

## Ten Common Myths of Child Abuse

**Myth 1.** Parents have the right to discipline their children however, they see fit.

**FACT:** Discipline must follow state law; despite what parents think is best. The method they use cannot leave marks that last longer than 24 hours or more.

**Myth 2.** Family and Children's Services (a.k.a. CPS) always removes children from their homes after an abuse report.

**FACT:** Approximately 1% to 2% of reports result in removal of children.

**Myth 3.** Male children do not get sexually abused.

**FACT:** 1 out of 6-7 boys have been, currently are or, will be sexually abused before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Myth 4.** If a male child is sexually abused, it means he is gay.

**FACT:** Although 98% of all sexual abusers are male, sexual abuse has nothing to do with sexual orientation.

**Myth 5.** Sexual Abuse only happens by strangers, people the child does not know.

**FACT:** About 80% to 85% of all abuse victims are abused by someone they know, love, or trust.

**Myth 6.** Children deserve abuse only when they are so challenging to their parents they push them to the point where they have no choice.

**FACT:** Being a parent is not easy, however, children NEVER deserve to be maltreated. If the situation escalates to the point of abuse, the parents need to get help immediately.

**Myth 7.** One parent must be arrested after a report of abuse is made.

**FACT:** Not necessarily, the goal is to keep the family unit intact, unless the child is in danger.

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**Myth 8.** A parent's choice to be abusive is only excusable if it is a well-known cultural practice.

**FACT:** False, parents must follow California law regarding child abuse, regardless of cultural background.

**Myth 9.** If you were abused as a child, you will abuse your children as a parent.

**FACT:** 75% of abused kids grow up and DO NOT abuse their children.

**Myth 10.** You can not make a report about past abuse.

**FACT:** It is never too late to report abuse, because the information will kept in file in case another abuse situation arises.



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