

HD300: Unit 1: Child Abuse and Neglect: Lecture 1

[Margaret Young]

Slide #1

Slide Title

HD 300

Child Abuse and Neglect

Slide Content

Unit 1

Overview of Child Abuse and Neglect

Audio:

We will begin by discussing what child abuse is and defining it.

Slide #2

Slide Title

What is Child Abuse?

Slide Content

- Definitions vary
 - Across culture
 - Across time
 - Across individuals
 - Across families
- Definitional ambiguity makes it difficult to respond to the issue

Audio:

Definitions vary on child abuse. Whether it is across culture, what is viewed as abuse by one culture may be normative in others. For example, in California, an immigrant from the Middle East was seen fondling his daughter at a ballgame, and of course he was arrested. In this country it is not acceptable to be fondling children in their genital area. However, in that families culture it is not unusual at all for parents to fondle their children and in fact many men greet each other by touching their genitals. What we assume is abuse here in the United States is not necessarily abuse in another culture. Definitions of abuse vary across time depending on cultural norms and attitudes changes. Individuals may view child abuse differently. What I view as abuse, you may not. If we were sitting in a class of with 100 students, we may have 100 different views of what child abuse is or is not. Definitions vary across families. What may be normative in one family is not normative in another family and what is viewed as abuse in the community at large may not be viewed as abuse in certain families. Unless an action is clearly abusive by most standards, different views make responding to the situation and protecting the child effectively.

Slide #3

Slide Title

Abuse by Commission

Slide Content

- Child abuse refers to an act...
- Committed by a parent, caregiver, or person in a position of trust...
- That is not accidental
- And that harms or threatens to harm...
- A child's physical health, mental health, or welfare

Audio:

We can define abuse as acts of commission or acts of omission and we will begin by acts of commission. By this definition child abuse refers to an act that is committed by a parent, caregiver, or person in a position of trust. It is not accidental. It harms or threatens to harm a child's physical health, mental health, or welfare.

Slide #4**Slide Title**

Abuse by Omission

Slide Content

- Child neglect refers to an act of omission...
- Specifically, the failure of a parent, caregiver or person in a position of trust...
- To provide for the child's basic needs and proper level of care...
- With respect to food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical attention, or supervision

Audio:

Omission on the other hand usually refers to child neglect. Child neglect then refers to an act of omission; specifically it is the failure of a parent, caregiver, or person in a position of trust to provide for the child's basic needs and proper level of care with respect to food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical attention, or supervision.

Slide #5**Slide Title**

Types of Abuse

Slide Content

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect (physical and emotional)

Audio:

In this course we are going to discuss four main types of abuse. We will talk about physical abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, sexual abuse and child neglect, and we will discuss both physical and emotional neglect.

Slide #6**Slide Title**

Incidence

Slide Content

- More than 3 million reported per year in the United States
 - Six children abused every minute in U.S.
 - Ratio of 45 of every 1,000 children
- Approximately 2,000 children die each year in the U.S. from child abuse and neglect
- Rate of abuse nearly doubled between 1986 and 1993 (a “true rise”)
- Estimated 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 7 boys sexually molested by the time they reach age 18

Audio:

With incidence of child abuse, we are going to be specifically be discussing child abuse in the United States, although we may travel to some other countries for specific types of abuse. However, in the United States there are more than 3 million incidences of abuse reported every year. That equates to six children being abused every minute in the U.S. that is a ratio of 45 of every 1,000 children. Of these three million reported, approximately 2,000 children die each year in the United States from issues related to child abuse or neglect. The rate of abuse nearly doubled between the years of 1986 and 1993, which is a “true rise” in abuse. That level has stayed pretty steady for the last few years and in fact there have been some years when the rate has dropped a little. An estimated 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 7 boys are sexually molested by the time they reach age 18. However, although reports suggest that it is 1 in 7 boys, because boys tend not to report sexual abuse, it is really thought that sexual abuse in boys is almost equivalent to that of girls.

Slide #7

Slide Title

Contributing Factors (Why?)

Slide Content

- Cultural attitudes and norms
- History of abuse in the family (cycle)
- Family structure
- Breakdown of the family
- Presence of other forms of family violence
- Child rearing practices
- Alcohol or drug use in the family

Audio:

So why does abuse occur? There are some contributing factors. The first as we mentioned are cultural attitudes and norms. In the United States, Americans as a cultural group still condone violence, and violence is certainly the norm in many areas of the country. We are doing better than we did in the past but we still have a long way to go. Another factor is if there has been a history of abuse in the family, or the cycle of abuse. We learn to become parents from our parents. If violence is modeled in the home, children often grow up and then imitate that behavior in their own families. Another factor has to do with family structure. Single parent families, families with many children and families with male children are at higher risk than two parent, smaller families, and families with only girls for violence within the home and especially violence perpetrated on the children. Divorce and all of the factors that lead to the family breaking down put these families at risk for child abuse and neglect. However, on the other side of that coin, divorce can free the family from an abusive family member. Spousal abuse is a predictor of