

The Developmental Impact of Different Forms of Child Abuse and Neglect

Penelope K. Trickett and Catherine McBride-Chang
University of Southern California

This paper reviews and integrates research knowledge about the impact of different forms of child maltreatment—physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Both the short-term impact on the child and the long-term impact on the adolescent and adult are considered. A developmental perspective guides the review. Research studies on these forms of child maltreatment which meet certain criteria (e.g. an appropriate comparison group) are reviewed with the aim of understanding how the experience of child abuse or neglect interferes with developmental processes or tasks as the individual goes through adolescence and then adulthood. Evidence about the role of other mediating factors such as gender and other individual difference variables, characteristics of the maltreatment, and family environment is also presented. Gaps in knowledge are noted, and recommendations are made for future research.