

Crimes adulthood.  
crimes against  
children is deserving  
of

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



Crimes against children are diverse in their approach, method, and long-term implications.

Child abuse is dynamic, where the abuse maybe physical, emotional, or various forms that disturb the child in a complex way. The literature demonstrates the implications of child abuse and how those impacted are going to be disturbed moving forward in their lives, transitioning from childhood to adolescence and in to adulthood. Crimes against children is deserving of heightened attention, where the literature suggests outcomes for those who are not treated in their youth. Collaboration and awareness on this issue demonstrate advocacy, where the children will eventually become adults. Untreated, an adult who was abused as a child will face an uphill battle in life, where the consequences for society are evident as supported by the literature.

**Crimes Against Children: Long-Term Implications of Abuse**  
The issue of crimes that are committed against children is one of the most difficult that criminal justice professionals and others that are involved in the investigative process can encounter.

Not only is there the obvious issue of child welfare, but there is also a range of different factors that must be given due consideration when an investigation into crimes against children is taking place. The legislation that is in place which regulates the investigative process is intended not only for the purpose of protecting children from being victimized by criminal offenders, but also to protect the privacy, safety, and health of these children. The investigative process that is associated with the examination of crimes against children is one that is often exceedingly difficult. One of the

most difficult factors involves the fact that the cooperation of the children who have been victimized is essential to the investigation. However, the actual involvement of the child victims in the investigative process raises many difficult questions of its own. Often the contextual circumstances in which victimization takes place is essential to the decision that is made concerning what kind of investigative methodology is to be utilized. Crimes

**Against Children** The crimes that are committed against children vary in nature. Among the most common are crimes involving abuse of a physical nature, or mere neglect.

Often, cases of these kinds are first noticed by various caregivers in a child's life, whether other relatives, neighbors, teachers, coaches, and social workers. Most often the perpetrator of routine acts of abuse or neglect will be the child's parent or stepparent. Public agencies such as the local Child Protective Services will be largely responsible for the initial phase of an investigation of cases of these kinds. However, there are also other crimes that are committed against children that are of an even more serious nature.

Among these are child abduction, child murder, child rape, and child sexual molestation. Crimes of these kinds may be perpetrated by strangers, or they may be perpetrated by individuals with whom the child victim was previously acquainted. **Collaboration Efforts** Child protective services (CPS) are required to work alongside law enforcement officials, in most states. Newman, Dannenfelser & Pendleton (2005) argue that the majority of states require CPS and law enforcement investigators to work together "when investigating criminal cases of child abuse" (p. 165). Thus,

organizations throughout the United States such as Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) have been developed in order to bring on a collective approach. The connection between law enforcement, as a wide body, and the specific organizations that are dedicated to minimizing abuse toward children is necessary in order to deliver a comprehensive approach (Newman, Dannenfelser & Pendleton, 2005). Whereas investigation may be the role of law enforcement, an issue of this magnitude demands multiple individuals and organizations working toward a solution, both for the individual cases as well as the wider scope of abuse in the United States.

There are multiple reasons that these collaborative centers are utilized. Legal or administrative issues, mandate and protocol, environmental support for children (aligned with child-driven goals), medical treatment and centers for expertise are some of the reasons that these collaborative centers have become so popular (Newman, Dannenfelser & Pendleton, 2005). The centers have the potential to become even more progressive. However, it must be recognized that these centers are working alongside law enforcement to bring a new approach to child abuse, one that does not only investigate the crime but identify solutions for these children moving forward. Barriers

With a collaborative response to such a sensitive issue comes barriers to progress. Newman & Dannenfelser (2005) argue that there is often confusion as to who should have the decision-making power when both law enforcement and child advocacy agencies are involved. Whereas law enforcement is dynamic in its goals, they may still not align with what a child advocacy organization is looking to accomplish. While collaboration is

progressive in this environment, there is, at times, a lack of clarity as to which organization is making the decision and delivering the highest level of value for the children, who must remain the focus (Newman & Dannenfelser, 2005).

Heightened Abuse: Pedophiles and Child Molesters      Pedophiles and child molesters share common characteristics. Murray (2000) finds that most child abusers are males, where they can be heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual. The reason they choose children as their victims is that the children are often vulnerable, available, and physically weaker (Murray, 2000). Thus, one is taking advantage of a situation, where the sexual abuse perpetrated may be a one-time incident that consists only of fondling, but can still have catastrophic implications for a child who is still developing (Murray, 2000). When recognizing child abuse in this regard, investigation is critical and demands diligence.

Law enforcement agencies working with child advocates becomes crucial in determining whether appropriate action will be taken, and whether the proper treatment will be incorporated so this burden is not catastrophic to the development of the child moving forward, which is possible in cases of abuse (Murray, 2000). Initiatives      Parents have a crucial role in keeping their children safe. Peachman (2017) finds that there are steps parents can take in order to advocate for child safety.

Even so, there are times where the parent (or child) cannot be blamed, as those looking to abuse children, such as the aforementioned molesters and

pedophiles, often use tactics that go against the safeguards implemented by parents, law enforcement officials, teachers, and the children themselves (Peachman, 2017). Still, the parents have a duty to inform their children and recognize awareness strategies that will enhance safety levels moving forward, and protect the children when possible (Peachman, 2017). The victimology of a child who has faced abuse, as will be discussed further, generally has a connection with the parents or the family environment (Peachman, 2017). Thus, there is urgency in a household where abuse is taking place, even if the immediate abuse is not toward the child.

**Victimology** Children are distinct in their victimology. The Editorial Board (2018) states, "If the #MeToo movement of the last few months has taught us anything, it's that it is extremely painful and risky for victims of sexual harassment...to speak out against their abusers" (para 1). Thus, there is a need for heightened advocacy in terms of communication. Enhancing the victimology of children who have been abused is crucial. Otherwise, they may not speak out, and will remain burdened by the abuse without proper treatment methods moving forward. Victims are diverse in this environment, and abuse does not discriminate.

While there are demographics that are more prone to abuse, the victimology for children suggests problematic household environments that will disturb the long-term ability of the individual to develop. Moving Forward Collaboration between law enforcement and child protection agencies becomes necessary. While there are barriers that emerge when these organizations align with one another, the benefits overwhelm the risk.

Therefore, child agencies are going to have a major role moving forward, where law enforcement remains in its investigative role to ensure that those responsible for the abuse are given the proper consequences. Child abuse in its many forms becomes a necessary focus of law enforcement, but the public also has a responsibility to advocate for children and their distinct victimology.