

MYTH OR TRUTH?

Understanding the Facts of Child Sexual Abuse

Quiz Answers:

1. Most child sexual abuse is committed by strangers to the child.
 True **XXXX False**

The vast majority of child sexual abuse is committed by people that the child knows and loves. 75% of the prosecuted cases in Idaho in 2002 were committed by a family member, a family friend or an acquaintance. Experts believe that this statistic represents a true figure for all cases of child sexual abuse, whether reported or not.

2. About half of child sexual abuse is committed by males.
 True **XXXX False**

About 94% of reported child sexual abuse is committed by males.

3. Most children are so frightened by child sexual abuse that they immediately report it to a parent, teacher or trusted adult.
 True **XXXX False**

Many children are confused by child sexual abuse, but are not frightened. Most children do not tell about the abuse immediately.

4. Most children who have been sexually abuse do not suffer physical injuries.
XXXX True False

Most children who are sexually abused are not physically injured.

5. Most children who are sexually abused engage in the behavior because they are threatened with physical injury to themselves or a loved one.
 True **XXXX False**

While some children are threatened, most child sexual abuse is accomplished through positive reinforcement of the child, or engaging the child in activity to the point where they feel responsible and thus cooperate with the behavior.

6. Children may not report child sexual abuse because the behavior makes them feel good.
XXXX True False

Because the activities, both physical and emotional, often make the child feel loved, needed, and are physically stimulating, children may not immediately report the behavior.

7. Children often do not report child sexual abuse because they feel responsible for the abuse occurring.
XXXX True False

The activities of the abuser, in gradually engaging the child in the activity, often make the child feel responsible. In addition, because children are immature, they naturally feel that because they engaged in the behavior they are somewhat responsible.

8. If a child is sexually abused a physical exam will generally verify that the abuse has occurred.
 True **XXXX False**

Most child sexual abuse does not involve physical injury, and thus 95% of the children who report child sexual abuse will have normal physical exams with no evidence of abuse.

9. Most sexual abuse involves vaginal or anal intercourse.
 True **XXXX False**

The nature of child sexual abuse, because it occurs in secrecy and does not involve activities that would scare children, involves touching, masturbation, fondling, or other activity that does not involve intercourse.

10. Girls are sexually abused more often than boys.
XXXX True False

Of the reported cases of child sexual abuse, one in four and one in six boys are abused before the age of 18. However, experts believe that more boys are abused than the reported cases might indicate, but boys do not disclose abuse as often because it is more often very confusing to them.

11. If a child discloses sexual abuse it usually really happened.
XXXX True False

If a child is talking about sexual activity, they generally have experienced it, or witnessed it, because children are generally not aware of sexual activity without personal experience.

12. If a child has been sexually abused they may deny it if directly asked about it.
XXXX True False

Experts estimate that about half of children who are directly confronted about sexual abuse will deny that the activity occurred, either because they do not want to get an adult in trouble, they feel responsible, they believe they will get in trouble, or they do not want to disappoint adults.

13. Over half of child sexual abuse is committed by parents and parent substitutes.
XXXX True False

Parents and parent substitutes are responsible for over 50% of child sexual abuse. Parent substitutes are those living in the home responsible for the parental care of the child. Of parental perpetrators, the majority are stepparents.

14. Developmentally delayed children are rarely sexually abused.
 True **XXXX False**

Developmentally delayed children are abused at 18 times the rate of normal children.

15. Over 50% of the reports to Health and Welfare about child abuse come from the school systems.

XXXX True **_____ False**

The schools are one of the largest sources of reporting child abuse to the Health and Welfare system.

16. Only teachers are required to report child sexual abuse to Health and Welfare.

_____ True **XXXX False**

Any person who has reason to believe that abuse is occurring is required by Idaho law to report it.

17. If a child discloses child sexual abuse, the law requires that it be reported within 24 hours to Health and Welfare or law enforcement.

XXXX True **_____ False**

18. An adolescent girl who has been sexually abused will normally react by internalizing and “checking out.”

XXXX True **_____ False**

True, although the caveat is that not every girl will react this way, some may react aggressively by expressing anger. Additional signs include using drugs, self-mutilation, etc.

19. An adolescent boy who has been sexually abused will normally react by withdrawing.

_____ True **XXXX False**

Boys normally react by showing anger and aggression.

20. Younger children who have been sexually abused will often act out sex acts in play.

XXXX True **_____ False**

Playing is often the only way that younger children can express what they are feeling, and thus they act out sex in play as a way of telling what has happened to them. In addition, children play in ways that they have experienced, so they may act out sexual acts with no knowledge of the social or moral implications of what they are doing.