National Children's Advocacy Center

As a Matter of *fact*

The Relationship Between Child Maltreatment and Academic Achievement

Exposure to one or more types of maltreatment may result in an array of negative outcomes, including lower academic achievement. Lower academic achievement is associated with long-term, negative psychosocial and economic consequences, such as higher representation in the criminal justice system, substance abuse issues, and high unemployment. Preventing child maltreatment may preclude low academic achievement which can lead to a higher quality of life for children, adolescents, and adults.

1. Children exposed to maltreatment are at increased risk of educational underachievement, including lower verbal and math scores.[1-10,12-13,18-22]

2. Neglected children have poorer academic performance than physically maltreated children.[4,10-11]

3. Maltreated children have higher rates of absenteeism from school than non-maltreated peers.[4, 11-14]

4. Maltreated children are at substantially higher risk than non-maltreated children of repeating a grade.[2,15]

5. Maltreated children are at increased risk of dropping out of school before high school graduation.[1,4,13,16]

6. Maltreated children are more likely to be referred for special education services.[2,4,10,13,17]

7. Maltreated children are more likely than their peers to exhibit poor social skills and classroom behavior problems.[2,6,12,15,17]

8. A child's risk of poor academic functioning is substantially heightened by multiple victimizations.[2,23]

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