliation of the victim, discreditation.
- **Psychical abuse** (sexual torment) – rude violation of human and sexual rights of the child (juvenile), rude and humiliating attitude, neglecting of personal desires. The child is treated as a creature without dignity and self-independence.
- **Fornication** – most of the times it is realization of sexual actions of an adult over child or juvenile, who aims to satisfy his sexual needs without a real sexual act. That form of sexual abuse is preceded from undressing, touching, making a child touch a violator’s sexual organs aiming an erection and satisfaction.

- **Rape** – any violent penetration and real sexual action, most of the times it is preceded from physical actions in order to exhaust the victim.

“Child sexual abuse” is using the child for sexual satisfaction. It is expressed as:

- Abuse with unequalateral relationship between a child and an adult, bigger or stronger man, which usually means a betrayal of child’s trust.
- Sexual action between a child and an adult, bigger or stronger man, which is a real sexual act, attempt for sexual action or threat.
- It includes a wide range of actions, which consider the child as an object of:
 1. sexual interest;
 2. sexual touching;
 3. undressing of genitals;
 4. masturbation in front of the child;
 5. oral sexual action;
 6. vaginal or anal penetration with an object, including finger and penis;
 7. showing of pornographic materials or using the child for pornographic purposes;
 8. involving the child in sexual actions with an animal;
 9. sexual exploitation, which aims a financial or material benefit.

Signs for eventual sexual abuse

Physical Indicators:

- discomfort when sitting and walking;
- pain and itching in the genital/anal area;
- bruising or bleeding in the genital area;
- bed-wetting;

- sexually transmitted disease;
- unexpected pregnancy, especially of very young girls;
- vaginal discharge or infections;
- stomachaches and headaches.

Additional signs:

Behavioral/Emotional Indicators:

- the child cries a lot;
- excessive interest or preoccupation with sexual matters;
- highly sexualized behavior or play;
- excessive curiosity about sex;
- sexual drawings, language or behavior;
- be inappropriately seductive;
- poor academic performance, falling grades;
- unexpected changes in the personality, wrapped in thoughts;
- lack of concentration, no hobbies and interests, depression;
- fear of adults;
- aggressive behavior and anger;
- having nightmares or being afraid of the dark;
- sudden unexplained sources of money
- fearful of undressing;
- alcohol or drug abuse (addiction);
- anxiety;
- social isolation and alienation;
- subordinating behavior;
- lack of trust toward adults, who are important for the child;
- regressive behavior, bedwetting;
- unsecured behavior, low self-esteem, low self-confidence;
- finding excuses for not going home or to a particular place;
- suicidal ideas and behavior;
- eating problems such as overeating, bulimia or anorexia;

Effects of child sexual abuse

The effects are short-term and long-term:

Possible short-term effects:

Problems in Sexual Adjustment:

- preoccupation with sexual matters;
- premature development of adolescent interests;
- despair regarding inability to control sexual urges;
- promiscuity;
- molestation of younger children;
- increased or public masturbation;
- sudden rush into heterosexual activities;
- venereal disease;
- pregnancy;
- prostitution.

Interpersonal Relationships:

- bewilderment concerning social relations;
- frightened by contacts with adults;
- running away from home;
- hostile interactions with older women;
- increased affection seeking from adults;
- homicidal ideas and fantasies.

Education Problems:

- learning difficulties;
- truancy;
- sudden disruptive behavior;
- depressed withdrawal from usual activities;
- collapse of self-esteem;
- peer relationship difficulties.

Other Psychological problems

- personal guilt or shame;
- 'infantile stage' prolonged or reverted to;
- tendency to withdraw from activities of normal childhood;
- over-eating;
- anxiety states and acute anxiety neuroses;
- behavior problems and delinquency;
- suicidal tendencies;
- nervous symptoms, fits and epileptic seizures;
- sleep problems including nightmare;
- impulsive self-damaging behavior;

- depression;
- anorexia;
- bulimia;
- drug/alcohol addiction.

Possible Long-term effects:

- sexual dysfunction including frigidity;
- promiscuity;
- impulses to brutally sexually assault a child;
- aversion to sexual activity;
- unsatisfactory sexual relationships;
- many unwanted pregnancies;
- prostitution;
- having incestuous relationships;
- sexual molestation of child;

Interpersonal Problems:

- conflict with or fear of husband or sex partner
- conflict with partners or in-law;
- social isolation and difficulty in establishing close human relationships;
- vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

Other Psychological Symptoms:

- low self-esteem and long lasting helplessness
- sleep problems
- over-eating
- self-harm
- chronic depression
- psychosis/schizophrenia
- suicidal ideation and attempts
- eating and body image disorders
- murder or interpersonal violence
- neurosis
- non-integrated identity

Organizations, working with victims of sexual abuse.

Some of the organizations, working with women and children, who are victims of abuse are:

- Foundation Association Animus, Sofia, phone: 02/ 981 76 86

- Foundation “Centre Nadia”, Sofia, phone: 02/ 981 93 00; 02/ 952 04 21

- “Puls” Foundation - Pernik, phone: 076/ 60 10 10

- Help-line - Pernik, phone: 076/ 60 33 60

- “Demetra” Association - Burgas, phone: 056/ 84 35 91

- “SOS Families in disgrace” Association - Varna, phone: 052/ 60 96 77

- “Diva” Foundation for care in the community, phone: 032/64 10 69

Foreign organizations:

- ECPAT – Italy, phone: (39 6) 693 80406, факс: (39 6) 693 80406, www.ecpat.it

- ISPCAN, USA, phone: +1 630 221 1313

- A.C.P.E., France, phone: 00 33 1 40 26 91 49, www.acpe-asso.com

If you are an organization, working with sexual abuse and traffic of children, as well as victims of sexual abuse, please write to us in order to include your organization in the News Bulletins!

News

In the first News Bulletin an article about the implementation of the project “To promote best practice in child abuse protection in North-East Bulgaria, financed by OAK – Switzerland was published. The education of the teachers and psychologists from the schools in Varna had successful end, the trained people received certificates.



At the moment is implemented the next step of the project – group sessions in abuse prevention are organized in the

schools in Varna, where work trained experts. The sessions and the developed themes were interesting both for the pedagogical teams from the schools and for the children.



There was a treat for the children, who took part in the sessions, provided by Gavroche. Through that treat we try to strengthen the contact with the children and to receive information back from the children.

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The parents also approve the inclusion of their children in the preventional work. Everyone agreed that it is necessary to work on the themes of the abuse and its prevention.



The schools in Varna, which the sessions are organized in, are Primary School „St. Ivan Rilski”, Primary School „Otets Paisii”, Secondary School „Elin Pelin”, Primary School „Prof. Marin Drinov”, Elementary School „Vasil Levski”, Secondary School „Liuben Karavelov”. In some of the schools the interest toward the sessions in abuse prevention was so big that second groups were formed.