

Impact of sexual abuse: case study of jaycee dugard



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Jaycee Dugard was the victim of kidnapping, false imprisonment, and rape between 1991 to 2009. The book by Jaycee Dugard is written in the first-person perspective. The story told by Jaycee is her personal experience to being kidnapped and imprisonment. She was eleven-year-old when she was kidnapped and released at the age of twenty-nine years old. Throughout the book she tells her experiences while being held captive by the Garrido's. Jaycee's family consisted of her mother Terry, her step-father Carl, and her baby sister Shayna. After being taken her "family" consisted of Philip and Nancy Garrido and later her two daughters. Jaycee's family was an average middle-class family who had just moved to South Lake Tahoe, California. The story begins with eleven-year-old Jaycee being kidnapped on her way to school. Some of the big milestones discussed in the book are Jaycee's first couple of weeks in captivity, giving birth to her two daughters at the ages of fourteen and seventeen, and the process of being free from the Garrido's at the age of twenty-nine.

Jaycee suffered from physical, sexual, and psychological abuse while in the hands of Phillip and Nancy Garrido. According to the Child Welfare Information Gateway (2013), physical abuse is described as the non-accidental physical injury because of punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, stabbing, choking, hitting, burning, or otherwise harming a child, that is inflicted by a parent, caregiver, or other person who has responsibility for the child. "I am very hungry today. I can't remember the last time I ate (Dugard, 2011, pg. 29)." There were many days where Jaycee would not eat and be starving. Phillip also kept her in handcuffs until she learned that this was her new life. Not only is having sex with her considered

sexual abuse but it is also physical abuse because of the result of a pregnancy. She had to go through the symptoms of pregnancy and the change in her body. The Garrido's made Jaycee have her babies at home without the proper medical services.

The worst abuse that Jaycee Dugard faced was psychological. Psychological abuse is described as a pattern of behavior that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of self-worth (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2013). Throughout the book Jaycee keeps a log of her mental state and her feelings. Being taken from her family at a young age and becoming a mother at fourteen is traumatizing. Jaycee was only fourteen when she gave birth to her first daughter and was not mentally prepared to have or take care of a child. " I'm watching many baby shows to prepare myself to take care of a baby...I'm so scared (Dugard, 2011, pg. 107-108)." Jaycee had to use television shows to try and prepare herself for the upcoming responsibilities. The Garrido's did not provide Jaycee with the proper vitamins or medical services throughout her pregnancy. As time went on Jaycee started to feel worthless and think negatively of herself. " Please, please stop these restless feelings...I know there is nowhere to go (Dugard, 2011, pg. 174)." She would feel alone and that her family may have forgotten about her.

Sexual abuse includes activities by a parent or caregiver such as fondling a child's genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, and exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2013). The first day that Jaycee was in captivity she was forced to perform sexual acts on Phillip. Jaycee was forced to have sex and perform sexual acts on Phillip until her second child was

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born. “ He pulls down my pants and takes off my shirt...I do not want to touch his private part, but the man insists, so I hold it in my hand (Dugard, 2011, pg. 17-18).” Phillip forced Jaycee in the shower and made her touch him even though she did not want it. The sexual abuse escalated into Phillip forcing Jaycee to have sex with him. “ He forces my legs open and inserts the hard thing between his legs in me (Dugard, 2011, pg. 31).” The abuse continued for years and resulted in Jaycee have two children. Ron Roberts, Tom O’Connor, Judy Dunn, Jean Golding, and The ALSPAC Study Team (2004), found that child sexual abuse has long-term repercussions for adult mental health, parenting relationships, and child adjustment in the succeeding generation.

According to Child Welfare Information Gateway (2004), explains that children are not responsible for the abuse inflicted upon them, certain child characteristics have been found to increase the risk or potential for maltreatment. Jaycee had many common protective factors for child abuse and neglect. She had a stable relationship to her mother, access to healthcare, adequate housing, good schools, and household rules. Due to the high number of protective factors for child abuse and neglect, Jaycee has little risk factors for abuse. Jaycee and her mother had a good bond and relationship. She lacked a good relationship with her stepfather, Carl. “ He already thinks I mess everything up; I don’t want to give him another excuse not to like me (Dugard, 2011, pg. 2).” She felt that Carl did not like her and that he did not meet his expectation of how she should act. The risk factors are usually a problem when the child is being abused by a caregiver or guardian, but Jaycee was abducted by strangers.

The kidnapping of Jaycee seriously impacted her and will continue to impact her for the rest of her life. Jaycee suffered multiple forms of sexual abuse which resulted in two children at a young age. Raising two children at the ages of fourteen and seventeen was hard since she did not learn from anything but television shows. Throughout the pregnancy and raising her children she would say how scared she was and how she imagined what their lives would be if they were free (Dugard, 2011). Dugard constantly thought of her family, friends, what her life would be like outside of the Garrido's. She would wonder what she did wrong and why this would happen to her. She kept journal entries logging her feelings that day and what happened. Most of the entries included her talking about how she wished she would see her mom or know that her mom knew she missed her. " Who am I? At this very moment I don't know. I don't know who I want to be (Dugard, 2011, pg. 166)." She would feel like she did not know who she was, like she lost her identity when she was taken. She was stripped of the person she used to be. Others explained that she was too much of a coward to leave the Garrido's or say anything to her neighbor or Phillip's parole officer (Dugard, 2011). Jaycee felt that she lacked skills and knowledge by not going to school for all those years. All these things psychologically impacted her and will take time for her to work through after her release from captivity.

It is known that adults who were abused have a higher incidence to become victimizer (Barrett, 2018). Some other risk factors that Jaycee faces is that she has lack of trust due to her kidnapping and some insecurity with her stepfather (Barrett, 2018). A social/ environmental risk that Jaycee faces is social isolation by being kept in tents in the backyard of the Garrido's for

eighteen years (Barrett, 2018). I believe that Jaycee Dugard is not likely to go on to maltreat children. Factors that can reduce risk of an adult becoming an abuser is to build family capacity and foster resilience (Barrett, 2018).

While being held captive Jaycee had two children of her own. By the time she was freed her children were fifteen and twelve. Throughout her captivity she built a bond with her children from the day she found out she was pregnant with them. Jaycee explained that Phillip and Nancy were loving and kind to the children and did not abuse them in any way (Dugard, 2011).

Child Abuse and Neglect (2007) by Sara R. Jaffee, Avshalom Caspi, Terrie E. Moffitt, Monica Polo-Tomás, and Alan Taylorexplained that, “ Children’s relationships with family members and other members of their social network have also been found to promote resilience to maltreatment.

Jaycee’s source of resilience would derive from her children and her mother. Throughout her captivity, Jaycee constantly thought of her mother and them being together. The thought of them being reunited one day kept her going. In her journal entries she recalled a memory of when her mother could not find her because she was hiding. She said, “ When she saw me standing at the door she raced to me and squeezed me tight I thought she would never let me go (Dugard, 2011, pg. 168).” Keeping these memories and playing them back in her head kept her to believe that one day she will be able to hug her mom again. She had talked multiple times about the friends that she had growing up and if they would still be there for her after. Jaycee having two daughters also was the source of her resiliency. She had to keep going to support them and not give up. She gave her daughters the best life that she could while in captivity and dreamed about what their future could be

like when they were released. When Jaycee found out that she was pregnant with her first daughter she would sit and talk to her belly. “ The connection I feel for this baby inside of me every time I feel it move is an incredible feeling (Dugard, 2011, pg. 99).” This feeling for her child made her keep going. The resilience got even stronger when she found out that she was having a second child. In one of her journal entries she explained, “ I would never turn back the clock and change the way things worked out. I love my kids (Dugard, 2011, pg. 169).” She now has children to look after and make sure they have good lives.

Throughout the book, there were multiple times where intervention was missed. Phillip Garrido was a convicted sex offender who had done some time and was on parole. Throughout Jaycee’s captivity there were multiple times that Phillip’s parole officer had been to the house for home visits but did not check the whole house or the backyard. In 1993 Phillip said, “ the police had found some drugs in the house and arrested him for parole violation (Dugard, 2011, pg. 71).” This is an example of miss opportunity on the hand of the police because by Phillip breaking a parole violation the police should have fully searched his house. In around 2007 Phillip is given a new parole officer who would come to the house for surprise visits. In the beginning Jaycee explained that they were not allowed in the house, but eventually he got tired of hiding and allowed them into the house daily (Dugard, 2011, pg. 198).” During a surprise parole visit the parole agent “ saw one of the girls sleeping in one of the spare rooms (Dugard, 2011, pg. 198).” Phillip gets later got another new parole officer who met Jaycee in the house with Phillip’s mother. The parole officer spoke to Phillip for his routine

drug test and then left. Due to Phillip's previous conviction and parole violation, he should not be allowed children in his home. There was no documentation of children living in the Garrido's house and should have been investigated further by the parole officers; instead it was overlooked multiple times.

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