

aware of all these factors to identify the less obvious examples of child abuse and neglect.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is one of the most devastating types of child maltreatment, and estimates indicate that it has increased significantly during the past decade ([US Department of Health and Human Services, 2012](#)). Some of the apparent increase is due to increased awareness and increased reporting ([Evans, 2011](#)).

As with all forms of child maltreatment, no universal definition for sexual abuse exists. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), amended by the CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2010, defines **sexual abuse** as “the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of such conduct; or the rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children” ([US Department of Health and Human Services, 2011](#)).

Sexual abuse includes the following types of sexual maltreatment (see also [Sexual Assault \[Rape\], Chapter 16](#)):

Incest: Any physical sexual activity between family members; blood relationship is not required (abusers can include stepparents, unrelated siblings, grandparents, uncles, and aunts); does not include sexual relations between legally sanctioned partners, such as spouses

Molestation: A vague term that includes “indecent liberties,” such as touching, fondling, kissing, single or mutual masturbation, or oral–genital contact

Exhibitionism: Indecent exposure, usually exposure of the genitalia by an adult man to children or women

Child pornography: Arranging and photographing, in any media, sexual acts involving children, alone or with adults or animals, regardless of consent by the child's legal guardian; also may denote distribution of such material in any form with or without