The Effects of Childhood Trauma on Life-Challenges as an Adult

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Parents and guardians have a conscious or unconscious impact on young people in their care. As those experiences shape a person’s life over time, they will play out in several ways. The child’s behavior while growing up, and moving on to adolescence, can mirror how they were treated as a child. This behavior will differ, depending on if the child was treated in a negative and demeaning way, or in a positive and uplifting way. There is great variability among children, even if they were from the same family, because each child processes the experiences differently. Childhood trauma is an often-overlooked factor when trying to dissect and explain why certain children choose to behave the way they do. Additionally, mental illness can be linked to both child neglect and trauma, regardless of if the person remembers the experience or not. Research shows that trauma may block out certain experiences in memory, which gives rise to conflict and an inability to cope. This study examined the differences in adult life-challenges between those who suffered childhood trauma and those who had no such traumatic experiences as children and offers insight to positive coping mechanisms for those experiencing emotional conflict.

There are many ways that parents and guardians can impact a child’s life whether that be in a negative demeaning way or be in a positive and uplifting way. The way that a child act growing up and moving on to adolescence can sometimes be a clear sign of how they were treated as a child. No one human being shares the exact same growing up story, even if they were from the same family because in the end the sides were processed differently. Childhood trauma is a factor that is overlooked when trying to dissect why certain children choose to behave the way they do. Many mental illnesses are linked to child neglect or trauma growing up and many children do not even remember it. Trauma tends to block out certain experiences in your memory that are too hard to handle. This study will look at the differences between adults that suffered childhood trauma and adults that had life a little easier. This research will be done by surveying random students both male and female that attend the University of North Georgia Dahlonega campus.

Autobiography Reference 1

**EVIDENCE OF CHILD ABUSE: INFERRING THE CAUSES OF EFFECTS by Steven**

**Fienburg**

This Journal by Steven Fienburg starts off by addressing the difference between looking into something and finding a cause and effect between the two. He address the child abuse called Shaken Baby Syndrome and with it has many impacts on someone for the rest of their life.

Fienburg goes over that child abuse has many different circumstances to it which causes the study of child abuse to be a little difficult. This is because no two children have faced the same kind of abuse nor the same kind of coping mechanism or otherwise called reaction.

**Reference 2**

**Identifying Grooming of Children for Sexual Abuse:Gender Effects and Increased False Positives from Internet Information**

**Natalie Bennett\*, William O’Donohue**

In this journal by Natalie Bennett and William O’Donohue the authors start off their intentions by explaining what grooming children can be defined as, as well as explaining why abusers groom. Most abusers find themselves grooming their victims because they do not want the secret to come out also to make the victim think nothing is wrong. 50% of abusers use gifts and extra attention to lure the children into staying in their sights. The authors go on to put emphasis on the fact that if more individuals were trained and educated on the sights of grooming than less children would be groomed.

Reference 3

# Early Child Abuse and the Effects of Subsequent Witnessed Violence: Results from a National High Risk Sample of Adolescents

Caitlin Elsaesser1 · Colleen Cary Katz2 · Megan Feely1 · Lorin Tredinnick1

Elsaesser et al. discuss an issue within child abuse that many look over, which is that being a victim of a crime and witnessing a crime as equally as impactful on your life. After surveying a group there was found to be a positive correlation between witnessing crimes in your youth and internalizing symptom issues later on in life. Children who spend their lives witnessing crimes have been found to have more symptoms that associate with clinical depression, anxiety, as well as control disorders. Exposure to crimes as well as child abuse are more ofently found in the same communities. The

authors used two theoretical models: Stress Amplification and Stress Inoculation to research how children who have witnessed abuse react to abuse.

Reference 4

# Predicting Child Maltreatment over the Early Life Course: A Prospective Study

Jake M. Najman1 · James G. Scott2,3 · Gail M. Williams1 · Alexandra M. Clavarino1 · Steve Kisely4 · Tara

R. McGee5

Najman et al. start off this journal by emphasizing that there are numerous facts that play a key part when discussing child abuse. Issues like family poverty might be the sole reason a child is being abused, or it might be a combination of all of the factors in their lives. 84.5% of children who face maltreatment face a single type of abuse.

Najman et al. break down the risks and factors for: emotional child abuse, physical child abuse, sexual child abuse. The authors analyze the ways that the mother could have factors that influence her to abuse the child or outside factors that make her feel she has no other choice. Other factors Najman et al. explained where the fact if the baby if planned or not and the influence that leads onto neglecting the child or not.

Reference 4

Do child abuse and interparental violence lead to adult family violence Heyman and Slep

Heyman and Slep state that children who are victimized at a young age have a high chance of victimizing other individuals when they become adults. There is an empasis all thoughout this journal that revolves around the notion that child abuse and interparental violence co-occur which not only impacts the children from the abuse but also impacts the children who witness the violence. There are announced flaws though because there might not be two parents in the house and Heyman and Slep explain that the parental figure left to take care of the children finds other individuals to fill the missing parent place. This fill in usually coordinates with more intra-family violence.

Reference 5

**The impact of child abuse and neglect training on knowledge and awareness in university students**

Husniye ALTAN1 , Figen SAHIN DAGLI2 , Isil Irem BUDAKOGLU3

Altan et al. explain that many children who are abused are often found in the system looking for a place to live. This has to do with the fact that the children act out, due to their abuse, but they are not looked into instead cast aside. There was a community prevention method that was popular in the 1980s. Not only did this method focus on the child so that the child feels one on one help, but also focused on the home life and community surrounding the child. This method looked into placed like Turkey and there were implemented exercises taught to the college students and like so this helped more people be alert on the extent of child abuse occuring in these specific areas. Altan et al. did an extensive research on the reaction times of the adolencesents witnessing child abuse and they because more confident saying something when seeingsomething.

Methodology Sample

There are roughly 17,000 students who attend the University of North Georgia Dahlonega Campus, located in Lumpkin County, Georgia.

I did my research by going on to The University of North Georgia’s Dahlonega Campus, located in the center of campus there is a drill field which is where I researched. I walked laps around the field asking random passersbys on the field a specific group of questions. Some students did not want to answer my questions, but for the ones who did, I used my phone for notes. I asked each person who decided to participate a group of nine questions: Male or Female, Age, Major, How many parents/guardians in the house, How many siblings, How did they perceive their childhood good or bad, Any outliers that might impact answers, Do they believe that someone's childhood impacts their adolescents, and finally I asked if the participants remembers their childhood. Over a month I was able to speak with 28 individuals on campus, due to the subject of my questions there were many people who walked away mid questions, but a handful were able to answer.

Data Subject 1

1. Male 2. 20

1. “No”
2. Both parents present
3. 1 sister
4. “Run of the mill childhood” Good
5. Played Baseball said might have caused financial stress 8. Yes, “teaches us morals”

9. Yes, “I have a bunch of good memories” Subject 2

1. Female 2. 18

1. “Yes really bad in middle school”
2. Single mother
3. 2 sisters
4. “Many late nights caring for sisters” “My mom tried her best, but was not there” 7. Oldest sister “i guess that meant I was mom when mom wasnt there”
5. Yes, “I am able to function at a young age without my parents, but I feel sometimes I missed a lot on my childhood”
6. “Bits and pieces especially when mom brought home new partners” Subject 3

1. Male

2. 20

1. “Nope”
2. Both Parents Present
3. Single child
4. “Fantastic my parents never really cared where I was and what i did” 7. “My parents do make a lot” “Dad’s never home especially”

8. “Not really you choose your own adult path” 9. “Yes, Many trips following the cash”

Subject 4

1. Male

2. 19

1. “In a way, not too bad though”
2. Both Parents Present
3. Single Child 6. “Good”
4. “Not that I can think of”
5. “In a way you can work harder if you had it worse as a kid i guess” 9. “Yes”

Subject 5

1. Female

2. 22

1. “Yes and anxiety which is not fun”
2. Both Parents Present
3. One older Brother
4. “Chaotic because of my older brother” 7. “My older brother”
5. “Yes because I have gone to therapy because of it”
6. “I only remember the bad times” Subject 6

1. Female 2. 22

1. “Thankfully no”
2. Both Parents
3. Only Child
4. “Amazing not much I can complain about”
5. “We moved a few times, but that helped me grow”
6. “Yes, Influential people are filled in your childhood to shape you as an adult” 9. “Yes”

Subject 7

1. Male

2. 20

1. “I mean I guess you can say so for a little”
2. Divorced Parents
3. 1 sister and 1 brother
4. “Good childhood, hate being the middle child” 7. “I had to always be the example”
5. “It could”
6. “I remember most of it” Subject 8

1. Male

2. 24

1. “Yes it hit me really hard after my parents split”
2. Divorced Parents
3. 1 blood brother 2 step sisters
4. “Bad when the divorce happened, everythings okay now” 7. “Probably just say the divorce”
5. “No”
6. “Not really as a little kid, more after middle school” Subject 9

1. Male

2. 21

1. “I dont know”
2. Single Father
3. 2 sisters
4. “Decent Childhood I would say”
5. “Dad worked a lot, I felt too responsible”
6. “I would say I am more educated about girls honestly, so yes it taught me a lot”
7. “I remember being dad unfortunately” Subject 10

1. Female 2. 23

1. “Not really somedays I am sad but not depressed”
2. Both Parents
3. Single Child
4. “I had an easy childhood, my parents are my support system” 7. “I wish i had a sibling”

8. “Yes if I did not have my parents, then I dont believe I would be who I am today” 9. “Yes I was very spoiled”

Subject 11

1. Female 2. 19

1. “Yeah to be honest did not like living for a while there”
2. Divorced Parents
3. 1 Brother
4. “Kinda rough, my parents probably should have split way before they did” 7. “Just mostly the fighting”
5. “I realized everyone doesnt go together in life at an early age, so I guess yes”
6. “Probably remember 50%-60%” Subject 12

1. Female 2. 23

1. “Really bad, I felt trapped for a while stuck in the arguing”
2. Step dad and my biological mom
3. 3 brothers and 3 sisters
4. “Pretty bad not gonna lie, I kinda only had me to support me” 7. “Crazy step family and no discipline”
5. “Could be the most influential time of your entire life, so yes”
6. “I try to remember, but a lot I blocked out” Subject 13

1. Female 2. 20

1. “Not Necessarily”
2. Stepmom and dad
3. Single child 6. “Easy”
4. “Nope, I sailed through”
5. “Depends if was good or bad”
6. “Yeah, first memory is probably when I was 4 years old”

Subject 14

1. Male

2. 24

1. “Nah”
2. Both Bio Parents
3. 1 sister
4. “Good except annoying sister”
5. “Nope” 8. “It might” 9. “Yes”

Subject 15

1. Male 2. 19

1. “I did feel sad for a few months”
2. Divorced Parents
3. 3 brothers 6. “Alright”

7. “Just the split but i was younger than my brothers” 8. “It can”

9. “Since I was probably 10 and older” Subject 16

1. Female 2. 18

1. “I feel like I have always had depression”
2. Divorced Parents
3. Only child
4. “Not too great” 7. “My fathers job”
5. “Absolutely it can”
6. “I wish I didn't” Subject 17

1. Male

2. 20

1. “Nope”
2. Both Bio Parents
3. 1 Sister 2 brothers
4. “Good”
5. “Not that I can think of”
6. “Not Necessarily, it's up to you” 9. “Yeah”

Subject 18

1. Female 2. 21

1. “Yeah but I feel like I have overcome it now”
2. Single Mother
3. 1 brother
4. “So so, with the circumstances”
5. “Just the separation of my parents” 8. “If it is good, no”

9. “I don’t know” Subject 19

1. Female 2. 20

1. “Yeah and honestly it is not something I wish for another to go through”
2. Divorced step mom and bio father
3. 4 other siblings 6. “Not the best”
4. “Too many siblings, not enough parents”
5. “I wanna make my future not like my past for my children so I guess yes”
6. “I wish i did not remember as much Subject 20

1. Male

2. 19

1. “Not really”
2. Both Bio Parents
3. Single child 6. “Fun”
4. “Nope”
5. “You can learn from your past” 9. “Yeah”

Subject 21

1. Male

2. 22

1. “Sometimes I felt like it but I am not sure”
2. Step dad Bio mom
3. 1 step sister
4. “Pretty good, just arguing” 7. “Probably just the arguing” 8. “It can I guess”

9. “Yes”

Subject 22

1. Male

2. 23

1. “No”
2. Both bio parents
3. 1 sister
4. “It was good”
5. “No it was pretty basic”
6. “Yes”
7. “Yes”

Subject 23

1. Female 2. 19

1. “Yes plus anxiety disorder which do not go well together”
2. 1 bio dad
3. 2 brothers 1 sister all blood
4. “Bad, my mom cheated and left dad to handle all of us” 7. “Mom leaving dad and substance abuse”
5. “Very much so”
6. “No” Subject 24

1. Female 2. 21

1. “No”
2. Step dad bio mom
3. 2 step sisters and 1 bio brother
4. “Alright”
5. “Family issues” 8. “No”

9. “Yes”

Subject 25

1. Male

2. 27

1. “No”
2. 1 bio mom
3. Only child
4. “Good”
5. “No, no outliers” 8. “Yes”

9. “Yes”

Subject 26

1. Female 2. 20

1. “Nope”
2. Both Bio parents
3. 1 sister
4. “Pretty good compared to most”
5. “Not that I can think of” 8. “Yes”

9. “Yeah” Subject 27

1. Male

2. 21

1. “Kind of”
2. Step mom Bio Father
3. 2 step brothers
4. “It was alright not much to say”
5. “No” 8. “Yeah”

9. “Kind of” Subject 28

1. Male

2. 22

1. “Yes”
2. Both Bio
3. 2 sisters 2 brothers
4. “I would use the word fun to describe it” 7. “Just a big family”
5. “Depends”
6. “Yes”