

## DYNAMICS OF ABUSIVE AND NEGLECTFUL FAMILIES

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### Parents who abuse may:

#### *Have personal issues*

- Explosive personalities
- Feel incomplete
- Afraid of taking responsibility
- Immaturity
- Use too much alcohol and/or drugs
- Poor self-esteem
- Hard time looking for and finding pleasure
- Mental illness
- Take part in criminal activities

#### *Struggle with parenting*

- Cling to their children
- Unrealistic or unfair expectations of child(ren)
- Strong physical punishment
- Delay or not take child for routine check-ups or other medical care
- Reluctant or inconsistent in explaining injuries

#### *Have troubled relationships*

- Hate being alone
- Isolated
- Anxious, tense, unwilling to trust
- Conflict in most relationships

#### *Struggle with life challenges*

- Abused as a child
- Many life stressors (financial, health, etc.)
- Younger in age
- Victim or perpetrator of domestic violence
- Few coping skills, trouble dealing with stress

**Children who are abused may:**

***Have birth or developmental issues***

- Developmental delays
- Premature or unwanted at birth
- Disability
- Colicky
- Speech problems

***Struggle with relationships***

- No idea of body privacy or ownership
- Feel good or valuable only when being affectionate
- Very good at controlling people and situations

***Have emotional issues***

- No sense of control over his/her environment (because they come from situations where power has been abused)
- Very passive OR aggressive
- Low self-esteem
- Unable to solve problems and/or handle conflict
- Afraid (of losing control, the dark, sleeping alone in room, danger, being touched)
- Depression
- Think about suicide
- Express emotions in strange ways

***Have behavioral problems***

- Poor school attendance and/or cut classes
- Sudden changes in school performance or under achievement
- Act younger than they are (thumb sucking, bedwetting or soiling, speech, clinging, whining)
- Bed or sleep problems (bedwetting, fear of sleeping alone in room, night terrors, nightmares, sleepwalking, can't sleep)
- Food-related problems (over/undereating, sudden weight gain/loss, hoarding, anorexia, poor body image)
- Many physical complaints (stomach-ache, headache, weariness)
- Play as if he/she was holding back something