

EFFECTS OF INCEST

- Society has labeled and often view incest victims as seductive and sexually deviant.
- The child is required to deal with issues that children have not yet developed the ability to cope with and/or understand.
- They may be fearful that they would not be believed.
- May feel they are holding the family together and telling would tear it apart.
- Guilt, bribery, threats and persuasion are used to control the victim.
- The victim often feels responsible and fears getting in trouble, being removed from home, punishment, disbelief, imprisonment of the offender etc.
- Feelings of Shame
- Often experiences a repressive climate in an incestuous family.
- Once reported caregivers may be over-protective, restrictive and child may have to bargain in order to maintain social relationships or activities.

Symptoms may include:

- Running away
- Fear, guilt, shame, loss of self-esteem
- Drug/alcohol abuse as an escape.
- Delayed learning
- Difficulties sleeping
- May be 'on edge' or 'jumpy'
- May sleep at school - feels safe there.
- Loss of appetite
- Depression
- Problems at school - including truancy, dramatic change in performance etc.,
- Aggression
- Nausea
- Compulsive behaviour
- Over protectiveness of siblings.
- Acting out abuse in play - e.g. with dolls, pets etc.

Long term Effects include:

- 80% of victims experience sexual dysfunction
- Marital Difficulties
- Promiscuity
- Attraction to older partners
- Prostitution
- Drug abuse- escape and denial
- Alcohol abuse
- Defensive character
- Lead dualistic life
- Depression
- Guilt over sexual pleasure.