

Lesson 6: Sexual Abuse

For Starters...



Sexual abuse, also referred to as **molestation**, is the forcing of undesired sexual behavior by one person upon another.

When that force is immediate, of short duration, or infrequent, it is called **sexual assault**. The offender is referred to as a **sexual abuser** or (often pejoratively) **molester**.

The term also covers any behavior by any adult towards a child to stimulate either the adult or child sexually. When the victim is younger than the age of consent, it is referred to as **child sexual abuse**. (Wikipedia)

Lesson 6 Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this lesson's material, students will be able to:

- Formulate a theory as to why alcoholism, substance abuse, eating disorders, and suicide are linked to a history of sexual abuse
 - Review the signs of an adult survivor of sexual abuse and relate these signs to individuals you may encounter in your work
 - Discuss the specific challenges you may find in working with individuals who have been sexual abused
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NOTES

What is sexual abuse? Although it might seem obvious it is not always so and many individuals (the sexual abusers) may not even perceive that their behavior is wrong.

Consider this list:

- unwanted touching or kissing
- being pressured or forced to do sexual things
- being pressured or forced to do sexual things to someone else's body
- being photographed without some of your clothes on
- being shown images or video of sexual nature in magazines or movies, or on a mobile phone or computer
- being pressured into sexual activities over the net
- being sent obscene emails, voice or text messages

The point is that none of these are OK, but the victim needs to speak out.

Do you think that sometimes individuals don't speak out because they will be viewed as "over-sensitive"?

Although this article is a bit dated, it speaks very well of the complexity of the instances of sexual abuse across the lifespan. Review this article and complete the Class Activities listed below.

[Click here to view the article](#)

CLASS ACTIVITIES

Lesson 6 Assessment

Answer the following questions in the appropriate quiz:

1. Describe the relationship between alcoholism, substance abuse, eating disorders, and suicide with a history of sexual abuse
2. Briefly define what signs you may look for that may indicate that a client of yours has a history of sexual abuse

Lesson 6 Discussion

Discuss the specific challenges you may find in working with individuals who have been sexual abused...do you have a "weak spot" or a "button" than can be pressed?