

Appendix 3: Definitions Relating To Sexual Violence

ACE Study

The ACE Study⁶⁵ is an ongoing major research study that relates current adult health status to adverse childhood experiences (ACE) decades earlier. The study is a collaborative approach between CDC and Kaiser Permanente's Health Appraisal Clinic in San Diego. About 17,000 participants provided detailed information about their childhood experience of abuse, neglect, and family dysfunction. Childhood abuse, neglect, and exposure to other traumatic stressors -- adverse childhood experiences, or ACE -- are common. Almost two-thirds of the ACE study participants reported at least one ACE, and more than one in five reported three or more ACE. The short- and long-term outcomes of these childhood exposures include a multitude of health and social problems. The ACE Score, a count of the total number of ACE respondents reported, is used to assess the total amount of stress during childhood. As the number of ACE increase, the risk for the following health problems also increases:

- alcoholism and alcohol abuse
- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- depression
- fetal death
- decline in health-related quality of life
- illicit drug use
- ischemic heart disease (IHD)
- liver disease
- intimate partner violence
- multiple sexual partners
- sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
- smoking
- suicide attempts
- unintended pregnancies

The study also demonstrated a direct relationship of ACE score to health-related behaviors and outcomes during childhood and adolescence, including early initiation of smoking, sexual activity, illicit drug use, adolescent pregnancies, and suicide attempts. As the number of ACE increases, the number of co-occurring or "co-morbid" conditions increases.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Minors

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Minors is the exploitation of children entirely, or primarily, for financial or other economic reasons. Exchanges may be either monetary or non-monetary. In every case, it involves maximum benefits to the exploiter and an abrogation of the basic human rights of the children involved.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ "Adverse Childhood Experiences Study," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA, 2008. Available at www.cdc.gov/nc-cdphp/ACE/findings.htm.

⁶⁶ Howard Davidson, Director ABA Center on Children and Law, presentation: Making Principles in the UN's Optional Protocol a US Reality, 6/20/02. Cited in Alameda County Sexually Exploited Minors Provider Network, n.d. Available at : <http://www.acgov.org/icpc/documents/SEMPacket.pdf>.

Domestic Trafficking

The recruitment, transportation or receipt of children by deception or coercion for the purpose of prostitution, other sexual exploitation or forced labor only within their country.⁶⁷

Normalization

The process by which an idea or concept or behavior becomes an accepted part of societal culture. Once this occurs, something that was once clearly understood as abhorrent or harmful becomes considered “just the way it is.” With more barriers removed and further normalizations it becomes viewed as beneficial or even preferential – the thing to have, the way to be, the expected behavior.⁶⁸

Perpetrators / Victims / Bystanders

Audiences can be categorized by their likely role in an act of sexual violence:

- as potential victims of the violence,
- as potential perpetrators of the violence, or
- as potential bystanders who have an opportunity to prevent or intervene in the act.

Because of the power of language and labeling, it is important to use non-labeling, descriptive language in all communication.

- Victims are also survivors; the term “victim/survivor” is often used to convey the healing process. Also appropriate is “person who was sexually assaulted.”
- Sex offender/perpetrator can also be termed “person who commits a sex offense.”

Pornography

Sexually explicit material that objectifies and exploits its subjects (predominantly women and children) while eroticizing domination, degradation, and/or violence.⁶⁹

Prevention: Primary / Secondary / Tertiary

According to the Prevention Institute, violence prevention is “a systematic process that promotes healthy environments and behaviors and reduces the likelihood or frequency of violence against women.”

The CDC recognizes that there are several ways to classify sexual violence prevention and intervention activities. The most common and useful way, from a public health perspective, is to adapt the Commission on Chronic Illness’ (1957) disease prevention classification scheme in a way that identifies activities according to when they occur in relation to the violence:

- Primary Prevention: [Activities] that take place before sexual violence has occurred to prevent initial perpetration or victimization.
- Secondary Prevention: An immediate response after the sexual violence has occurred to deal with the short-term consequences of violence.
- Tertiary Prevention: Long-term responses after sexual violence has occurred to deal with the lasting consequences of sexual violence for the victim/survivor, as well as sex offender treatment interventions.

⁶⁷ Safe Harbors Youth Intervention Project (SHYIP), Partners for Violence Prevention, Saint Paul, MN; et. al., November 2007, p. 69. Available at: http://partnersforviolenceprevention.org/documents/CNA11_1_final.pdf

⁶⁸ National Plan to Eradicate the Sexual Exploitation of Children, in development, 2008. This plan is in preparation by the National Coalition to Prevent Child Sexual Exploitation, supported in part by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. See Cordelia Anderson, Sensibilities, Inc.: http://www.cordeliaanderson.com/cordeliaanderson.com_files/Page1256.htm

⁶⁹ Chuck Derry, Gender Violence Institute. See: <http://www.letswrap.com/GVI/#sa>

This plan emphasizes primary prevention, highlighting the need to “go upstream” to prevent violence from occurring.

Public Health is concerned with the health of the community as a whole. Public health is community health. The mission of public health is to “fulfill society’s interest in assuring conditions in which people can be healthy.” The three core public health functions are:

- The assessment and monitoring of the health of communities and populations at risk to identify health problems and priorities;
- The formulation of public policies designed to solve identified local and national health problems and priorities; and
- Assurance that all populations have access to appropriate and cost-effective care, including health promotion and disease prevention services, and evaluation of the effectiveness of that care.⁷⁰

Sex Trafficking

Activities related to receiving, recruiting, enticing, harboring, providing, or obtaining by any means an individual to engage in prostitution are collectively referred to sex trafficking.

Sexual Exploitation

A practice by which a person achieves sexual gratification, financial gain or advancement through the abuse or exploitation of a person’s sexuality by abrogating that person’s human right to dignity, equality, autonomy, and physical and mental well being; e.g., trafficking, prostitution, sex tourism, mail-order-bride trade, pornography, stripping, battering, incest, rape and sexual harassment.⁷¹

Sexual Violence

Minnesota Department of Health, General Definition

The use of sexual actions or words that are unwanted by and/or harmful to another person. It can include assault, rape, harassment, voyeurism, and other noncontact abuse.⁷²

CDC Uniform Definitions for Sexual Violence

Nonconsensual completed or attempted contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus involving penetration, however slight; nonconsensual contact between the mouth and the penis, vulva, or anus; nonconsensual penetration of the anal or genital opening of another person by a hand, finger, or other object; nonconsensual intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks; or nonconsensual non-contact acts of a sexual nature such as voyeurism and verbal or behavioral sexual harassment. All the above acts also qualify as sexual violence if they are committed against someone who is unable to consent or refuse.⁷³

⁷⁰ “Definition of Public Health,” MedicineNet.com. Available at: <http://www.medterms.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=5120>

⁷¹ Donna M. Hughes, Pimps and Predators on the Internet: Globalizing Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children, The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, 1999. Available at: <http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/ppdef.htm>

⁷² A Place To Start: A Resource Kit for Prevention Sexual Violence, Minnesota Department of Health, 1999. Available at: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/injury/pub/kit/index.cfm>

⁷³ Uniform Definitions of Sexual Violence, CDC Injury Center, 2006. Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/sv_surveillance/04_uniform_definitions.htm

Imagine... our lives without sexual violence or exploitation.

The CDC urges use of consistent definitions to monitor the incidence and prevalence of sexual violence and to examine trends over time. Consistent definitions also help researchers uniformly measure risk and protective factors for victimization or perpetration, which ultimately assists prevention and intervention efforts.

Relevant Minnesota statutes:⁷⁴

260c143 Procedure: Habitual Truants, Runaways, Offenders
609.321 Prostitution
609.341 Definitions for Criminal Sexual Conduct
609.342 Criminal Sexual Conduct
609.352 Solicitation Of Children To Engage In Sexual Conduct
626.556 Reporting Of Maltreatment Of Minors
256K.45 Minnesota Runaway And Homeless Youth Act

⁷⁴ Minnesota Statutes available at www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us.