

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE STATISTICS The Magnitude of the Problem



FACT:

Child sexual abuse is far more prevalent than most people realize.

It is likely the most prevalent health problem children face with the most serious array of consequences.²

About one in 10 children will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday.*¹

About one in seven girls and one in 25 boys will be sexually abused before they turn 18.¹

This year, there will be about 400,000* babies born in the U.S. that will become victims of child sexual abuse UNLESS WE DO SOMETHING TO STOP IT.¹

*Includes contact abuse only.

FACT:

Identified incidents of child sexual abuse are declining, although there is no clear indication of a cause.

The number of identified incidents of child sexual abuse decreased at least 47% from 1993 to 2005-2006.^{3,4}

FACT:

Even with declining rates of reported sexual abuse, the public is not fully aware of the magnitude of the problem.

The primary reason is that only about 38% of child victims disclose the fact they have been sexually abused.^{5,6} Some never disclose.^{7,8}



There are also privacy issues surrounding cases of child sexual abuse that influence reported data.

For instance, public police reports do not name the victim, and most media concerns have a policy that precludes naming victims.



DARKNESS TO LIGHT

FACT:

Most people think of adult rape as a crime of great proportion and significance and are unaware that children are victimized at a much higher rate than adults.

Nearly 70% of all reported sexual assaults (including assaults on adults) occur to children aged 17 and under.^{9, 10}

Youths have higher rates of sexual assault victimization than do adults. In 2000, the rate for youths aged 12 to 17 was 2.3 times higher than for adults.¹¹



References

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