

Child Abuse..... It Matters You

What is Psychological Abuse ?

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Psychological Abuse is the repeated pattern of behaviour and attitudes towards a child or extreme incident that endangers or impairs the child's emotional or intellectual development. Examples include acts of spurning, terrorizing, isolating, exploiting/corrupting, denying emotional responsiveness, conveying to a child that he/she is worthless, flawed, unwanted or unloved. Such act damages immediately or ultimately the behavioural, cognitive, affective, or physical functioning of the child.

These actions are considered psychological abuse :

Rejection and isolation

Constantly criticizing children harshly, scolding them unreasonably, teasing or treating them coldly; depriving them of a normal social life such as locking them up at home; lowering their self-esteem; ignoring their physical and emotional development.

Threats

Threatening children with words or severe punishment, making them feel scared or uneasy; threatening their security constantly.

Deception

Giving children incorrect ideas and concepts that deprive them of proper learning opportunity. As a result, they may develop an inclination to solve problems through violence, promiscuity or drug abuse.

What are the symptoms of psychological abuse ?

- Pre-school children who have been psychologically abused may be physically or mentally underdeveloped. They may behave abnormally, for example, biting others, bed-wetting, avoiding others, feeling insecure or being emotionally unstable and very dependent on other people.
- School children may have serious behavioural problems such as telling lies, stealing, devaluing themselves, and being argumentative. Other children may isolate themselves, feel depressed or have suicidal tendency.
- Children who have been psychologically abused may easily go astray, leading to a lot of social problems. The consequences of child

psychological abuse are therefore very serious and should not be overlooked.

Why should we care about child abuse and what can we do to help ?

- People who abuse children may be aware that their behaviour is questionable. But every often, they have difficulty to control their abusive behaviour or some may even be unmotivated to change such behaviour.
- All families have problems and for all family problems, there should be solutions. Child abuse is just a sign of family problems. Victims of abuse and the abusers are equally in need of professional treatment and counselling. People should seek help as early as possible.
- Child abuse is not just the problem of individual families. It will also hinder the development of the children and affect their ability to contribute to the society as law-abiding citizens.
- We hope that everyone who cares about children's development and reducing social problems will help stop child abuse. We have to enhance our awareness about the scope and extent of the problem and give it serious attention.
- For effective prevention of child abuse, we need the continual support of our community in promoting public education and publicity.
- In case you come across any suspected case of child abuse, please contact the relevant organization or respective Family and Child Protective Services Unit.

Hotlines

**Telephone
Number**

Social Welfare Department

2343 2255

Family Crisis Support Centre 24-hour Hotline

18288

CEASE Crisis Centre 24-hour Hotline

18281

Against Child Abuse Hotline

2755 1122

End Child Sexual Abuse Foundation
(Hug Line for child sexual abuse)

2889 9933

Family and Child Protective Services Units	Telephone Number
Family and Child Protective Services Unit (Central Western, Southern and Islands)	2835 2733
Family and Child Protective Services Unit (Eastern and Wanchai)	2231 5859
Family and Child Protective Services Unit (Kwun Tong)	2707 7681
Family and Child Protective Services Unit (Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung)	3188 3563
Family and Child Protective Services Unit (Sham Shui Po)	2247 5373
Family and Child Protective Services Unit (Kowloon City and Yau Tsim Mong)	3583 3254
Family and Child Protective Services Unit (Shatin)	2158 6680
Family and Child Protective Services Unit (Tai Po and North)	3183 9323
Family and Child Protective Services Unit (Tuen Mun)	2618 5710
Family and Child Protective Services Unit (Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing)	2940 7350
Family and Child Protective Services Unit (Yuen Long)	2445 4224

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