

The Influence of Child Sexual Abuse on Preschool-aged Children

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**MA Program:
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Research Question

What are the influences of child sexual abuse on preschool-aged victims?

Research Purpose

- Contribute towards lack of CSA → preschool-aged victim research
- Enlighten teachers on how they can better support students who have been sexually abused; especially during the home-school and/or prek-kindergarten transition
- Contribute towards ACEs body of research; particularly because research shows a correlation between CSA and suicide attempts into adolescence and adulthood.

ABUSE



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

NEGLECT



Physical



Emotional

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION



Mental Illness



Mother treated violently



Divorce



Incarcerated Relative



Substance Abuse

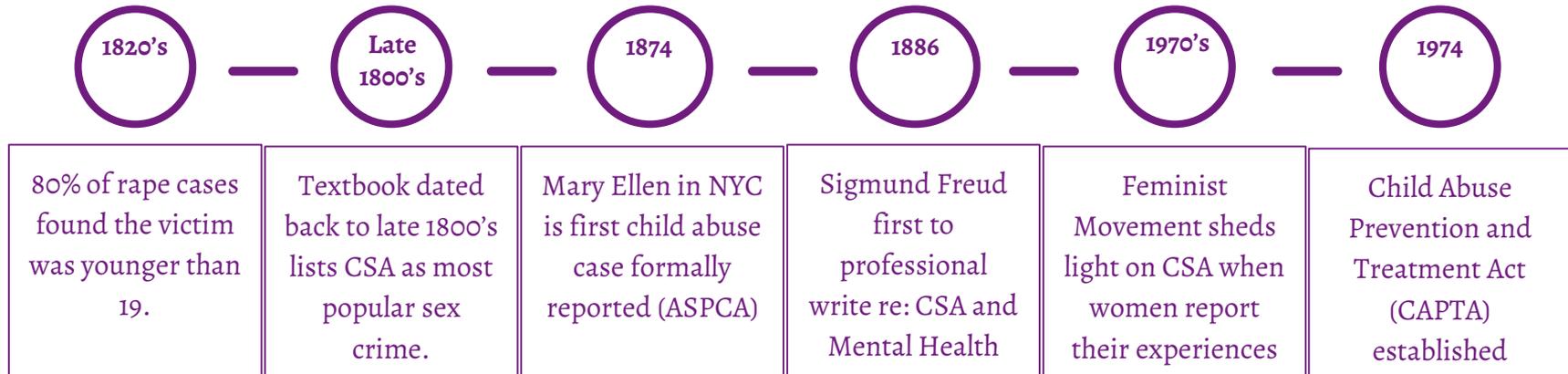
**Adverse
Childhood
Experiences
(ACEs)**

The involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared, or else that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Children can be sexually abused by both adults and other children who are – by virtue of their age or stage of development – in a position of responsibility, trust or power over the victim (WHO, 1999).

CSA Statistics

- 1 in 7 girls, 1 in 25 boys victimized by CSA
- An estimated 400,000 victims of CSA annually
 - Roughly 45% of cases are 'screened out'
 - Roughly 30% of CSA victims never report.
 - Can take up to 1.5 years to disclose abuse.
- 35% of CSA victims are younger than age 7.

Brief Historical Timeline



Literature Review

- Dissociative Symptomatology
 - 26.3% of CSA victims
 - Frequent daydreaming; rapid regression of behaviors and academic skills; rapid changes in personality; and age-inappropriate sexual knowledge and/or behaviors.
 - Over time → decreased in girls, increased in boys
- Sleep Problems
 - 25.3% of CSA victims → 21 times more likely than non-abused children
 - Nightmares, waking-dreams, and Sleep paralysis.
 - Chronic abuse → severe sleep problems

Literature Review (Con't)

- Social Emotional Impacts

- Difficulties regulating emotions and difficulties expressing anger → higher in boys
- Preschool-aged children were more likely to suffer from difficulty regulating emotions due to their non-offending parents' level of distress in the aftermath of abuse discovery (crisis period)
- Difficulty regulating emotions were higher for children with non-offending parent(s) with a history of CSA themselves
- PTSD-symptomology

- Behavior Problems

- Internalizing: emotional reactivity, anger, depression, and anxiety → higher in girls
- Externalizing: physical aggression, rule-breaking, and attention-deficits → higher in boys
- CSA victims are more likely to be aggressive because they begin to see the world as a hostile place

<p>Contributing towards CSA research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Literature review highlights several short- and long-term influences of child sexual abuse on preschool-aged victims.● Crucial for teachers and curriculum-makers to consider
<p>Assisting teachers in supporting students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Social-Emotional Learning Environments (SELEs)● CSA victims → lower IQ's; struggle in math, reading, and language; and reduced attention/concentration<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Suspensions and/or expulsions
<p>ACEs Research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Children exposed to ACEs are more likely to experience suicide attempts, household dysfunction, drug abuse/addiction, alcoholism, and clinical depression.● Highlights the importance of mitigating ACEs impacts on children

Recommendations for Future Research

- Social Emotional Learning Environments (SELEs) & school readiness
 - Preschool classrooms → transformed into SELEs → help *all* children w/ emotional regulation, social skills, managing negative behaviors, etc → school readiness
- Impacts on non-offending parents
 - Non-offending parents → Crisis Period → Depression, PTSD, & other impacts → Poor family functioning → Unable to adequately support child through period of reporting, investigation, and healing.

Thank You

Questions?

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