

Information for men on childhood sexual assault

Talking about sexual assault is never easy. Talking about something that happened in your childhood is often extremely difficult. For men talking about personal topics can be even harder than for women. If, however, childhood sexual assault is affecting your life you may find you need to discuss your situation with someone.

According to Fergusson and Muller (1999) 1 in 6 males are sexually assaulted by the age of 18 years. This can be you, your friend, your brother or another close relative.

What Is Child Sexual Assault?

Sexual assault occurs when an adult or someone bigger and/or older uses power and authority over a child to involve them in sexual activity. Physical force or emotional threats or coercion may have been involved.

Child sexual assault involves a wide range of sexual activity. This may include

- Touching, fondling or kissing a child's genitals.
- Being masturbated or forced to masturbate the offender.
- Being made to look at, or pose for, pornographic photos.
- Voyeurism
- Verbal harassment or innuendo.
- Oral/genital contact.
- Penetration of the victim's anus or mouth with a penis, finger or object.
- Being made to penetrate the offender's mouth or anus

Myths about Male Childhood Sexual Assault

Male Children Are Not Abused

One third of the children seen at SECASA are male. 1 in 6 male children are abused by the age of 18 years.

Children Are Seductive or Precocious

Sexual assault is always the responsibility of the adult. Children are blameless.

Children are Attacked by Strangers

Most people know their attacker. Only 15% of assaults are by strangers. In the case of children and young people the offenders are often family members or family friends.

Children/Young People Make Up Stories About Sexual assault

Why would they? Small children particularly do not have the language, knowledge or life skills to fantasize about sexual assault.

Children or Young People Who Have Been Assaulted Are Damaged For Life

Dealing with the consequences of sexual assault can be hard work but people do recover. Children and young people, who feel supported by their family or significant others can, and do, recover from being assaulted.

Impact of Childhood Sexual Assault

Childhood sexual assault disrupts psychological development sometimes leaving male children with problems with intimacy and authority figures. This can manifest itself in many ways in childhood and in later life including.

- Acting out behaviour
- Multiple sexual partners
- Sex work
- Confusion about your sexual orientation
- Becoming a workaholic/over working
- Withdrawing from society and social activity
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Suicidal or self-mutilating behaviour
- Inability to form trusting relationships
- Nightmares and sleep disturbance
- Eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia, compulsive eating.

REFERENCE:

Mike Lew (1990) Victims No Longer: Men Recovering from Incest and Other Sexual Child Abuse. New York: Harper Collins

Mike Lew (2000) Leaping Upon the Mountains: Men Proclaiming Victory Over Sexual Child Abuse. Boston: Small Wonder Books and Berkeley, CA North Atlantic Books.

Contact Details 95942289 (24 hour crisis line)

Website: www.secasa.com.au

MySpace: www.myspace.com/secasa

South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault is a service of Southern Health

9928 8741 (administration)

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