

## Child Abus: symptoms and repercussions in adulthood

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### Abstract

The child who suffered psychological abuse of physical and mental abuse, or neglect, experienced behavioral problems of development and learning, mental health, physical and mental health in adolescence, general psychological deterioration, as well as an extreme lack of self-esteem and a degraded self-image of the person. Emotional abuse also leaves traces in adulthood. These abused children are often emotionally victimized during their adult lives, and may turn into irascible, hostile and aggressive adults.

**Key words:** abuse, neglect, insults, psychological abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse.

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### Résumé

L'enfant ayant subi une maltraitance psychologique des brutalités physiques et mentales, violence, d'abandon ou de négligence, rencontra à la période de l'adolescence des problèmes comportementaux de développement et d'apprentissage, de santé mentale, avec des état physique et psychologique général dégradé, ainsi qu'un manque extrême d'estime de soi et une image dégradée de sa personne. Les abus émotionnels laissent également des traces à l'âge adulte. Ces enfants maltraités sont souvent victimisés sur le plan émotionnel pendant leur vie d'adulte, et peuvent se transformer en adultes irascibles, hostiles et agressifs.

**Mots clés :** maltraitance, négligence, insultes, violences psychologiques, abus émotionnels, abus sexuels.

### ملخص

الطفل الذي عانى من الإيذاء النفسي الإيذاء الجسدي والعقلي أو الإهمال ، تترتب عليه مشاكل سلوكية تتعلق بالنمو والتعلم ، والصحة البدنية والعقلية في سن المراهقة، التدهور النفسي العام ، وكذلك النقص الشديد في احترام الذات وبالإضافة إلى التدهور النفسي. الاعتداء العاطفي يترك آثارا في مرحلة البلوغ. غالبًا ما يقع هؤلاء الأطفال المعتدى عليهم كضحية عاطفية في مرحلة الشباب والكهولة ، وقد يتحولون إلى بالغين عدوانيين وعدائيين.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الإساءة ، الإهمال ، الإهانات ، الإساءة النفسية ، الإساءة العاطفية ، الإساءة الجنسية.

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## I- Introduction :

The child who has been the victim of psychological abuse and who has not benefited from any protective intervention and no therapeutic support is facing adolescence with an extreme lack of self-esteem and a degraded image of his person. Since the parents continue their actions during this period, the child remains stuck in his personal development and has many problems that his family is not slow to postpone the crisis of adolescence. Emotional abuse also leaves traces in adulthood. Many victims who have suffered psychological abuse during childhood are often emotionally victimized during their adult lives. They continue to maintain abusive relationships and are subject to exploitation and abuse by others. Their contempt for themselves confirms them in this role of victim "serving" others. Among these victims of emotional abuse during childhood, some become irascible, hostile and aggressive adults. Violence against children is the result of actions or inactions by those to whom the child is expected to trust. - *Does abuse lead to chronic psychological problems?*

The right of the child is a composite right and broke, the rules which constitute it are registered in several codes, civil code, penal code, of the family ... etc. It is implemented by various magistrates including the children's judge, essentially the right of the child has an internal vocation but cannot ignore international law, it develops similarly to other social or medical structures also responsible for the protection of the child.

Another vision of the rights of the child is conveyed by the international convention of the rights of the child, the child is from now on thought like a subject, a person endowed with freedom. Admittedly, this convention was not the first international text proclaiming the rights of the child, a first declaration was approved in 1924 by the society of nations and more closely the United Nations had adopted a declaration of the rights of the child in 1959. But these documents were only affirmations of principles that had no binding force for the states, especially since their echo was very weak. This is not the case of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, known as the New York Convention, which obliges the signatory states to take steps to make the rules set out in its text more effective, more generally the states must adapt their legislation. to incorporate in their positive rights the norms set in the international text., and it came into force on May 16, 1993, at the regional level Algeria published on July 8, 2003 in the Official Gazette No. 41 Presidential Decree No. 03242 ratifying the African Charter of Rights and Welfare African child, the charter recognizes the unique and privileged position of the child in society with important responsibilities within the family, a right granted to the child means a corresponding duty in keeping with the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (DJENNAD Mohand, [2006]).

According to the WHO, child abuse affects one in four children, and around 20 % of women and 5 to 10 % of men say they have experienced sexual violence as children. Abuse has harmful, often serious and lasting, consequences on the physical and mental health of the victims. It is punishable by law in most countries.

The role of the judicial system is the protection of the child, the recognition of his rights, as well as the punishment of unlawful practices against him. The intervention of the courts differs from "one situation to another, whether civil, criminal or administrative, which must safeguard the best interests of the child, an interest considered as a" flexible "concept and which is left to the discretion of the juvenile judge, in light of a set of situations, it was pointed out.

For the participants in the meeting, there is a need for research on enforcement mechanisms for the protection of children's rights and coordination between different justice and court-involved stakeholders.

## **I.1. Definition of Child abuse**

According to the United Nations , child abuse is defined as: "Any form of violence , physical or mental abuse or abuse, neglect or neglect, abuse or exploitation, including sexual violence".

According to the ODAS (Decentralized Observatory of Social Action, 1993 ) : " The abused child is one who is the victim of physical violence, mental cruelty, sexual abuse, heavy negligence with serious consequences on its physical and psychological development " . " The child at risk is the one who knows conditions that may endanger his health, safety, morality, education, or maintenance, but that is not abused (negligence). .. ».

The World Health Organization proposes a definition:

"Abuse or child abuse includes all forms of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, or forms of exploitation, including commercial, resulting in actual or potential harm to health. The child's survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power ".

## **I.2. The types of violence**

There are 3 main categories of violence:

### **I.2.1. Physical violence**

Any deliberate and non-accidental use of force against a child, such that the child is or may be injured: hitting (by hand or with an object), beating, kicking, punching , to bite, to burn, to poison, to suffocate, to strangle, to shake, to throw, to drown, to manufacture symptoms, to deliberately induce an illness.

### **I.2.2. Physical violence**

Physical abuse results in the use of force or violence against a child, so that he or she is injured or injured : to strike (with the hand, with the fist, with the foot, with an object ...), to bite, to burn, to poison, to drug or to incite to consume dangerous substances (alcohol, tobacco, narcotics ...), to smother, to strangle, to shake, to shake, to drown ... The violence committed against the children does not need to be habitual or repeated to fall under the law.

In 2016, the police identified 131 infanticides, 67 committed within the family. Of these 67 children who died as a result of a parent or close relative, almost 4 in 5 were under 5 years old. Note that these figures only reflect known cases of law enforcement.

Violence against children is severely punishable by law, especially when the perpetrator is a relative or a close relative of the victim.

### **I.2.3. Psychological violence**

Acts that are usually repetitive, including verbal threats, social isolation, bullying, or the fact that the child is routinely subject to unreasonable demands (in relation to age, level of development, etc.), to terrorize him / her, to expose him to danger, to violence (committed on the other parent or another child). Emotional abuse is implicated in all other forms of abuse, even if it can happen alone.

### **I.2.4. Sexual violence**

Sexual abuse includes forcing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity, including prostitution, whether the child is aware of what is happening or not. These activities may include a contact, penetrative or not. They may include non-contact activities, such as getting children to watch sexual activities or watching / producing sexual images, or encouraging children to engage in inappropriate sexual behavior.

Sexual violence is not limited to rape, but concerns all acts of a sexual nature imposed on children. Sexual assault refers to any sexual assault committed with violence, coercion, threat or surprise. Rape is one of them, and is characterized by an act of sexual penetration (vaginal, anal or oral).

### 2.3.5. Abuse of cultural practices

Some countries, because of cultures, uses and beliefs, tolerate certain types of practices, even though they contravene children's physical and mental well-being. These countries, which are aware of the seriousness of these acts on the health of children, (they have ratified the international standards that condemn these abuses) continue to tolerate them because of the traditions. In reality, these countries do not measure the seriousness of these practices sufficiently. Also, they do not even try to adopt prevention and awareness measures.

## II– Analyses and explications:

### II.1 The aftermath of maltreatment

Beyond death, which is, of course, the most serious consequence of abuse, two broad categories of consequences of abuse can be schematically distinguished: attacks on physical health and attacks on mental health. The boundary between these two categories is actually very difficult to establish, and they are closely related. They, in turn, have "cascading" consequences on the life of the child and then of the young adult (social, emotional, school life, behavior towards the law ...)

- **Death:** The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are 155,000 children aged 15 and under who die each year as a result of abuse and neglect. As a large proportion of deaths are probably not reported due to lack of surveys and post-mortem analyzes, this figure is underestimated.
- **Impairment of physical health:** Violence against a child can have a direct impact on his or her physical health: it is usually physical trauma (injuries, fractures, etc.) that can lead to disability / disability. This case may involve limbs (arms, legs), vital functions (organ damage), but also brain function. In this case, the physical attacks lead to mental attacks (shaken baby syndrome for example). Impairment of physical health can also be indirect: neglect of care can lead to a deterioration of the physical state (malnutrition, deficiencies, chronic or acute untreated diseases ...)
- **Mental health issues:** The secure relationship between a child and caregiver is the foundation upon which the child constructs his or her image of the world and their own identity and ability to interact with children. When the person or persons who are supposed to bring a child safety, care and education, is (are) actually a source of danger and anxiety, the child can not develop properly. Abuse affects children's self-image, their ability to trust and enter social life. When abuse occurs early in the child's developmental stages and occurs on a regular basis, it can cause irreversible harm and jeopardize one's ability to live independently.

### II.2. Consequences on the life of the child

These physical and psychological consequences have serious consequences for the life of the child and then of the young adult. These consequences can be associated and manifest themselves in a cascade (some leading others).

- **Developmental and learning issues:** The correlation between abuse and a lower than average level of education has been established on many occasions. Abuse can have a heavy impact in areas essential for learning such as speech and language.
- **Mental health and behavioral problems:** internalized behaviors (withdrawal, sadness, isolation, depression, suicide attempts, food disorders, addictions to drugs and alcohol) and active behavioral disorders (hyperactivity, aggression, violence towards others, criminal activity ...)
- **Precarious social situations:** children who have suffered abuse and neglect are more likely than others to experience precarious social situations during adolescence. For girls, the likelihood of early pregnancy is significantly increased relative to the general population, as are the rates of STD infections. For the most part, the risks of

unemployment and housing problems are also higher and jeopardize long-term social integration.

- **Degraded general physical condition: there is** a correlation between childhood abuse and degraded physical health status in adolescence (Longitudinal study conducted in the United States by Flaherty et al., 2006, 2009). According to this study (which takes into account all violence, not just physical violence), the more a child has experienced episodes of abuse, the more likely his state of health is to be altered in his adolescence.

### II.3. Aggravating factors

Factors related to the conditions in which abuse occurs:

- **The age of the victim:** The earlier the maltreatment, the more it intervenes early in the development process, preventing the smooth running of fundamental steps (body diagram, self-image, structuring of language ...). These steps cannot be "caught up" later, the damage can be irreversible.
- **Duration and frequency:** the more regular and long-term abuse is inflicted, the greater the impact on the child's life and development.
- **Relationship of the abuser to the assaulted:** The closer the aggressor (parent or other person from the family environment) the more the experience is traumatic and impacting.

### II.4. Factors related to taking into account the situation of maltreatment

- **Disavowal of the act by the third party:** Most of the time, adults are not prepared to receive the confidence of an abused child. The "deafness" or lack of support of the person chosen to be a confidante represents an additional trauma for the child. A fortiori if it is a close relative who refuses to take into account the story.
- **Absence of material evidence of abuse:** Evidence such as traces of beatings, burns, etc. facilitate the validation of the act in the face of denial or repression, and can quickly protect the child.
- **The absence of judicial treatment:** the absence of judicial treatment can be seen as a denial of the reality of abuse, and thus as a lack of protection.

## III- Discussions of protection measures

### III.1. Law on the protection of the child in Algeria

The protection of children against all forms of violence is at the heart of the Algerian state's concerns, as evidenced by the importance of the budgets allocated to the different ministries in charge of protection. Algeria has been committed for several decades to bring its national legislation into line with the international conventions to which it is a signatory, and in particular that relating to the rights of the child.

In spite of these advances, children in Algeria are still exposed to violations of their rights, notably because of a strong demographic growth, inadequate educational and disciplinary practices, at borders or significant migratory pressure.

In 2008, Parliament passed an Education Act that prohibits corporal punishment, moral abuse and all forms of bullying in schools. Between 2008 and 2015, a National Action Plan for Children guides government action and leads to the adoption, in 2014, of an amendment to the Penal Code toughening penalties for perpetrators of violence against children, and in 2015, a Child Protection Law which enshrines a number of new rights for children and introduces strengthened protection mechanisms, including the creation of the National Body for the Protection and Promotion of Children. This dynamic is further supported by the constitutional revision of 2016, which enshrines in the Basic Law important rights for increased protection of children: criminalization of child labor, repression of violence against children, obligation for parents to ensure the protection of children.

Despite these advances, children in Algeria are still exposed to violations of their rights, in particular because of a strong demographic growth, inadequate educational and disciplinary practices, instability at the borders or significant positive migratory pressure. Child Protection programming aims to:

- **Support decision-makers to strengthen the legal and regulatory framework for children by:**

- The development of a new National Action Plan for children.
- Improving the care of young children in childcare institutions of the Ministry of National Solidarity.

- **Improve child protection services by strengthening the capacities and practices of social sector professionals:**

- The sensitization of the executives of the Ministry of National Solidarity and the National Body for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood on the protection of children and the promotion of exchange of experiences.
- Professional training in case management.

- **Strengthen the system of protection for child victims of abuse, abuse, discrimination, neglect, violence and exploitation:**

- Support for a strengthened coordination mechanism for children under court placement.
- Support for family or institutional care with greater respect for the best interests of the child.

- **Strengthen the capacity of institutional and non-institutional actors to report on the situation of children:**

- The support has research and analysis on the situation of children in Algeria.
- Capacity building of protection actors in the production of evidence about childhood.

- **Inform and raise public awareness about the forms of violence faced by children, especially those encountered in their use of the Internet:**

- Raising awareness of children's rights by celebrating key events and facilitating thematic meetings with children and adolescents.
- The popularization of rights via various communication media, including social networks.

### **III.2. National body for the protection and promotion of children in Algeria**

The national body for the protection and promotion of children is responsible for the promotion of the rights of the child, including the establishment and evaluation, periodically, of national and local programs for the promotion of children's rights. children's rights, in coordination with the various public administrations, institutions and institutions and persons responsible for the protection of children; to implement all awareness-raising, information and communication actions and to encourage research and teaching in the field of children's rights, its mission is notably to promote the participation of civil society in monitoring and the promotion of the rights of the child and to set up a national information system on the situation of children in Algeria, in coordination with the administrations and institutions concerned, according to the rules of procedure which have just been published on the official journal (DJENNAD Mohand, [2006]).

#### **IV- Conclusion:**

The health protection measures of a health nature are extremely numerous, the children are beneficiaries of preventive medical acts which according to their age are exercised either in the centers of maternal and infantile protection, or within the framework of the school medicine and university.

The protection centers provide consultations and medico-social preventive measures for children under six years of age. Also the requirement to submit children to a number of medical examinations, each child is provided with a health book issued free of charge on which are recorded all indications related to health especially periodic medical examinations and vaccinations.

School- age and school-based protection is also a key element in promoting the health of the population as a whole, reaching more than a quarter of this population.

It aims to support students in the educational environment, to ensure this student a harmonious physical development, and mental, intellectual and social. It consists of activities aimed at improving and protecting the collective and individual, physical and mental health of students, this protection being achieved through a control of the state of health of each pupil, in particular by the school health record, by the activities of hygiene, prevention and first aid, which are one of the main tasks of the educational structures and their staff, through the execution of the health activities provided by the health services in a coordinated manner with the educational establishments and local communities and also by the submission of sports activities to a periodic medical check.

By reference to international standards, Algeria is committed to taking all the necessary legislative, regulatory and other measures to implement the rights recognized by international standards, bearing in mind the need to give special protection to the child. Algeria has ratified several conventions other than the CIDE among which, the international convention n ° 138 on the minimum age, 1973 ratified on April 30, 1984 and the international convention n ° 182, concerning the prohibition of the worst forms of work of the children and the immediate action to eliminate them adopted by the ILO General Conference on 17 June 1999, ratified on 28 November 2000.

In addition, it has initiated a bill on the organization and promotion of social action. This law defines the essential axes of protection, of the social integration of the vulnerable categories of which the children in difficulties, in moral danger or that having committed offenses, the poor and the early childhood. Measures of social protection, education in protective environment and in ordinary environment of social and professional integration were also taken.

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