

1. Gewirtz-Meydan, A. & Opuda, E. (2020). **The impact of CSA on men's sexual function: A systematic review.** *Trauma, Violence & Abuse.*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838020939134>

Abstract

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is strongly associated with sexual dysfunction. However, research about male survivors' sexual functioning after CSA is lacking. The current systematic review searched for all studies that reported on CSA and sexual function among male survivors to answer the following questions: Do male survivors of CSA experience sexual dysfunctions, and if so, to what extent? Does CSA increase the risk of developing sexual dysfunctions in adulthood among men? Studies were identified by searching seven databases and sources of gray literature. The selection criteria included empirical studies involving a population of adult men who experienced CSA before the age of 18. Studies focused on sexual functioning and sexual development after the abuse. Twelve studies met the selection criteria. While some studies confirmed that CSA is a risk factor for sexual dysfunction in adult male survivors, including low sexual drive, problems with arousal, and difficulties with orgasm and pain, other studies failed to find a correlation between sexual dysfunction and CSA. The wide range in quality, methodology, and definitions of CSA and sexual function presented challenges to consistent analysis of the studies and to determine the impact of CSA. Further research is required to fully understand the effect of CSA on adult men's sexual function.

2. Gewirtz-Meydan, A. (2020). **The moderating role of social and parental support between sexual abuse, self-concept and psychopathology in a national representative sample of children.** *Children and Youth Services Review.*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chidyouth.2020.104938>

Abstract

While many studies point out the relationship between child sexual abuse and psychopathology, further understanding of the mechanism of this association is required. The present study examined a theoretical model of the effect of child sexual abuse on psychopathology. Analyses were based on three waves from the National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence (NatSCEV), conducted in 2008, 2010 and 2014. Children and youth ages 10-17 who reported being sexually abused (N=414) were examined in comparison to a control group who were selected to match the CSA group in age, sex, and socioeconomic status (N=414). Using structural equation modeling, we examined a theoretical model of the effect of child sexual abuse on the development of psychopathology. Sexually abused children had lower self-concept, social support and perceived parental quality, and higher psychopathology than the control group did. Higher self-concept, social support and perceived parental quality were linked with lower levels of psychopathology.

3. Gewirtz-Meydan, A., Lahav, Y., Walsh, W., & Finkelhor, D. (2019). Psychopathology among adult survivors of child pornography. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 98*.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2019.104189>

Abstract

Background: The majority of studies investigating child pornography have focused on conceptualizing the problem and the harm of the crime, evaluating the risk for child pornography offending, or discuss preventive measures. Little is known about survivors of this type of crime.

Objective: This research explores the relationship between child pornography victimization and psychopathology in adulthood. Specifically, we examined the contribution of emotional reactions at the time of the crime and shortly after (guilt, embarrassment and avoidance) on psychopathology among adult survivors of child pornography.

Participants and setting: The study was conducted among 107 child pornography adult survivors, aged 18-63 ($M = 39.48$, $SD = 12.31$). All participants were sexually molested during the crime.

Methods: An online survey was completed by a convenience sample of adult survivors of child pornography.

Results: Findings indicate survivor's current age predicted current psychopathology symptoms. Survivor's emotional reactions of guilt and embarrassment at the time of the crime and shortly after were significantly associated with elevated psychopathology, above and beyond demographic characteristics and features of the crime.

Conclusions: The present results suggest the way survivors of child pornography react to the crime might shape their mental health in the long term.

4. O'Brien, J. E., Gewirtz-Meydan, A. & Mitchell, K. J. (2019). Online requests to run away: Prevalence from a nationally representative sample of youth. *International Journal of Child Maltreatment*, 2, 183-197.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42448-019-00025-6>

Abstract

The current study explored the prevalence and characteristics of online requests to run away among a nationally representative sample of youth. The three Youth Internet Safety Surveys (YISS-1, YISS-2, and YISS-3) are detailed and structured telephone questionnaires designed to quantify youth experiences with others via the Internet. A total of 4511 youth were surveyed about their online experiences, including receiving a request to run away. Findings reveal that online requests to run away are rare ($n = 36$) and that the majority of requests to run away came from peers that youth already knew in person. An important implication of the current study is the inclusion of online risks, including being asked to run away via the Internet, as a topic in extant safety trainings for youth. Understanding how such experiences fit into the broader context of peer relationships and interactions is an important next step.

5. Gewirtz-Meydan, A., & Finkelhor, D. (2019). Sexual abuse and assault in a large national sample of children and adolescents. *Child Maltreatment*.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077559519873975>

Abstract

The present study sought to examine features of sexual abuse cases among a U.S. nationally representative sample of 13,052 children and adolescents, ages 0–17 years. The National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence was collected in three different years (2008, 2011, and 2014) via telephone interviews. Information about sexual abuse and assault was obtained from youth themselves (ages 10–17) or caregivers (for children ages 0–9) using the Juvenile Victimization Questionnaire. Results indicate most offenses are at the hands of other juveniles (76.7% for males and 70.1% for females), primarily acquaintances, and occurring more frequently for adolescents aged 14–17. Whereas girls are mostly abused by males (88.4%), boys are abused by both males (45.6%) and females (54.4%). In 15% of cases, penetration is part of the abuse. Victims report being very afraid in 37.5% of episodes but not at all afraid in 19.8%. Among 10- to 17-year-olds, 66.3% of episodes are not reported to parents or any adult. Police reports occur for 19.1% of all cases. The results in the present study indicate that children and youth are exposed to sexual abuse and assault in varied ways, which require moving beyond conventional stereotypes of the problem.

- 6. Gewirtz-Meydan, A., Mitchell, K. J. & Rothman, E. (2018). What do kids think about sexting? *Computers in Human Behavior, 86*, 256-265.**

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.04.007>

Abstract

To determine the current and potential future impact of sexting on adolescents, we need more information about youths' attitudes and beliefs concerning this behavior. Using a national sample of 1560 youth Internet users, ages 10 to 17, collected between 2010 and 2011, the present study examined the attitudes and beliefs about the impact of sexting as well as youths' likelihood of reporting it to authorities. Results indicate that the majority of youth considered sexting to be a crime. Compared with youth not involved in sexting, youth who were involved in sexting were less likely to consider sexting a crime and did not believe that sexting would hurt their chances of getting a job, hurt friendships, romantic relationships, or their relationship with their family. Boys and older youth held more favorable attitudes towards sexting than girls and younger youth. Boys were also less likely to say that they would report sexting to authorities and less likely to say that they would talk to their friends in order to prevent them from sexting. Youth who reported substance use, had ever had sexual intercourse, and intentional pornography consumption, were less likely to think sexting would hurt friendships or relationships, or say they would report sexting than youth not involved in these activities.

- 7. Gewirtz-Meydan, A., Walsh, W. A., Wolak, J. & Finkelhor, D. (2018). The complex experience of child pornography survivors. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 80*, 238-248.**

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2018.03.031>

Abstract

This research explores the complex experiences of survivors of child pornography production. The study was conducted among a convenience sample of child pornography adult survivors (N = 133), using an online survey which included a series of open-ended questions. Nearly half of respondents reported that they felt the production of sexual images caused specific problems that were different from the problems caused by other aspects of the abuse. Nearly half of the sample worried all the time that people would think they were willing participants or that people would recognize them, one-third refused to talk about the images and 22% denied there were images. The qualitative analysis identified three major themes which emerged from the survivor's perspective as adults: Guilt and shame, their ongoing vulnerability and an empowerment dimension the images sometimes brought. Recommendations for further research and additional implications are discussed.