A tragedy on the rise, a punishment for a lifetime

Story by Gail Pellerin

Many parents refuse to accept there is a problem. Jackson said. They interpret the abuse as normal and make up excuses for doctors, teachers and other family members.

"Some mothers need to walk in a room and see their daughter naked with their husband," Hanretty explained. "Then they might accept there is a problem." Sometimes parents who abuse or neglect their children will call Child Protective Services' emergency response number, admitting they are afraid they are going to hurt their child.

More often, cases of abuse and neglect are reported by neighbors, teachers, family members or the victims themselves.

Through education, social agencies hope to teach the children that they should tell someone if another person touches their bodies where they don't want it to. It's a crime. It's wrong.

Child feels responsible

The majority of abused children feel an inevitable sense of worthlessness, and of being a damaged good. Hanretty said. She referred to a speech by Dr. Suzanne M. Sgroi from St. Joseph College Institute for the Treatment and Control of Child Sexual Abuse, West Hartford, Conn.

Victims feel responsible for the crime, especially if they "let the secret out," she said, quoting Sgroi. Many are clinically depressed and have suicidal tendencies.

Many victims also suffer long-term effects, especially if psychological rehabilitation is not received, Hanretty said.

A five-year-old child who had sexual intercourse with her father for two years, has experienced an incredible amount of sexual behavior and may seek out men when she is older.

On Monday, January 24, 1983, a tragic event occurred in San Luis Obispo County. The case involved a five-year-old child who had sexual intercourse with her father for two years. The child's mother reported the incident to Child Protective Services.

Social worker and supervisor Marie Jackson of Child Protective Services in San Luis Obispo said there has been a 10 percent increase in child abuse in the nation since last year. She added that for every one case, at least two, and possibly three or four, go unrecorded.

According to Connie Hanretty, coordinator of the Sexual Assault Victims Program for the district attorney's office, 70 percent of all the sexual assaults reported in 1982 were for children under the age of 14.

"It's just alarming," she said.

Child protective agencies regard situations where there is a lack of supervision, an insufficient amount of food, or poor housekeeping as cases of child abuse or neglect. Other situations include adults who use a belt to cause physical damage, burn children with cigarettes, beat the children and break bones or fracture skulls, fondle children inappropriately or perform sexual acts with them.

More children die from abuse than any disease," Jackson said. Human Relations Commission Program Coordinator Steve Henderson said there are reported cases of children being put in bathtubs filled with scalding water, sat on stove burners and hit with coat hangers. All punishments were the reactions to misbehavior such as rejecting food or crying too often, according to reports.

Parents may also resort to emotional abuse, such as shutting a naked child in a dark closet for hours, he said.

"Which is more difficult?" Henderson asked. "I'd rather take the whipping.

Children tend to endure abuse for a long time, he reported, adding that some situations go on for years—and the child pays for it.

"It's a sickness, that's how I classify it," he said. However, Hanretty claims. "When subject A molests a little girl, I don't think it's a disease. He had a choice to do it. It's a crime. It's wrong.

Child abusers

Hanretty said most men who sexually abuse children are not mature in their psyche and have sexually-related problems with adult women.

In addition, child abusers are young, lack parenting skills, may have been abused themselves or suffer from psychological problems or drug illnesses, according to Jackson. Abusive parents may also have financial problems, unreasonable expectations of the child and an inability to cope with stress.

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Child abuse wave leaves wreckage in wake

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"Many of the girls considered 'loose' on campus in high school, may have been abused," she explained. "Also 90 percent of prostitutes were sexually-abused children." Shelter for abused children

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The child is introduced to the district attorney and given a tour of the courtroom to encourage the child to feel comfortable with the surroundings.

After the juvenile court hearing, the case is either dismissed for lack of evidence with no further action, or the child is declared a dependent of the court.

After court hearings

If the case is dismissed, a social worker will follow up with the family to provide needed services to prevent recurrence of the problem.

When a child is a dependent of the court, a foster home is set up for him or her until the parents show positive improvement.

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LOTTERY WINNERS

From page 2

The parents of a child involved with the court proceedings.

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LOTTERY WINNERS
Services aid battered kids

From page 2

provenance and acceptable standards of living.

Within six months there is a second hearing in juvenile court to determine if the situation has changed.

"Reunification of the family is the main goal," Jackson said, noting some parents never make progress.

In the event of unfit parents, the alternative is to find a permanent plan, such as adoption by another person.

"Some children are hard to place because of deformity, mental problems and severe physical or emotional damages," Jackson admitted. "Every child has the right to have a family. A feeling of permanence is needed."

Reporting rests with all

According to Jackson, everyone has a moral and ethical responsibility to report suspicion or knowledge of child abuse. Child care custodians, medical practitioners, and employees of a child protective agency are mandated by law to report cases of child abuse.

Because of continuing cuts of human services in California, the problem of child abuse will continue its vicious cycle, Jackson says.

"I don't see a bright future," Jackson admits. "Unless people become aware that a child's rights count, the problem will persist.

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An initiative is a policy statement by (Committee to Save Summer Vacation). The Recreational Sports program proposed to start a petition of student signatures as well as many Student Senators? Yet another proposal supported by large numbers of students. Proposal for "Indoor Soccer" at the manager's office. Ultimate Frisbee is here and you are invited to join in the sport that has everyone jumping into the air. Signups will be taken at an organizational meeting tonight at 8 p.m. in Science North Building Room 202. Signups for Disabled Intramural Volleyball will be taken until Friday, Jan. 28, at 4 p.m. You can enter this four-player team sport by calling 546-1366. Other meetings will be held Thursday, Jan. 27, at 4 p.m., and in the recreation center, the meeting will be held at 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. The Mustangs' dual season meet record is 11-2, was sparked by superior decisions in nine of the nine weight classes Pujol won.

Despite the fact that Stanford is a young team with freshmen in the six lower weight categories, Mustang coach Vaughn Hitchcock praised several of his wrestlers, three of whom wrestled for the first time this year.

"I'm real pleased with David Wood (156 pounds), Danti Teran, (134 pounds), and Ives McGary, (130 pounds)," Hitchcock said. "They made some mistakes, but two beat their opponents by decision of large margins."

McGary, a sophomore from Wayne State, beat George 213 pounds, and Al Gutierrez had gotten things off to a flying start for the Mustangs in the 174-pound class. Gutierrez beat Bert Pugliss 26-5 to raise his season mark to 17-0. "The superior decision marked one of Gutierrez' peak performances of the season," Hitchcock said.

Teran, a sophomore transfer from Rio Hondo Junior College, defeated Mike Mathison 20-12. Mike Mathison 20-12. Bradley 17-15 to raise the Mustangs' lead to 13-0. A forfeit in the 143-pound category gave Cal Poly six more points.

Wood, a sophomore transfer from Chabot Junior College, registered a 27-5 superior decision over Stanford's Greg Silvestro.

The Mustangs whipped a group of Golden Eagles 40-31 in league play. Cal State LA is 3-7 on the season. The Mustang win also snapped the Golden Eagles' steak of seven consecutive wins since losing to Cal Poly in the last meeting on Jan. 19.

The Golden Eagles were again, their own worst enemy. Poly was up 13-6 with 13 minutes remaining in the first half. But in the ensuing 16 minutes of play, Cal State Northridge outscored the hosts 37-27 for a 45-23 lead with 18:02 remaining in the contest. Poly brought the score back to within six with 2:32 left, but couldn't get any closer. Northridge escaped with a 70-62 win. The Matadors are 3-1 in the CCAA and 13-0 overall.

This was a rare 2-0 win in the contest. The Mustangs connected on only two of their 33 ties (24 percent). If it wasn't for their defense and rebounding prowess the Mustangs held a 49-41 edge. Poly would still be winless in CCAA action.

But the Mustangs aren't winless. Oh, yeah, remember the diving plant in McNeill and assistant coach Darrell Wilson's office. Well, it's making a comeback, too.