

The Impact of Adolescent Child Abuse on Psychosocial Outcomes



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Abstract

Despite the existing literature on child victimization, the extent of research on youth victimization is limited (Deakin, 2006). This shortage highlights the importance and need for mental health practitioners to examine the impact of early victimization in childhood and its relation to psychosocial outcomes of adolescents. The present quantitative study examined an existing nationally representative dataset of 17,366 adolescents who completed the 2009 Dane County Youth Survey. Adolescents who indicated they were physically or sexually abused were analyzed across a variety of measures that include depression/suicidal ideation, bully victimization, alcohol use, delinquency, and bully perpetration. The purpose of this study was to analyze mean level differences between adolescents who have experienced child abuse within 30 days, more than 30 days but less than a year, more than a year ago, and never, utilizing four separate analyses of variance (MANOVA). MANOVA results indicated that the subgroup of 30 days or less scored significantly higher on all psychosocial outcomes in comparison to the other subgroups. Although the subgroup of 30 days or less had higher rates on all psychosocial outcomes, all other subgroups still displayed significantly higher scores on the outcomes when compared to the adolescents in the never group. Results from this study could further aid in gaining a better understanding of victimization and related mental health outcomes as well as lead to better treatments for victimized youth.