

Child sexual abuse: Theoretical-empirical review and systematic prevention in Croatia

Summary

Child abuse and neglect represent social and public health problem with high mortality and morbidity rates worldwide. Research systematically indicates all abuse and neglect types' high prevalence and incidence, also lowest disclosure percentage of sexual abuse, with far-reaching consequences on mental health and well-being. According to the Council of Europe, every fifth child is sexually abused, which is supported by national data, and through modern technologies, children are exposed to additional dangers such as online recruitment ("grooming") and sexual abuse via the Internet. The risk of victimization of children and young people is on the rise due to the current pandemic crisis. This paper presents an overview of theoretical and empirical knowledge on child sexual abuse, live and through modern technologies, and a critical review of the prevention of this problem in Croatia at the national level with recommendations for improving the prevention goals of the next National Strategy for Children's Rights in Croatia.

Key Words: *child sexual abuse, grooming, sextortion, prevention*