

ARTICLES OF INTEREST FOR CORPORATE SERVICES' AFFILIATE NETWORK

VIOLENCE IN THE HOME

School Problems: There is a logical correlation between a child experiencing a violent home life and his or her behavior at school. The behaviors may include physical aggression in resolving conflicts with peers, academic underachievement, difficulties and frustration in concentrating, and truancy. The truancy can be intensified when running away from home appears to be less frightening than going home.

Guilt: As with the role reversal effect, the child does not feel worthy or adequate in the parent(s)' eyes and may even feel responsible for the violent outbursts. Older children may feel guilty if they weren't able to stop or prevent it from occurring.

Weak or Unhealthy Interpersonal Skills: It may be difficult for these victims to form healthy, intimate relationships as adults. They may have difficulties in communicating feelings and resolving conflicts, and have unrealistic expectations of other people. As a result of the victimization in the formative years, healthy development of trust, nurturing, autonomy, etc. may be underdeveloped.

Distorted Problem-Solving Skill Development: Children develop methods of dealing with every day problems in the formative years by observing the interaction and skills of parents or guardians. Since violence and abuse are learned behaviors, the child will most likely continue the cycle as an adult, lacking appropriate problem-solving skills.

Physical and/or Sexual Injury: The child may be directly abused either physically or sexually (or both) as a result of the parent's abusive behaviors. Certain types of injuries are common to physical abuse.

- **Bruises.** Bruising may indicate the use of corporal punishment. Suspect physical abuse if a child has bruising in unusual places. Bruises on buttocks, back, sides of the body, both sides of the face or head, or on the upper surface of the hands or feet are unlikely to have an accidental cause.
- **Burns.** About 10% of cases of physical abuse involve burns such as cigarette burns or scalding burns (immersion burns) as when a child's hands or feet, sometimes the entire body is placed in hot water.
- **Fractures.** Abuse fractures are caused by twisting or pulling an arm or leg, or shaking a child so hard that the arms or legs flail about, causing fracture on the end of the long bones. Punching or kicking a child may cause fractures of the ribs, scapula, or sternum.
- **Head injuries.** Most abuse deaths are caused by injuries to the brain resulting from shaking or hitting a child's head or face. Shaken baby syndrome (shaken baby–impact syndrome) is brain damage caused when a baby is shaken, slammed, or thrown against an object.
- **Abdominal injuries.** A severe blow to the abdomen with a fist or foot can cause damage to internal organs. A ruptured spleen or liver, a hole or cut (perforation) in the intestines, a large blood clot (hematoma), or a bowel obstruction can occur with physical abuse to the abdomen.

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