

Family violence in new zealand

Sociology, Violence



Sally washed the dishes and began to dry them. All of a sudden, she heard the door slam. 'Girl! Where's my food?' the voice yelled. Sally began shaking and hunting frantically for the dish. Her seven year old fingers dropped the plate and it shattered on the floor. Her father stomped into the kitchen and began to threaten to beat her. Think this story is horrifying and unrealistic? Think again. Scenarios like this happen to thousands of children every day. Tens of thousands of children each year are traumatized by physical, sexual, and emotional abusers or by caregivers who neglect them, making child abuse as common as it is shocking.

Most of us can't imagine what would make an adult use violence against a child, and the worse the behaviour is, the more unimaginable it seems. But the incidence of parents and other caregivers consciously, even wilfully, committing acts that harm the very children they're supposed to be nurturing is a sad fact of human society that cuts across all lines of ethnicity and class. Whether the abuse is from the perpetrator's mental illness, substance abuse, or inability to cope, the psychological result for each abused child is often the same: deep emotional scars and a feeling of worthlessness.

Statistics show that family violence in New Zealand has increased by 20%. Child, Youth and Family had 66, 210 notifications of suspected child abuse involving 47, 221 children were received by Child, Youth and Family in 2005 and 2006. Now it has risen to over 130, 000 notifications. Woman's Refuge have been helping between 450-600 families per month and on average 14 woman, 6 men and 10 children are killed each year by a member of their

family. Police figures report 9, 630 male assaults and female assaults increased nationally by 40% in years up to 2008.

Police attended 86, 545 Family Violence callouts; there were roughly 200 Family Violence incidents per day one every 7 minutes. Police estimate that on average 18% of Family Violence incidents go unreported and at least 74, 785 children and young people present at Family Violence incidents, 84% of those arrested are men and 16% are women. There were 3, 105 temporary protection orders and 2, 738 final protection orders involving approximately 10, 000 children that were made by the Family Court in the year to 30 June 2006. Barnados, Personal communications, August 2012) For children 26 child victims were murdered by men and 15 child victims were murdered by women. Men are responsible for 2/3rds of the deaths of children aged 0 - 14 years and children under one years of age are at a greater risk of being killed Mothers and fathers are equally represented as perpetrators in this age group (The First Report July 2006.) These statistics on abuse is a serious problem for such a small country. It is horrific to see how many children get abused everyday around our communities, cities and between the North and South Island.

Child abuse is becoming a serious problem in New Zealand and is damaging our child's emotional, physical and cognitive development, which can lead to effects later on in life. There should be more advertising on child abuse and more people should speak up to get the help they are needed. Children are our future so we should be protecting them not hurting them. The role of the adult is to protect their children from any harm or dangerous situations and have a safe positive environment for the child to be in.

The adult's role is to care for the child and ensure that their well-being is being met and that they are nurtured. Children at a young age are dependent on adults and need the guidance and support which some children are sadly not getting. The adult needs to be a positive role model in the child's life and communicate with the child in a positive way. The role of the Early childhood educator is to care for and educate the children in their setting. It is your responsibility to keep these children safe from any harm or possible danger.

Early childhood centres should provide a positive learning environment where the child is encouraged, praised and acknowledged. Educators should support families and help when needed. It is our goal to make a difference in a child's life and it should be a positive one. This essay will outline who is abused, the children in our society that are particularly vulnerable to abuse and will state the five main types of abuse that are addressed in New Zealand. It will discuss the short term and long term effects of physical, emotional, sexual abuse, neglect and family violence for both children and families.

It will discuss the positive and negative effects on a community of a suspected child abuse case and discuss why it is important for children to know how to protect themselves through three strategies. This essay will explain what early childhood teachers should do to protect themselves from allegations when working in an early childhood setting and give two examples of two voluntary services in New Zealand which support children who have been abused and support the children and their families these services are Otautahi Refuge and Barnyards.

The final part of this essay will evaluate the role of both voluntary and private services in supporting children and their families under pressure these services are Child, Youth and Family and Cholmdeley Children's Home it will discuss the usefulness and limitations of each service then finally conclude the key aspects. There are four main types of abuse around the world these are emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. There is also a fifth type of abuse in New Zealand which is family violence. (Child, Youth and Family, 2011). Every child can be exposed to violence and many children can be vulnerable to abuse. Children in our society that is living with the following factors can be more vulnerable to abuse. A child with a young mother that has a low self-esteem that may have little support and is unable to cope with stress. A parent that has a psychiatric history or mental illness. A child who is living with an unrelated adult, a child that lives in an environment with family violence or the parent or family member has a history of abuse.

Other factors can include Excessive use of alcohol, drug taking, poverty, lack of essential resources, the parent has dissatisfaction with the child and is unwanted, social isolation where there is no family support and minimal antenatal care. (Simcock, 2011). Infants and children with disabilities are particularly vulnerable and are at a higher risk of being abused. Babies and under two's are the most vulnerable of all children, because they are fully dependent on adults to care for them.

It is also easier for parents to become isolated at this time because the child may not be in preschool and will not have much contact with the outside world. This can make it harder for professionals or others to identify when things

aren't quite right. (Child, Youth Family, 2011). Some offenders abuse children because they are attracted to their dependency; this combined with society's attitude towards disabled people can increase the risk of disabled children and those that have learning difficulties being abused.

Children with disabilities are less likely to receive information on abuse and might not understand the inappropriateness of abuse and the difference between good and bad touching. Children with disabilities may receive less affection from family and friends who can make them be more accepting to sexual attention. Children with disabilities are more vulnerable because they could be less likely to tell someone what has happened because of communication disabilities as well as they might not be believed. (Beaver, et al. 2008). There are short term and long term effects that each type of abuse can have on children and families. " Verbal and psychological wounds can leave a child forever changed". (Teach through love, 2012). The effects of emotional abuse are often silent and are often overlooked, unnoticed or confused with other causes. Emotional child abuse, attacks a child's self-concept, the child comes to see him or herself as unworthy of love and affection. The long term effects of child abuse may not be shown until the child is older.

Less severe forms of early emotional deprivation still can produce drastic effects of emotional abuse such as babies who will grow into anxious and insecure children who are slow to develop and who may fail to develop a strong sense of self-esteem. ([chrome://newtabhttp//www. teach-through-love. com/effects-of-emotional-abuse. html](chrome://newtabhttp//www.teach-through-love.com/effects-of-emotional-abuse.html)). The long term effect on neglect from poor health show that adults who experienced abuse or neglect during

childhood are more likely to suffer from physical ailments such as allergies, arthritis, asthma, bronchitis, high blood pressure, and ulcers (Springer, Sheridan, Kuo, & Carnes, 2007).

Sexual abuse effects on children and youth can be evident in emotional, physical and behavioural ways. These effects can be just as devastating whether there was only one occurrence or there were repeated occurrences. Sexual abuse cannot be compared, because each abuse experience is unique. When a child is sexually abused she/he learns that adults cannot be trusted for care and protection their well-being is disregarded, and there is a lack of support and protection.

Short term effects could include some form of bruising on the child, long term effects can include depression, extreme dependency, inability to judge trustworthiness in others, mistrust, anger and hostility. Children's bodies can often respond to the sexual abuse, bringing on shame and guilt. ([chrome://newtabhttp//www. child-abuse-effects. com/sexual-abuse-effects. html](http://www.child-abuse-effects.com/sexual-abuse-effects.html)). Physical abuse is a behaviour which results in physical harm to a child. Short term effects of physical abuse may include unexplained bruises, welts, cuts and abrasions these can be found in unusual places and should be looked out for in case they are a regular occurrence.

Short term effects also include burn marks and unexplained fractures or dislocations which can be unusual for a child at a young age. The child may not be able to trust and be fearful of physical contact. (Child, Youth and Family, 2011). Family violence is like a war zone in the family household. It is where children live in an environment characterised by fear, frustration, anger, cruelty and violence. Children that are exposed to family violence can <https://assignbuster.com/family-violence-in-new-zealand/>

have short term effects this could be when the child develops severe behavioural problems, become violent as adolescents and for long term effects they could continue the cycle of violence. [chrome://newtabhttp//www.jigsaw.org.nz/Site/Help/Hot_Topics/family_violence.aspx](http://www.jigsaw.org.nz/Site/Help/Hot_Topics/family_violence.aspx)). Family violence can cause the child to have a low self-esteem, poor academic results when older, and can have a fear of developing close relationships. ([chrome://newtabhttp//www.jigsaw.org.nz/Site/Help/Hot_Topics/family_violence.aspx](http://www.jigsaw.org.nz/Site/Help/Hot_Topics/family_violence.aspx)). The long terms effects that abuse can have on the family could be that the abuser might not know they are constantly putting the child down and neglecting them, the adult may not see any harm in it.

The child might show signs when they are older that they have been emotionally abused and their parents may question why they are acting or have feelings that way. The victim (child) may have no trust in adults and might not be able to form close relationships. The effects of physical and sexual abuse on the family will be if someone notices the child being abused they could report it to the agency for example CYFS (Child, Youth and Family) and the abuser could be charged against and put into jail depending on the seriousness of the abuse.

The family will get a name for themselves and the family will be torn apart. (Child, Youth and Family, 2011). Child abuse can affect anyone, even children in your own community. The effects on a suspected child abuse case in the community can have both negative and positive effects. The positive effects are that the community will be aware of what is going on around them and can look out for families that may be vulnerable to abuse “ The

more people there are looking out for children, the safer they'll be" (Child, Youth and Family, pg. 25).

The community watch will intervene if needed but will keep a look out to see if there is any unexpected behaviour that should not be occurring. Helpful ways that the community can get involved will be listening and supporting the family, putting them in touch with people that can help. The community could send out brochures or have community group meetings that discuss abuse, what to look out for and if needed where to get help and support from. This will allow the family to feel a sense of support from the community and get the help that is needed.

The negatives about the community suspecting could be that the family may hear gossip that is going around and feel like they are being named and discriminated against. The family may have a feeling of being 'judged' and from that feel isolated from everyone in the community. Children of a young age are often unaware or naive of potential danger and therefore vulnerable to abuse or bullying. Because of this it is important that children know how to protect themselves from abuse, bullying and to be aware when they could be in possible danger.

The best way to protect children is to empower them to protect themselves, by doing this they need to feel good about them and then will have a high level of confidence, self-esteem and be assertive therefore making them less vulnerable to abuse and bullying. The childcare practitioner has a professional duty and responsibility to protect the welfare of the children in their care. Children should feel that they are able to come to the childcare

practitioner for help and protection, but will only be able to do this once a trusting relationship has been built up between them.

The childcare practitioner also has a responsibility to involve the parents in helping children to protect themselves, as the message given to the children needs to be consistent. (Beaver, et al. , 2008). One way that I would teach a child to protect themselves would be through a learning experience that involves how to take care of the babies in the centre. I will demonstrate and role model how to care for the babies by being gentle, bathing them appropriately being calm and feeding them the right foods.

I will show them how to correctly hold a baby and have conversations on why you should never drop or shake a baby. From this experience children will develop awareness of what is appropriate and what is inappropriate and if you have a strong relationship with the child they may approach you and say that it's not the way their younger siblings are being treated at home, this will then lead to questioning of abuse. Hide and seek is not only just a game but it can be used to prevent children from family violence, physical and sexual abuse.

As a practitioner you can talk to the children about being in an uncomfortable situation for example if there is a lot of yelling or someone being hit in the household or if you ever feel unsafe to run and hide under their bed or lock themselves in the bathroom if there is a lock on the door and not to come out until it is safe. This is a hard strategy to tell children because you do not want to scare or upset the children so you have to say it in a relaxed way. This can help prevent the child from the abuser or witnessing any forms of abuse.

Another strategy that I can teach would be teaching the children about their body parts and what is appropriate to touch and what is inappropriate to touch. This is a hard subject to address because you could explain to the children that no one other than someone they trust can touch their ‘ private’ areas for example when nappy changing and washing but other than that they should not touch them. “ Your body is your own”. (Finkelhor, D. pg. 59, 2007). Teaching children that their body is their own and that no one can touch it without permission.

Establishing open and direct communication at a very early age about sexuality and “ private body parts”, using the correct names for genitals and other parts of the body, will help children understand what is and what is not allowed for adults in contact with them. This will also help them recognise embarrassing or abusive behaviour. To teach this to children I could use a board story of the body and get the children to identify each part and whether it is okay for other children and adults they don’t trust to touch them there or not, this could allow conversations to start and the children may ask questions. (Finkelhor, D. 2007). Safe and unsafe touching. Teach children the difference between safe/appropriate and unsafe/inappropriate touching. Tell children it is not okay if someone looks at or touches their private parts or asks them to look at or touch someone’s private parts, and that inappropriate touches are wrong and against the law. If they are not sure whether someone else’s behaviour towards them is acceptable, make sure they know to ask a trusted adult for help. (Finkelhor, D. 2007).

Early childhood teachers need to protect themselves when working in an early childhood setting to protect ourselves from allegations of child abuse.

Centres should have a set of policies and procedures set in place so that parents, caregivers and whanau can view these at any time. If a child has an accidental injury it must be recorded in a book stating what happened, how you fixed it and ensure that it is signed by a witness. If a child makes false allegations against you, record the dates and time it was said and get another adult to witness if it is possible.

If a child touches a teacher inappropriately, record what happened and let another adult know what happened. When you go on school trips ensure that you have enough staff for ratios. As a teacher you need to make sure you don't place yourself in a position where you are spending a huge amount of time alone with one child this could lead to assumptions. (Beaver, et al. , 2008). If you are an early childhood teacher in a home based setting, never take a child into your bedroom or take children in the car by yourself unless you have that trust with the parent/caregiver.

When changing a child's nappy, clothing and bathing ensure that there is someone with you, most centres have see-through windows in there toileting area. When it comes toileting never wipe a child's bottom when they are capable of doing it for themselves, avoid going on your own to the toilet with children. Keep in mind of how and where you touch a child. If a child is really young or disabled consider a cushion for your lap when they sit on your knee. If a child hugs you or kisses you be careful if it extends.

If you are going out of the room with a child for example to the store room to help get paint make sure you tell another teacher or adult where you're going and make sure you are not out there for a long period of time. Early childhood teachers need to ensure that they follow these procedures in order

to protect themselves. (Beaver, et al. , 2008). Otautahi woman's refuge is a community based, voluntary organisation that have been operating since 1989 with the purpose of supporting whanau Maori to escape family violence and move towards wellbeing.

Otautahi empower and support whanau Maori and communities who choose a free life from violence and abuse in all forms. Otautahi have a safe house which is primarily for Female Maori and tamariki who are involved or in immediate family violence situations this allows the family to be safe from harm, confidential and supervised at all times, Otautahi also have outreach support to both perpetrator and victim. They provide a 24hour seven days a week support