

Child Maltreatment

Child maltreatment includes all types of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect of children under the age of 18.

What We Know

- In 2007, in the United States, 1,760 children died from abuse and neglect.
- In 2007, Child Protective Services confirmed more than 790,000 children as victims of child maltreatment.
- 1 in 7 children between the ages of 2 and 17 in the U.S. are victims of child maltreatment.
- Early child maltreatment can affect long-term development of the brain and result in later vulnerability to mental and physical health problems.

Preventing child maltreatment could help reduce the risk for health problems as adults including substance abuse, obesity, and heart disease.



Research Focus	What We Want to Know	How This Research Will Help
Safe, Stable, and Nurturing Relationships (SSNRs)	How do SSNRs develop and how do community and social factors influence these relationships and child maltreatment directly?	It can help determine the ideal times, strategies, and settings to promote SSNRs and reduce child maltreatment.
Social and Economic Burden	What is the social and economic burden of child maltreatment and what are the potential factors that can lessen this burden?	It can reduce the risk of detrimental health effects for victims of child maltreatment and can guide future development of programs and policies to prevent child maltreatment.
Parenting Programs	To what extent can we use parenting programs to prevent child maltreatment and promote SSNRs?	We can prevent negative behaviors that lead to maltreatment and learn whether broad use of parenting programs reduces child maltreatment and promotes SSNRs.
Public and Organizational Policies	How effective are public and organizational policies in preventing child maltreatment and promoting SSNRs?	This can lead to the adoption of laws and policies that prevent child maltreatment and that ensure safe environments for children.
Distribution of Evidence-Based Strategies	What are the best ways to increase adoption of effective strategies that prevent child maltreatment and promote SSNRs?	We can increase both access to and reach of effective programs that prevent child maltreatment and promote SSNRs.



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