

7 child sexual abuse world health organization

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7 Key Questions and Answers on Child Sexual Abuse: A WHO Perspective

1. What is the definition of child sexual abuse?

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), child sexual abuse refers to any sexual activity involving a child under the age of 18, wherein a perpetrator exploits the child for sexual gratification. This includes acts such as penetration, fondling, and exploitation through online or offline means.

2. How prevalent is child sexual abuse?

WHO estimates that globally, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys experience sexual violence before the age of 18. These numbers are likely underestimated, as many cases go unreported.

3. What are the consequences of child sexual abuse?

Child sexual abuse has severe and long-lasting consequences on the victim's physical, mental, and emotional health. It can lead to trauma, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicide. Survivors may also experience problems with relationships, employment, and education.

4. How can we prevent child sexual abuse?

Prevention measures include empowering children with age-appropriate education on their rights and body safety, promoting respectful relationships, and creating environments where children feel safe and supported. Involving parents, teachers,

and community members is crucial.

5. What should be the response to child sexual abuse?

It is essential to report all suspected cases of child sexual abuse to the appropriate authorities, such as law enforcement or child protection services. Victims require immediate access to medical care, legal assistance, and counseling. Supporting survivors and their families is paramount in their recovery and well-being.

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