



NSM Insurance Group's Social Services & Behavioral Healthcare Practice

The Impact of Abuse on Victims and Organizations

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A single incident of abuse can cause a lifetime of pain and suffering for a child or vulnerable adult and irreparable damage to an organization's reputation, financial stability, and insurability. Maybe your organization recently experienced or narrowly avoided such an incident. Or maybe you want to make sure you are doing everything you can to keep those in your care safe.

Although research shows that sexual abuse is widespread—it affects more individuals than heart disease, breast cancer, drug abuse, and autoimmune diseases—it doesn't have to happen in your organization

Sexual Abuse Statistics

- 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused before they turn 18.
- 90 percent of offenders are known by their victim or their victim's family.
- 1 in 10 public school children, accounting for 4.5 million students, have experienced sexual misconduct by an educator.
- Each year, 1 in 7 nursing home residents and thousands of adults with disabilities are abused.
- There are more than 60 million survivors of child sexual abuse in America; 80 percent never reported their abuse.
- Child abuse costs the United States approximately \$103 billion per year.

Impact on Victims

The immediate effects of sexual abuse often include depression, anxiety, aggression, and self-harm. Long-term effects may include poor physical and mental health, impaired social skills and academic performance, developmental and behavioral problems, and an increased participation in high-risk activities like drug abuse or sexual promiscuity.

Victims of sexual abuse are:

- 3x more likely to suffer from depression
- 3x more likely to suffer from depression
- 4x more likely to contemplate suicide
- 13x more likely to abuse alcohol and 26x more likely to abuse drugs
- 40x more likely to experience marital problems

- More likely to suffer physically, with an increased risk of heart disease and obesity.

Impact on Organizations

Organizations where sexual abuse occurs typically experience financial loss, damaged reputation, and low morale. Entire programs are shaken by incidents of abuse, left wondering what they could have done to prevent the incident from occurring in the first place.

- Plaintiff's attorneys prevail in more than two-thirds of sexual abuse cases against an organization.
- Average compensatory awards in a molestation case can easily exceed \$700,000 & can Occur multiple times!
- Molesters will likely pass your organization's background check—*less than 5 percent have a criminal record!*

Step back from these alarming and tragic facts and ask yourself, "How would I feel if this happened in my program or under my watch—or to my child?" Now is the time to take action.

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