

Child abuse and maltreatment

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Child Abuse and Maltreatment in Abuse Child abuse and maltreatment in toddlers Child abuse is not all about broken bones and bruises. Physical abuse is maybe the most visible in all age groups but there are other types of abuse that toddlers are exposed to; ignoring their needs, making them feel unwanted and worthless, and putting them in dangerous and unsupervised situations is child abuse (Cruise & Gorton, 2001). Emotional abuse, neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and family violence are types of child abuses that toddlers undergo. Emotional abuse is when the parents rear the child with the aim of fulfilling their goals rather than those of the children. Shouting at a child may cause emotional distress.

Abuse of toddlers has greater impacts more than one can see. Neglect and other forms of abuse have both long term and short term consequences including developmental delays, physical injuries, emotional trauma, and aggressive behaviour. As a nurse it is important to recognize the tell tale signs of abuse in toddlers since the toddlers can not express themselves. These include shaken baby syndrome, evidence of poor hygiene, sleep disturbances for the young one, unaccounted for bruises and physical injuries, a child being abandoned or left unsupervised, aggressive behaviour towards other children.

While neglect and abuse has been documented, some cultural practices can always be misidentified as abuse. For example, disciplinary practices in various communities; physical punishment is accepted in the low socio economic classes. This means that such cultural differences in rearing children place parents at greater risks of being reported. In Florida over 40 professionals have been mandated to report child abuse cases one of them

being the nurses (Cruise & Gorton, 2001). If nurses suspect any child abuse, they can report through fax or phone. The phone number is toll free and open all the time. The fax number is also open for twenty four hours a day. The nurses are required to give the reactions of the child ad observed.

References

Cruise, T., & Gorton, C. (2001). *Child Abuse and Neglect: The Schools Response*. New York: Guilford Press.