Assault / Contact / Molest Offense

Child sexual abuse or child molestation is a form of child abuse in which an adult or older adolescent uses a child for sexual stimulation. Forms of child sexual abuse include asking or pressuring a child to engage in sexual activities (regardless of the outcome), indecent exposure (of the genitals, female nipples, etc.) to a child with intent to gratify their own sexual desires or to intimidate or groom the child, physical sexual contact with a child, or using a child to produce child pornography.

Child sexual abuse can occur in a variety of settings, including home, school, or work (in places where child labor is common). Child marriage is one of the main forms of child sexual abuse; UNICEF has stated that child marriage "*represents perhaps the most prevalent form of sexual abuse and exploitation of girls*". The effects of child sexual abuse can include depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, complex post-traumatic stress disorder, propensity to further victimization in adulthood, and physical injury to the child, among other problems. Sexual abuse by a family member is a form of incest and can result in more serious and long-term psychological trauma, especially in the case of parental incest.

The global prevalence of child sexual abuse has been estimated at 19.7% for females and 7.9% for males. Most sexual abuse offenders are acquainted with their victims; approximately 30% are relatives of the child, most often brothers, fathers, uncles, or cousins; around 60% are other acquaintances, such as "friends" of the family, babysitters, or neighbors; strangers are the offenders in approximately 10% of child sexual abuse cases. Most child sexual abuse is committed by men; studies on female child molesters show that women commit 14% to 40% of offenses reported against boys and 6% of offenses reported against girls.

The word pedophile is commonly applied indiscriminately to anyone who sexually abuses a child, but child sexual offenders are not pedophiles unless they have a strong sexual interest in prepubescent children. Under the law, child sexual abuse is an umbrella term describing criminal / civil offenses in which an adult engages in sexual activity with a minor or exploits a minor for the purpose of sexual gratification. The American Psychological Association states that "*children cannot consent to sexual activity with adults*", and condemns any such action by an adult: "*An adult who engages in sexual activity with a child is performing a criminal and immoral act which never can be considered normal or socially acceptable behavior*." (Wikipedia, 2015, Yes – quit smirking. This is actually a good summation.)

Statutory Sexual Offending

- Age of Consent is currently 16 in Canada and ranges from 14-to-18 in the United States.
- Statutory sexual crimes accounted for approximately a quarter of all sexual crimes involving minors in the United States in 2000 (Troup, Leasure & Snyder, 2005).
- Hines & Finkelhor (2007) found that 1% of girls ages 11-to-12 and 4% of girls ages 13-to-15 reported voluntarily having sex with a male who was five or more years older.
- A national study showed a little over 1% for all respondents had sex for the first time before the age of 14 with someone who was six-or-more-years older (Abma, Martinez, Mosher, & Dawson, 2004).
- 13% of adolescent girls had a sexual experience with an adult male who was three or more years older. The typical age difference was three or four years. 80% of the sexual experiences were described as voluntary (Manlove, Moore, Liechty, Ikramullah, and Cottingham, 2005)

Troup-Leasure and Snyder (2005) found the following:

- 95% of the statutory incidents involved minor females and almost all of these incidents involved older males as perpetrators. The perpetrators were adults in 82% of the cases. The majority of female adolescents were 14 or 15 years old, and the meeting age difference was six years. So the male was typically a young adult.
- Its rare for statutory sexual offences to involve strangers - 29% of offenders were considered boyfriends/girlfriends, and 62% were considered friends/acquaintances. This leaves 9% as strangers.
- Arrests occurred in 42% of the incidents. Arrests were less likely if the older person was the minor's boyfriend or girlfriend.
- With regards to male adolescent victims, they were 5% of the cases. In these cases, 94% of the older persons were female. This suggests that the majority of statutory offenses involved heterosexual participants.
- The medium age difference for male adolescents was nine years, which is larger than the medium age difference for female adolescents. (Troup-Leasure and Snyder -2005)