



Christian Voices for Life  
Weekly Pro-Life  
Education  
Prayer  
Action

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## Is Abortion a Cause for Subsequent Child Abuse?

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**Education:** “Kathy” had two children when she had her second abortion. A week later, depressed and distraught, she tried to kill herself and her two sons by jumping off a bridge. She and the 5 year old were rescued; the 2 yr old died. She later stated that she wanted to kill herself and her children in order to reunite her family.(1)

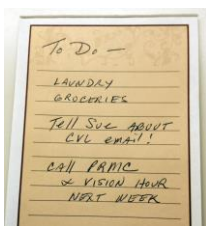
A woman may at first feel relief after her problem pregnancy is over, and may appear to function normally for years. But as time passes, it becomes more and more likely that she will come to suffer life-changing affects from her decision.

Abortion is linked with increased depression, violent behavior, alcohol and drug abuse, replacement pregnancies, and reduced maternal bonding with children born subsequently. These factors are closely associated with child abuse and would appear to confirm individual clinical assessments linking post-abortion trauma with subsequent child abuse.(2) With over a million abortions a year in the U. S., even a small percent resulting in abuse is a serious concern.

1. McFadden, A., “The Link Between Abortion and Child Abuse,” Family Resources Center News (January 1998) 20.
2. Benedict, et.al., “Maternal Perinatal Risk Factors and Child Abuse,” *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 9:217-224 (1985); P.G. Ney, “Relationship between Abortion and Child Abuse,” *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 24:610-620, 1979; Reardon, *Aborted Women - Silent No More* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1987), 129-130, describes a case of a woman who beat her three year old son to death shortly after an abortion which triggered a “psychotic episode” of grief, guilt, and misplaced anger.



**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, Please wrap your loving arms around women who have been wounded by abortion. Give them healing and peace as they face the difficult truth and mourn for their child. Help them to find the healing ministries that will allow them to process their grief, and find the acceptance and understanding that they need. Protect the whole family from the hurtful effects of abortion, and draw them instead closer to you as they come to know your mercy and love. Help all of us to have compassion and mercy on post-abortive women and leave judgment to you.



**Action:** If you have a friend who is struggling with sadness and emotional turmoil, and you suspect a past abortion may be the cause, there is a way to help. At the right time, mention to her something like: “I saw an interesting website (such as those listed below) that really gave me a new outlook on abortion. I never realized the awful pressures women face when making that decision and how much they can suffer afterward from grief and feeling alone and feeling condemned by others. But I learned that there are programs that help

women struggling with emotional problems after abortion.” Have information on healing programs if she asks for it, or you might even be able to leave it where she can find it. Information about healing ministries can be found at [www.abortionrecovery.org](http://www.abortionrecovery.org) (the Abortion Recovery Care Directory), [www.rachelsvineyard.org](http://www.rachelsvineyard.org), and at [www.hopeafterabortion.com](http://www.hopeafterabortion.com) (Rachel Project website, the Catholic program).