



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWS

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Sergeant Frank Avila - Sergeant Chris Rowland

May 2012

LITTLE KNOWN FACTS ABOUT CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse comes in four types ... physical violence, psychological abuse; sexual assault and neglect ... all of them are traumatic. While almost everyone knows that child abuse exists, few understand the alarming statistics:

Did You Know These Statistics?

- At least 850,000 kids will be sexually abused this year alone. A report of child abuse is made every 10 seconds in America!
- Child abuse doesn't discriminate, and affects every part of our society, all social strata, all races, both sexes, and kids from birth to 18.
- Perpetrators and pedophiles are people of no particular "type" either, and many select professional careers and volunteer positions that put them in direct contact with groups of kids. They look like you and me.
- Well over 39 million American adults were sexually abused as kids.
- At least 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually assaulted before they're 18 years old, 93% by someone they know, love or trust.
- The Center for Disease Control (CDC) says 5 American children die every day from child abuse, mostly from neglect, and estimates the annual cost of child abuse in America to be well over \$100 billion a year.
- Up to 90% of kids who are abused never tell, often fearing that their disclosure will result in retaliation, blame or removal from the family.
- For many abused kids there is also a fear of not being believed.

About 500 kids go missing **EVERY DAY** in our country, some of them runaways trying to escape an abusive upbringing. Many children simply vanish. We hear only about the tip-of-the-iceberg cases in the media.

In the most serious cases, the child is abducted by a stranger and killed, held for ransom, or taken with the intention to keep.

According to the Department of Justice, 74% of the time a child is killed by an abductor it happens within three hours of being taken.

NOTE: Most agree these statistics are significantly UNDERestimated because child abuse is one of the most under-reported of all crimes.

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Indicators of sexual abuse --

Source: www.childwelfare.gov

Children often show signs that they have been sexually abused. Some may show many signs, while others only a few, experts said. Below are a list of some symptoms of sexual abuse in children, not including physical signs such as venereal disease and pregnancy.

Indicators of sexual abuse in young children include:

- » Sleep disturbances
- » Bed wetting and/or loss of fecal control
- » Regressive behavior
- » Self-destructive or risk-taking behavior
- » Impulsivity, distractibility, difficulty
- » Refusal to be left alone
- » Fear of an individual, such as an alleged offender
- » Fear of people of a specific type or gender
- » Fire setting
- » Cruelty to animals
- » Problems relating to peers
- » Sudden changes in behavior
- » Difficulties in school
- » Inappropriate interest (for the age) in things sexual

Indicators of sexual abuse in older children include:

- » Eating disturbances (bulimia and anorexia)
- » Running away
- » Substance abuse
- » Self-destructive behavior, suicide attempts, self-mutilation
- » Incurability
- » Criminal activity
- » Depression and social withdrawal
- » Problems relating to peers
- » Sudden changes in behavior
- » Difficulties in school

LAKE BALBOA:

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"Learn the signs" -- from OneWithCourage.org

1. **Unexplained Injuries** Visible signs of physical abuse may include unexplained burns or bruises in the shape of objects. You may also hear unconvincing explanations of a child's injuries.

2. **Changes in behavior** Abuse can lead to many changes in a child's behavior. Abused children often appear scared, anxious, depressed, withdrawn or more aggressive.

3. **Returning to earlier behaviors** Abused children may display behaviors shown at earlier ages, such as thumb-sucking, bed-wetting, fear of the dark or strangers. For some children, even loss of acquired language or memory problems may be an issue.

4. **Fear of going home** Abused children may express apprehension or anxiety about leaving school or about going places with the person who is abusing them.

5. **Changes in eating** The stress, fear and anxiety caused by abuse can lead to changes in a child's eating behaviors, which may result in weight gain or loss.

6. **Changes in sleeping** Abused children may have frequent nightmares or have difficulty falling asleep, and as a result may appear tired or fatigued.

7. **Changes in school performance and attendance** Abused children may have difficulty concentrating in school or have excessive absences, sometimes due to adults trying to hide the child's injuries from authorities.

8. **Lack of personal care or hygiene** Abused and neglected children may appear uncared for. They may present as consistently dirty and have severe body odor, or they may lack sufficient clothing for the weather.

9. **Risk-taking behaviors** Young people who are being abused may engage in high-risk activities such as using drugs or alcohol or carrying a weapon.

10. **Inappropriate sexual behaviors** Children who have been sexually abused may exhibit overly sexualized behavior or use explicit sexual language.

RESEDA:

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Next Neighborhood Watch Meetings – May 10 and June 14 at 7:00 p.m. - West Valley Community Police Station

Resources and Tools:

- National Association of Missing & Exploited Children: www.MissingKids.com
- Center for Disease Control: www.CDC.gov
- 24 hour National Child Abuse Hotline: **1-800-4-A-CHILD**: www.ChildHelp.org
- National Association of Adult Survivors of Child Abuse: www.NAASCA.org

TARZANA:

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LAPD WEST VALLEY CARNIVAL!

MAY 4TH , 5TH & 6TH

SAVE 50% BY PURCHASING PRE-SALE
TICKETS

LOCATION: VANOWEN STREET BETWEEN WILBUR
STREET & VANALDEN AVENUE

CARNIVAL HOURS: FRIDAY, MAY 4TH, 2012
5PM - 11PM

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, MAY 5TH & 6TH, 2012
2PM - 11PM

*PRE-SALE TICKETS AVAILABLE AT
WEST VALLEY AREA POLICE STATION.
19020 VANOWEN STREET RESEDA , CA 91335*

*10 RIDES FOR \$20
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT THE LAPD
WEST VALLEY AREA COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICE
AT 818-374-7690 OR 818-374-7611*