

PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE

FACT SHEET - APRIL 2019



DEFINITIONS

PHYSICAL ABUSE - Inflicting, or threatening to inflict, physical pain or injury on a vulnerable person, or depriving them of a basic need.¹

EMOTIONAL ABUSE - Inflicting mental pain, anguish, or distress on a person through verbal or nonverbal acts.¹

SEVERITY

Size of the Problem

Children

Nearly 700,000 children are abused in the U.S annually. An estimated 683,000 children (unique incidents) were victims of abuse and neglect in 2015. Neglect is the most common form of maltreatment. Of the children who experienced maltreatment or abuse, three-quarters suffered neglect; 17.2% suffered physical abuse; and 8.4% suffered sexual abuse.²

In Tennessee, the top 4 types of abuse reported are sexual abuse, physical abuse, drug endangered, and neglect. Every hour of every day, there are allegations of child abuse in Tennessee. This issue is not unique to one county or community, this is a problem across the state.³

Adults

On average, 20 people experience intimate partner physical violence every minute in the United States. Each year more than 10 million people abuse others. 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have experienced some form of physical abuse by an intimate partner. On a 2015 survey day, domestic violence hotlines in the U.S. received about 21,000 calls or about 15 calls every minute.⁴

In Tennessee, 40% of women and 32.5% of men experience intimate partner physical violence, intimate partner rape and/or intimate partner stalking in their lifetimes.⁵

Elderly

With over 5 million instances of elder abuse in the United States, counts of victims exceed both child abuse and domestic violence combined. Elder abuse is a growing issue.¹

Seriousness

A history of abuse and neglect have been connected to a greater risk of opioid use disorder.

- Multiple studies have concluded that adverse childhood experiences, including childhood abuse, are associated with having a substance use disorder and with early initiation of drug use.⁶
- People with a history of trauma, including childhood abuse, may use opioids to reduce their emotional challenges and stress related to their past trauma.⁶
- Childhood neglect and emotional abuse have been related to risk of prescription opioid misuse for adults 18–32 years of age, highlighting the potential life course implications of childhood abuse and neglect for later prescription opioid misuse.⁷
- A nationally representative study found intimate partner violence survivors have 24 times the risk of developing OUD as those with no intimate partner violence history.⁸ Female survivors of intimate partner violence have three times the risk of developing OUD than male survivors.⁹
- Financial exploitation is the most common abuse reported by elders. However, after people with OUD (who are financially dependent on their parents or grandparents) have exhausted funds, physical and emotional abuse are reported in response to a lack of money for the abuser.¹⁰

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RIPPLE EFFECT

The reduction of physical and emotional abuse could positively impact the following issues:

- Opioid Use Disorder Overdose
- Mental Health
- Transmission of HIV and Hepatitis B and C
- Employment

FEASIBILITY

The RCORP-ETC Region has a number of resources and programs available to prevent emotional and physical abuse. These resources include the following.

Resources

- Community Health of East TN
- Family Justice Center
- TN Domestic Violence Hotline
- Family Crisis Center
- SafeSpace
- CEASE Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault
- Carl Perkins Child Abuse Prevention Center

Interventions

- Family Care Conference¹¹
- Interdisciplinary Action Mobile Outreach¹²
- Fostering Healthy Futures Program¹³
- Coping Power¹⁴
- Mindfulness-Based Interventions¹⁵

COMMUNITY VIEW

Of the 710 people who completed, the community survey, 13.5% identified emotional or physical abuse as a challenge related to opioid use disorder. The community identified abuse as the 8th most important challenge out of 24 issues.¹⁶

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