

CHILDHOOD ABUSE AND LATER VIOLENT CRIME FACTS

Key Statistics Linking Child Abuse and Violent Crime

1. Children who experience abuse or neglect are far more likely to commit violent crime.

2. Research shows:

- 75% - 80% of violent offenders were abused as children.
- Exposure to domestic violence greatly increases violent behavior risk.
- Children who witness domestic violence are:
 - 2–3 times more likely to become involved in violent relationships later in life
- ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) scores predict violent behavior.
 - People with 4 or more ACEs are significantly more likely to experience:
 - violence
 - incarceration
 - substance abuse
 - suicide attempts
 - Mental health problems

3. Juvenile offenders have extremely high trauma rates.

Studies show:

- Over 90% of juvenile offenders have experienced at least one traumatic event.
- Abuse increases the risk of aggressive behavior in adolescence.
- Research shows abused children are:
 - 2–4 times more likely to develop serious aggression or antisocial behavior

4. Childhood neglect strongly predicts criminal behavior.

Neglect is the most common form of abuse and is linked to:

- higher rates of juvenile delinquency
- school failure
- later criminal activity

5. Many serial killers report childhood abuse.

While rare overall, studies have found:

- A significant portion of serial killers experienced severe abuse, neglect, or abandonment as children.

Public health experts emphasize:

Preventing childhood trauma is one of the most effective ways to reduce future violence in society.

Sources:

- [CDC – Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACE Study\)](#)
- [Abuse link to Violence](#)
- [National Institute of Justice https://nij.ojp.gov](https://nij.ojp.gov)
- [Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline](#)
- [Darkness to Light](#)