

"No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

Article 5, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948

Abuse

I identify seven types of abuse:

1. *Physical abuse*, including assault and any deliberate act resulting in physical injuries, including beatings in the guise of corporal punishment but which are delivered with fists or to the child's head. The work of Lewis and Pincus in the States is relevant here - in many violent criminals, especially serial killers, they've found evidence of brain damage during childhood from parental beatings and accidents which have resulted in a smaller than normal cortex, with consequent lack of ability to control violent tendencies.

2. *Sexual abuse*, including incest, rape, buggery or any paedophile activity for the gratification of the abuser. The abuser usually has a sexually dysfunctional or unsatisfying relationship with their partner; sexual relations may be violent or inadequate or non-existent, and the child becomes a convenient substitute.

3. *Tactile abuse*, where there is little or no physical contact between parent(s) and the young child, and any contact tends to be violent, punitive, unjust and inappropriate. Physical contact seems to be especially important in the first five or six years. Some children enjoy a cuddle into their teens. Sadly, with abuse coming into the open, many parents (especially fathers) now fear that physical contact with children may be regarded and misconstrued as abuse (Note: with malicious accusation, it is invariably the accuser who is guilty of the abuse - see [projection](#) on the serial bully page). For further information on the importance of touch, see the work of the [Touch Research Institute](#).

4. *Existence abuse* where the existence and rights of the child are ignored

- neglect of needs:
 - physical (food, clothing, shelter)
 - intellectual (education)
 - psychological (self-development, self-confidence, self-esteem, maturity)
 - behavioural (company, friendship, interpersonal and communication skills, relationships)
- ignoring the child's existence
- rejection as an only child
- ignoring one child and loving all others (rejection)
- ignoring the child as a separate human being and using the child as an extension of one's own existence (as in [MSBP](#), Munchausen Syndrome By Proxy - almost

killing the child then rescuing them in a dramatic attention-seeking manner by arriving at hospital casualty at the last minute, then revelling in the adulation of the concerned mother who nearly lost her child)

- abandonment

5. *Religious abuse or cult abuse*

- The child is forced to accept the narrow, exclusive religious views of the parent or guardian to the exclusion of any other belief or possibility of any belief
- Any behaviour by the child not in line with the parents' rigid religious zeal is met with punishment and abuse
- The child is starved of development in interpersonal skills and relationships in the name of religion
- The child is subjected to strange, unnatural and often perverse beliefs on sexual matters and sexual development in line with the religious belief
- The child is discouraged or prevented from associating with any person not sharing the religious belief of the parent or guardian

6. *Emotional abuse*, including

- refusal or unwillingness or inability to express love
- deliberate withholding of love
- conditional love (eg "I don't love you when you behave like that")
- loving one child to the exclusion of all others
- cocooning and smothering, denying the child the opportunity to develop as a separate individual
- being forced into any conflict between parents
- being used as a pawn by warring parents
- being forced into a caring or caretaker role at an inappropriate age
- witnessing alcohol or substance abuse, especially on a regular basis, perhaps being forced to participate
- witnessing violence between parents or adults

7. *Psychological abuse*, including

- constant criticism of a trivial and unjustified nature
- unjustified blame, often for things which have no connection with the child

(scapegoating)

- refusal to value
- refusal to acknowledge the child and their achievements
- refusal to praise
- inconsistency in judgement
- unclear, shifting and inconsistent boundaries, sometimes no boundaries, at other times very tight boundaries
- refusal to make eye contact with the child over a long period
- refusal of parents to agree with or support each other when dealing with children
- unpredictable behaviour on the part of the parents