



# As a Matter of *fact*

## The Relationship Between Child Maltreatment and Child/Adolescent Well-Being

Exposure to maltreatment or violence can disrupt the course of physical, emotional, and intellectual development in children and adolescents. Risks associated with maltreatment include alterations in a child and adolescent's physical health, impaired psychosocial functioning, mental health conditions, and changes in brain architecture. Preventing child abuse and neglect improves the health and quality of life of children and adolescents.

# 1

**Physical Health:** Maltreatment in childhood nearly doubles the danger of overall poor health including increased risks of: <sup>(4-5)</sup>

|  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Asthma <sup>(1, 6-7)</sup>                     | Bruises <sup>(4)</sup>           |
| Traumatic Brain Injuries <sup>(4, 7-10)</sup>  | Burns <sup>(4)</sup>             |
| Sexually-Transmitted Diseases <sup>(4-5)</sup> | Broken Bones <sup>(4, 7)</sup>   |
| Unplanned Pregnancies <sup>(11-12)</sup>       | Obesity <sup>(4, 7, 13-14)</sup> |
| Dating Violence <sup>(14-15)</sup>             |                                  |

# 2

**Delinquency (Impaired Psychosocial Functioning):** Children and adolescents who experience maltreatment may have impaired psychosocial functions including:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| More Aggressive Behavior <sup>(1-2, 4, 11, 16-17)</sup>       | Drinking Alcohol <sup>(6, 11-12, 19, 26-27)</sup>                |
| Truancy <sup>(17-18)</sup>                                    | Binge Drinking <sup>(6, 26)</sup>                                |
| Running Away <sup>(18-19)</sup>                               | Smoking <sup>(6, 14, 19, 28)</sup>                               |
| Fighting <sup>(6, 20-22)</sup>                                | Substance Abuse <sup>(4, 6, 11, 13, 19, 29-32)</sup>             |
| Carrying Weapons <sup>(18, 20-24)</sup>                       | Sexualized Behaviors at a Younger Age <sup>(5, 11, 26, 31)</sup> |
| Threatening Others with or using a Weapon <sup>(18, 22)</sup> | Risky Sexual Behavior <sup>(2, 5, 12, 19, 33)</sup>              |
| Violence <sup>(25)</sup>                                      |  |

# 3

**Mental Health:** Trauma exposure has potentially severe consequences for the mental health of children and adolescents across the developmental continuum including:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Attachment and Behavior Disorders <sup>(2, 4, 12)</sup>                   | Anxiety <sup>(1, 5, 11, 17, 29, 31, 36)</sup>          |
| Antisocial Behavior <sup>(17)</sup>                                       | Suicidal Ideation <sup>(21, 31, 36, 38)</sup>          |
| Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder <sup>(2, 4-5, 12, 17, 20, 29, 34-35)</sup> | Self-Injurious Behaviors <sup>(20-21, 31, 39-43)</sup> |
| Depression <sup>(2, 5-6, 11, 13, 17, 19, 20, 22, 36)</sup>                |  |

# 4

**Changes in Brain Architecture:** Maltreatment in childhood may cause changes in the physical structures within the brain which can result in the following: <sup>(2-4, 11-12, 14, 26)</sup>

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Sensory and Motor Skill Deficiencies <sup>(9)</sup> | Reduced Physical Health <sup>(2, 4, 10)</sup>         |
| Poor Academic Performance <sup>(1, 2, 44)</sup>     | Mental Health Issues and                              |
| Impairment in Cognitive Processing and              | Maladaptive Behaviors <sup>(2-4, 9, 11, 33, 45)</sup> |
| Language Acquisition <sup>(2, 9, 33)</sup>          |   |

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