

Mental illness as a consequence of sexual abuse

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



Mental illness takes effect on many for numerous reasons, one being sexual abuse. So, what would happen if a young girl were to be sexually abused? Would she not suffer any repercussions of her traumatic incident? Yes, of course. Women survivors of childhood sexual abuse, miss out on the advantages of a successful child development. Such as, experiencing a traumatic sexual experience that sends toxic chemicals throughout their brains and throughout their childhood and into their adult life's causing prolonged symptoms of distress. Which brings me to my resolution which is, girls who experience violence, childhood abuse, or trauma; are likely to develop lifetime psychopathology disorders.

Furthermore, survivors of childhood sexual abuse are speaking out more bringing awareness to this upcoming epidemic. The American College of Obstetricians States; Long-term effects of childhood sexual abuse are varied, complex, and often devastating. Many obstetrician-gynecologists knowingly or unknowingly provide care to abuse survivors and should screen all women for a history of such abuse. Depression, anxiety, and anger are the most commonly reported emotional responses to childhood sexual abuse. (2011) This awareness has caused many Psychologists to further do research broadcasting information that there is an, in fact, a link between mental illness in children who have survived a traumatic sexual experience. As an illustration, the authors from the American Psychology Association wrote the article Examining the Link Between Traumatic Events and Delinquency Among Juvenile Delinquent Girls: A Longitudinal Study. Which further explains, " Although most children who have experienced traumatic events exhibit resiliency and do not develop significant behavior problems, many

become vulnerable to serious developmental interruptions and negative long-term consequences including substance abuse, risky sexual behavior, poor academic performance, mental health problems, and delinquent behavior." (Marsiglio, C. M., Chronister, M. K., Gibson, B., Leve, L. D. 2014)

This sample study included 166 girls in the juvenile system, the researchers saw the same violent and abnormal symptoms in each girl that had been sexually victimized. There have been additional studies by psychologists who have found a common link between childhood sexual abuse and mental disorder known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder(PTSD), which is also a common disorder in Army Veterans. Marvasti, Jams hid writes, " The impact of child sexual abuse has been studied and found to be harmful to some child and adolescent victims. In addition, many long-term negative sequelae of sexual abuse have been diagnosed in a number of adult survivors." (2004)

Likewise, PTSD, it is also have been proven that survivors of childhood sexual abuse often suffer from Major Depressive Disorders, Detachment Disorders, Eating Disorders, Anxiety Disorders, Compulsive Disorders, Reckless/Negligent Behaviors, Personality Disorders and Self-harm behaviors. When these girls often grow older they become more venerable to get involve with a domestic violent partner. As stated by The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; " Adult survivors of sexual abuse may be less skilled at self-protection. They are more apt to accept being victimized by others...This tendency to be victimized repeatedly may be the result of a general vulnerability in dangerous situations and exploitation by untrustworthy people." (2011) This research provided the details, that because of the exposure to a traumatic incident; the victim may still find

herself in re-occurring traumatic events. Consistent with previous findings, the present results indicate that the prevalence of CSA is high among individuals seeking inpatient treatment for AN. A history of CSA was associated with greater psychiatric disturbance overall and a higher rate of dropout for patients of the binge-purge subtype. (American Medical Association. (2016)

Nevertheless, girls who experience sexual abuse at a young age not only suffer from psychological disturbances but also exhibit unhealthy behaviors and make irrational decisions. If certain parts of that brain are damaged or if a child does not successfully develop his/her brain; they are at risk for diagnosis of a mental illness. the Hippocampus cannot function normally when under high levels of stress. When in its vulnerable state the hormones in the hippocampus suppresses itself and loses its ability to function. “ Now, in the largest study yet to use brain scans to show the effects of child abuse, researchers have found specific changes in key regions in and around the hippocampus in the brains of young adults who were maltreated or neglected in childhood. These changes may leave victims more vulnerable to depression, addiction and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the study suggests.”(Demarest Tingus, K., Heger, A. H., Foy, D. W., & Leskin, G. A. (1996) A successful child development plays a crucial identity in that infants personality, likewise a toxic, hostile environment or a loving may alter whether or not that child develops a mental disorder. The chemicals inside the brain, specifically the neurotransmitters, such as; serotonin, epinephrine, and dopamine all help generate the good moods and our success is driven motivations. To further illustrate, the mind of an abused child or survivor is

<https://assignbuster.com/mental-illness-as-a-consequence-of-sexual-abuse/>

known to make less of these chemicals causing depression or impulsive aggression later in life. On the Contrary, many may argue that there are many possible factors that may cause a child to develop psychiatric illnesses. Predominantly, yes; but because of recent studies, there has been ethical evidence that further concludes the relevance between sexual abuse and mental illness.

In conclusion, it is plain to the relevance between sexually abused children and mental illness. As covered, some children do show resilience to trauma while other girls become mentally paralyzed from the incident. Causing life-long distress or a lifetime full of therapy. Trauma affects the brain very carefully, almost deflecting it from normal development. It is easy to compare the behaviors of a sexually abused girl to the behaviors of a girl with a normal history and be able to compare and contrast the differences.