Munchausen by Proxy

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Munchausen by proxy is defined as “ a mental health problem in which a caregiver makes up or causes an illness or injury in a person under his or her care, such as a child, an elderly adult, or a person who has a disability. Because vulnerable people are the victims, MSBP is a form of child abuse or elder abuse” by The University of Michigan.

People who suffer this mental health illness often feel like their life is out of control, often have low self-esteem and are bad in dealing with anxiety. They may also have had bad childhoods. These factors enable the sufferer to feel like they are in control when they control their child’s life.

The positive reaction, assistance (both monetary and physical), and free gifts they get may also be motivating them to continue with their behavior.

This is treated by first putting the victim in custody or a safe place, and then the sufferer is given counseling and in cases where they suffer from other mental health issues like anxiety are put on medication. Both child services and law enforcement are involved.

Awareness about this has increased as media exposure has increased and people have seen this in some of their favorite shows. The infamous case of Gypsy Blanchard- who killed her mother with the help of her online boyfriend is the subject of the show “The Act” on Hulu, it is also the subject of a documentary called “Mommy Dead and Dearest”.

Her mother faked her illnesses, made her get unnecessary surgeries, and did not let her get a proper education.

The same disease was also part of the storyline of Netflix’s “The Politician” following the fictional character Infinity and her grandmother- who suffered from Munchausen by proxy. If you believe that someone you know maybe a victim or an abuser suffering from this disorder please file an anonymous report and contact a doctor.