

# Common Myths about Child Abuse

## 1 Child abuse only happens in some parts of society.



Rates of **PHYSICAL ABUSE AND NEGLECT** are affected by socioeconomic status. <sup>2</sup>

It is **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE** perpetration/victimization that occurs in all parts of society. <sup>8</sup>

## 2 Children are victimized by creepy psychopathic strangers.

**91.6%** In 2015, 91.6 percent of victims (all types) were maltreated by one or both parents. Other perpetrators known to victims included foster parents, other relatives, neighbors, and daycare providers. <sup>1</sup>

**90%** For **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**, about 90% of victims know their abuser. <sup>3</sup>

## 3 Children usually tell someone they are being abused.



Research has found that most child victims delay or never disclose **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE** to friends, family or the authorities <sup>4,5,6</sup>

## 4 Many children lie about being abused.

**<10%** False allegations of **SEXUAL ABUSE** by children and adolescents are statistically uncommon, occurring at the rate of 2 to 10 percent of all cases. <sup>7</sup>

## 5 If a child has been sexually abused, there will be medical evidence.



Medical evidence is found in less than 5% of substantiated **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE** cases. <sup>9,10</sup>

## 6 The most common type of abuse children experience at home is sexual abuse.



**CHILD NEGLECT** is the most common type of abuse experienced in the home. <sup>11</sup>

## 7 Males who are sexually abused as boys all grow up to sexually abuse children.

Male sexual abuse victims rarely go on to become perpetrators of sexual abuse. <sup>12,13</sup>

## 8 Only men sexually abuse children.

At least 20% of substantiated child sexual abuse cases are perpetrated by females.<sup>14, 15, 16</sup>

## 9 Boys are less traumatized as victims of sexual abuse than girls.

The severity of traumatization among male victims of sexual abuse is equal to that of female victims.<sup>17, 18, 19, 20</sup>

## 10 Children with disabilities are less likely to become victims of abuse than children without disabilities.

Children with disabilities are two to three times more likely than children without disabilities to experience abuse.<sup>21, 22, 23, 24</sup>

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