

FACTS AT A GLANCE: FAMILIES FACE COMPLEX, INTER-RELATED OBSTACLES

Other Problems ▼	Primary Problem Brought to the Attention of One Part of the System					
	Child Abuse and Neglect	Crime and Delinquency	Domestic Violence	Mental Illness	Substance Abuse	Poverty
Child Abuse and Neglect	1. It is estimated that about 1/3 of abused and neglected children will eventually victimize their own children. ⁴	7. About two-thirds of incarcerated mothers were the primary caregivers for at least one child before they were arrested. ¹⁶	13. Between 30% and 60% of men who batter their wives also abuse their children. ⁷ 50% of men who frequently assault their wives also frequently assault their children. ³	19. People who grew up with a household member who was depressed, mentally ill, or who attempted suicide were two times more likely to have been physically abused. ⁹	25. As many as 2/3 of people in drug treatment programs reported being abused as children. ⁴	31. Abuse is 14 times more common in poor families; neglect is 44 times more common in poor families. ¹⁴
Crime and Delinquency	2. Childhood abuse and neglect increased the likelihood of arrest as a juvenile by 59%, as an adult by 28% and for a violent crime by 30%. ² Childhood abuse increased odds of future delinquency & adult criminality by 40% ¹³	8. Children of offenders are five times more likely than their peers to end up in prison themselves. ¹⁶	14. About 4 in 10 inmates serving time in jail for intimate violence had a criminal justice status – on probation or parole or under a restraining order—at the time of the violent attack on the intimate. ¹⁹	20. Psychotic disorders may double or triple the risk for violence but is a much less potent risk factor than others such as substance abuse. ¹⁵ An estimated 2/3 of young people who need mental health services are not getting them. As a result, many with mental health issues become involved in the juvenile justice system. ²³	26. Provisional data for 1997 show that past year illicit drug users were about 16 times more likely than nonusers to report being arrested for larceny or theft and nine times more likely to be arrested on an assault charge. ²⁶	32. The body of research has produced mixed findings in establishing a statistical relationship between poverty and crime. ²²
Domestic Violence	3. Many abused children, without therapeutic intervention, will grow up to be abusers or candidates for serious revictimization. ¹³	9. Domestic violence accounted for 10 – 12% of all San Diego County Sheriff's security-classified bookings in 1997, 1998 and 1999. ¹⁷	15. 85% of batterers witnessed violence as children. ¹⁸	21. 81% of women who have been treated for psychiatric disorders report histories of abuse. ¹⁰	27. Alcohol and drug abuse increase the likelihood of domestic violence; not only during periods of intoxication, but also during periods of sobriety. ²⁵	33. As many as 60% of women receiving welfare have been victims of domestic violence as adults (compared to 22% of women in the general population). ²⁰

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Mental Illness	4. In one study, as many as 80% of adults abused as children had a psychological disorder by age 21. ⁴	10. The mentally ill make up 5% of the overall population but 16% of the prison and jail population. ¹¹ Among teens in juvenile detention, nearly $\frac{2}{3}$ of boys and $\frac{3}{4}$ of girls have a psychiatric disorder. ⁸	16. Between 60%-90% of battered women have significant mental health issues. ¹⁰ $\frac{1}{4}$ of suicides of women in America are related to domestic violence. ⁶	22. Children who have a parent with mental illness are at significantly greater risk for multiple psychosocial problems. ¹²	28. More than half the people surveyed who had ever been diagnosed with substance abuse or dependence had also experienced a mental disorder at some time in their lives. ¹⁵ Mental health problems often predate substance abuse problems by 4 to 6 years. ¹⁵	34. People in the lowest strata of income, education and occupation are about two to three times more likely than those in the highest strata to have a mental disorder. They are also more likely to have higher levels of psychological distress. ²⁴
Substance Abuse	5. Substance abuse may be a factor in as many as 70% of all child neglect cases. ³ Nearly 80% of maltreated children are prenatally exposed to maternal substance abuse. ¹	11. U.S. Department of Justice shows that 80% of the two million men and women behind bars today –some 1.6 million individuals— are “seriously involved with drug and alcohol abuse.” ²¹	17. Up to $\frac{1}{3}$ of abused women will abuse drugs or alcohol as a way of coping with abuse. ⁶ About $\frac{1}{2}$ of all offenders convicted of intimate violence and incarcerated had been drinking at the time of the offense. 54% had prior records for alcohol and/or other drug charges. ¹⁹	23. About 15% of adults with a mental illness also have a co-occurring substance abuse disorder. ⁵	29. Children of alcohol & drug-addicted parents are up to 4 times more likely to develop substance abuse and mental health problems than other children. ⁵	35. For low-income women in general and for those receiving welfare in particular, substance abuse rates range from 16 to 37%. ²⁷ Studies have found that between 10 and 20% of the welfare population have a substance abuse problem. ³³
Poverty	6. Most children living in foster care are from low-income families that are eligible for public assistance. ³⁰ A conclusive link is difficult to pin down – substance abuse and mental health issues may contribute to both poverty and child maltreatment. ³¹	12. <i>Poverty appears to function as a critical nexus, or catalyst, for a multitude of problems. Initial findings from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention reaffirms the link between delinquency and poverty.</i> ³⁵	18. The population of batterers cuts across all socio-economic lines. ³² Low income battered women are more likely to seek assistance from public agencies. ³³	24. Mental disorders are the leading cause of disability (lost productive years) in North America. Without treatment the consequences can include unemployment and homelessness. ³⁴	30. There is a clear relationship between chronic homelessness and substance abuse. ³⁶	36. In one longitudinal study, about 50% of African-American persistently poor children were poor as young adults, as were 25% White children. ²⁹

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