

CHAPTER 1

DEFINING THE PROBLEM –

CHILD ABUSE

&

Generational Child Abuse

Defining abuse as “maltreatment” does not convey the terror and pain of child abuse.

Child abuse is more accurately defined by the World Health Organization’s

“Extended exposure to violence and deprivation”

It is also the WHO’s definition of torture

CLARIFYING ACES 8 MINUTE VIDEO

POWERFUL ACES NEWS

Generational child abuse may be the most common problem America suffers from.

For the purposes of this book, child abuse is defined by “traumas committed upon children by their caregivers to such an extent that they are recognized by teachers, social workers, law enforcement and others reporting obvious signs of trauma/abuse that result in a report of child abuse by the County”.

Only a fraction of adverse childhood experiences are seen or reported.

Most abused children live a lifetime of toxic stress in silent torment.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) suffered in the birth home last a lifetime.

Many adults go to their grave never having talked with anyone about their childhood abuse and trauma.

About 450,000 children were being removed from their homes by Child Protective Services annually.

Rarely do American children become State Wards (foster children) unless they have suffered severe and repeated trauma over extended periods.

Nationally, most reports of child abuse are screened out or families are given services instead of investigating the abused child.

Data about how many families in child protection have been involved in the system over multiple generations has been underreported and unavailable. Generational child abuse may be the most unknown and misunderstood part of America's child abuse conundrum. If you are reading this book and can help our team make this information available, please do (send to [Hello@invisiblechildren.org](mailto>Hello@invisiblechildren.org) attn writing team).

This unknown crisis of broken families and traumatized children goes a long way in making America a leader among the industrialized nations in teen and pre-teen births and sexually transmitted diseases along with our high crime, incarceration and recidivism rates.

Counties operate child protective services independently and manages their own data. There is little demand for or incentive to report child abuse infor-

mation to the public. Simply reporting intake notes at Child Protective Services, would make available details of a prostituted nine-year-old, a badly beaten seven year old or the baby left in a crib unfed and unattended for long periods. This almost never happens.

KARA will argue that it is because the public is seldom aware of the frequency and severity of child abuse that these painful issues remain hidden from a public that might otherwise do more for children if they only knew.

Child abuse is misunderstood and under addressed because of this. When we don't see a problem we won't see a need for a solution.

Questions;

- Are there more crisis nurseries, prenatal and quality daycare, mental health resources and better-quality foster care and group homes when the public is made aware of what child abuse is and does to the children in their communities?

- Are community crime rates, graduation rates and school performance impacted when fewer children fail in school, become teen and preteen moms and juvenile felons (statistically high probabilities)?

- Is generational child abuse an American phenomenon making us different than most other industrialized nations that have managed to control the progression of ACES and generational child abuse?

- For a child, is the trauma of being raped, beaten or neglected the same as the trauma of watch-

ing mom or a sister/brother being beaten, raped or neglected?

- Where should parental rights end and a promise for safety from violence, rape and preventable illness begin?

Healthy children grow up as functioning members of a community. They go to school, find jobs, pay taxes, participate in the community and importantly, go on to have their own healthy, functioning families.

Abused and traumatized children too often become broken adults with mental health and behavior problems that doom them to a life of poor choices, dangerous lifestyles, chronic illness and early death.

These children hurt themselves and damage the people and communities in which they live.

In child protection cases of multiple children, the oldest child usually has suffered for four years - State Ward Child abuse cases rarely involve a singular event or problem and most often there are other children in the home suffering trauma.

Singular child abuse events are almost never reported or known outside the family and the system is so under-resourced that only the hardest cases make it into the system.

Unless a child dies or is so damaged that hospital personnel, law enforcement, teachers or other mandated reporters take notice and act, childhood traumas are invisible except to the child and family.

Even the concept of "mandated reporter" sets an expectation not always useful to the child. Many man-

dated reporters just “don’t” report. Reporting involves the reporter - and many don’t want to “get any of that on them” (words spoken to this writer/guardian ad Litem by mandated reporters on more than one occasion).

An abused child knows only the rules of life by lessons learned in the home.

They can only manage their own life with the coping skills learned in the home and in school.

Traumatized children so often struggle with mental health and behavior issues in school.

In 2020 55% of foster youth graduated compared to 87.3% of other students (+ 35% of them receive graduation waivers). Only a small percentage go to college.

80% of youth aging out of foster care lead dysfunctional lives.

At risk children go on to have at risk families. Their children grow up with the same violence, lack of parenting skills, drug and alcohol problems they themselves lived.

This Star Tribune article by Chris Serres is a painful example of how we treat other people’s children.

Twin girls beaten with bats, starved, raped and chained over 12-15 years on the 4200 block of 17th Av South in Minneapolis. Over 50 police calls to the home, developmentally disabled and pregnant in high school.

“The neighbors knew. The police knew. The county

knew. We all knew...But nothing was done.”

“How many times the county received reports of abuse and neglect remains unclear” (from the star tribune article).

These stories are common among people that work with and live with abused and neglected children.

4-year- old Eric Dean was tortured to death after 15 ignored reports of abuse by mandated reporters and how 6-year-old foster child Kendrea Johnson died by suicide and my 7-year-old CASA guardian ad litem case child was prostituted over 2 years and 49 police calls to her home where gun fire and prostitution were the reason for the police calls.

I'm just one of hundreds of volunteer MN CASA guardians and I know too many of these stories.

My first visit to a 4 year old CASA case girl was at the suicide ward of a hospital.

The following chapters will demonstrate the degree to which child abuse and trauma impacts every citizen, every institution, and every community.

Because this topic is uncomfortable, it's rarely a conversation outside of the institutions involved.

Because this topic is uncomfortable it is unpopular to advertisers making it a reality that only child death and the very worst stories get public attention in major media.

As you read this book, keep in mind that you can have a significant impact on children where you live by simply talk about what's in these chapters. You will find that most of the people you know are unaware of

what you know.

Compared to the child sex abuse scandal that has rocked the Catholic Church for decades and filled newspapers and other media with class action lawsuits and vivid stories, there is little reporting of the sex abuse children are suffering at the hands of their care givers.

Multi-million dollar fines the Church pays in Priest scandal lawsuits make the paper and get our attention. No lawyers, no fines no news for the millions of children suffering the same kind of abuse. Lawyers representing children in child abuse cases are paid by the county and not very much money. They never make the paper.

Consider that the Priest scandal represents the sex abuse of a tiny percentage of American children and that almost 40% of American children are reported to child protective services by their 18th birthday. This is the difference between a few hundred thousand children abused within the church and millions of children abused in the home. For every child suffering abuse at the hands of a Priest there are hundreds or possibly thousands of never to be known children sexually abused at the hands of their caregivers.

We are much more aware of the depth and scope of the Church's problem with abuse than we are with the abuse facing millions of children in homes in their own communities.

America's generational child abuse has grown silently and exponentially for decades.

Without help from the community it is almost impos-

sible for a young mother to parent her child any differently than she was parented. Parenting skills don't come from the stork.

SHORT STORIES (9 OF 1000's THAT MONTH)

(example of child protection intake case notes)

1. 1. Report of neglect, mental injury of older child by mom. In October mom attempted suicide by taking medication with her three children present. The older child called 911. Oldest child in day treatment and has various diagnosis. Oldest reported as a runaway in December. It was learned that child was beaten by his father the previous summer while he was residing there, a child protection report in ... was made. Child admitted to Child Psychiatric Unit due to making threats towards family. Child was told to get out of the home, then told to leave the shelter due to violence. Oldest child currently at ... Residential Treatment Center.

2. Failure to thrive. Mother had a family arrangement for her children to be placed with paternal grandmother and sister. The 2 younger siblings that were temporarily placed with the Aunt were reported as malnourished. Mother visited the home and found her children starved and malnourished. They were taken to hospital and diagnosed as Failure to Thrive. Mother suffers from multiple mental health issues and unable to cope with daily stresses. It was reported that the mother started having these issues once the father was incarcerated. No food in the house.

3. Father and girlfriend engaged in a

domestic dispute & rape which was witnessed by the child. Police were called to the residence and the father was arrested and charged. Child reports father's violent tendencies and is afraid of her environment. Child traumatized by the daily events that surround her, contemplates committing suicide.

4. 4. Mother deceased. Children residing with different relative and friends when domestic incident occurred between 15 yrs. old and father. Child was assaulted by father, hit 25 times or more with a hard object. Currently, 15 yr. old is 5 months pregnant. The father is facing criminal charges.

5. Maternal Grandmother had sole/legal custody and passed away, may 2018. No legal guardian to report. 7 year old Child suffers from depression. Currently in treatment at Medical Pediatric unit due to suicide ideations.

6. Seven Children. Dad is smoking meth in a bedroom of the house while the children are in the living room. Dad is using and selling meth and he is in charge of the 3 youngest children while mom is at work. Home was raided and dad was arrested. Mom suspected he was using but she works and needed him to watch the kids. Two young children with unusual cuts and bruises.

7. Eight year old female child has major depression disorder and history of suicidal attempts. Mom is failing to provide care for her, refusing to pick her up from the hospital. Mom and child fight and then mom tells the child to leave the house. Mom stated at the hold hearing that she is done with this

child and she wanted to terminate her rights.

8. Mom bouncing between Iowa and Montana stating that she was unable to find housing and has been staying with friends and relatives. Children have not been in school at ALL for two years. Mom admits to using THC. Children have educational needs/ IEP and ADHD not being dealt with. Mom left the children with a caretaker she admits was not trustworthy. Her youngest was unsupervised and playing in the street when he was hit by a car and received broken bones and serious concussion. Mom was not cooperating with the hospital and refused to give him medication. The child got an infection and he had to go back to hospital. Hospital refused to release him to mom when she stated she was going to take him to another state. Child is medically fragile.

9. Egregious harm petition. Baby's arm broken in 5 places and aged at different times with no explanation from parents. Investigation is ongoing with charges pending.

California's State Surgeon General Nadine Burke Harris and Harvard's T.H. Chan

Are calling ACES a public health crisis.

Abused children have no voice in their homes, courts, media or the legislature.

If it's not spoken

it's not heard

If it's not heard

It's not an issue.

If it's not an issue

there's no problem.

If there's no problem

There is no need for a solution

Children have the civil rights of pets and property

America is the only nation in the world to not ratify

the United Nations Rights of the Child Treaty of the
1980's