

# **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](#)