

# Neglect in the Pediatrician's Office: I

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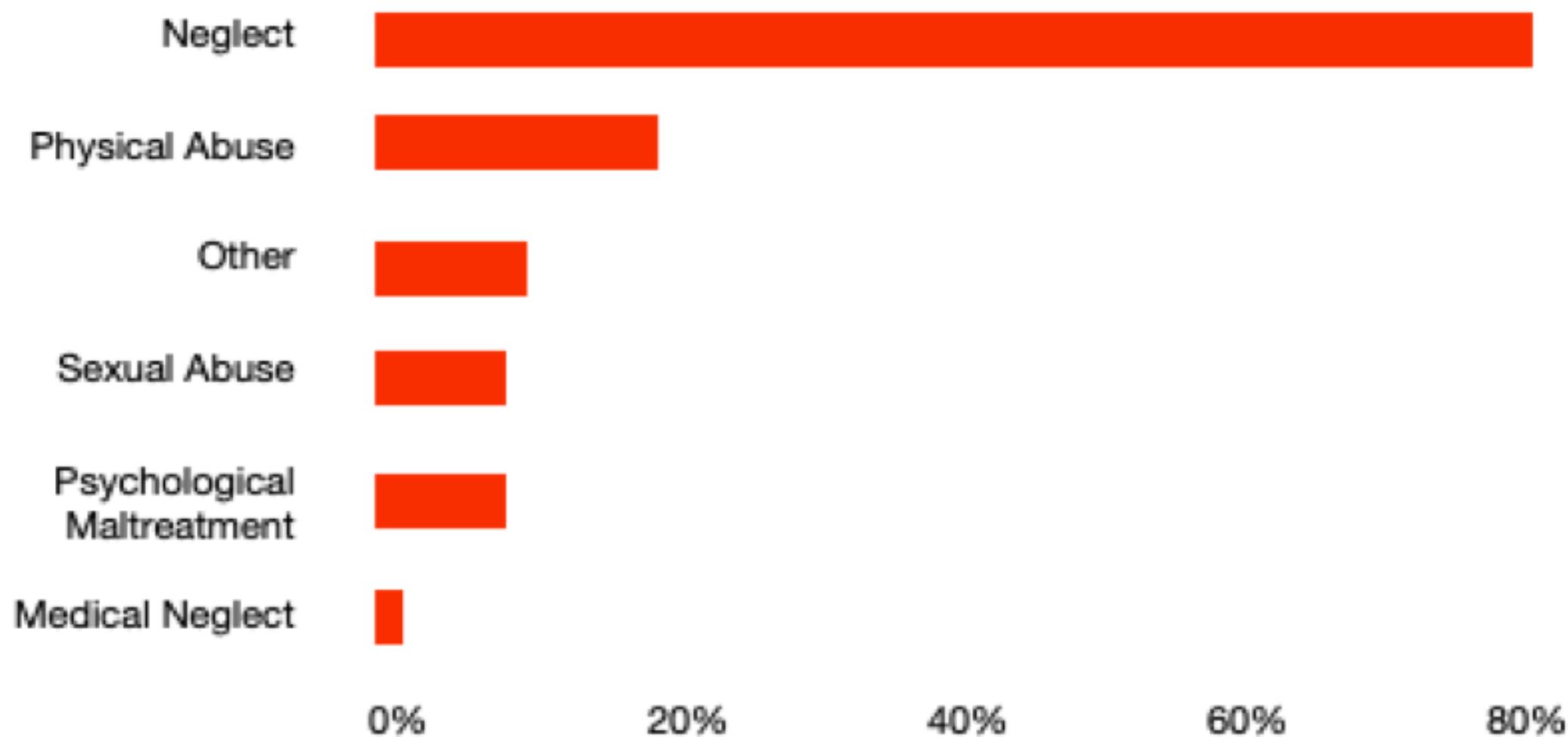
Children's Hospital Color

# Neglect by Percentage in Colorado (reported)

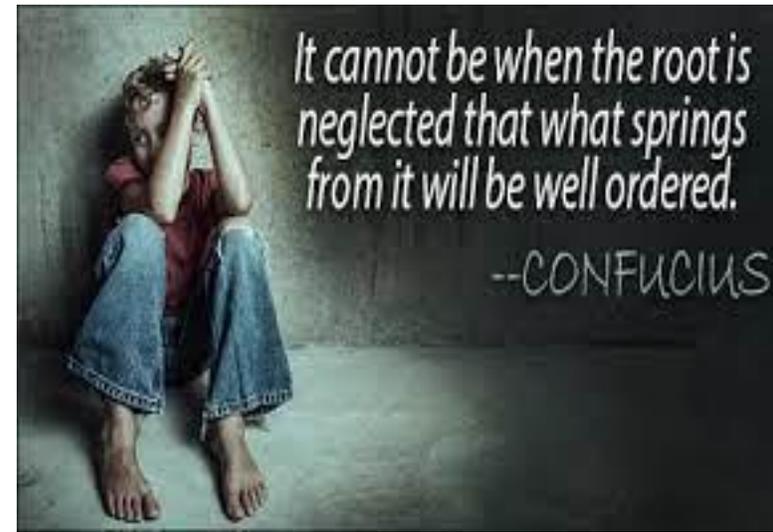
<b>Year</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Emotional abuse	2.9	3.2	2.9	2.3	2.0
Medical neglect	1.4	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.8
<b>Neglect</b>	<b>83.8</b>	<b>84.0</b>	<b>85.4</b>	<b>86.7</b>	<b>88.1</b>



# Neglect is the Most Prevalent Form of Child Maltreatment



# What is Child Neglect?



- It is the failure of a parent, guardian, or other caregiver to provide for a child's basic needs.
- The leading cause of Foster Care Placement
- The leading cause of Child Abuse deaths
  - Child neglect was the finding in 61% of child maltreatment cases.
- Neglect often begins in early childhood and can continue into adolescence
- **Neglect Types:** Physical, Medical, and Educational

# Physical Neglect

- Failure to provide for a child's basic need
  - Nutrition, clothing, shelter, hygiene, and medical care.
  - Inadequate supervision of a child and other forms of
  - Reckless disregard of the child's safety and welfare.
- **Abandonment:** The desertion of a child without arranging reasonable care or supervision.
- **Expulsion:** Refusal of custody, such as the permanent or indefinite expulsion of a child from the home
  - Without adequately arranging for care
  - The refusal to accept a child who has returned after running away.



# Physical Neglect (continued)

- **Shuttling:** repeatedly left in the custody of others for days/weeks
- **Nutritional :** undernourished or is repeatedly hungry for long periods  
May be evidenced by poor growth.
- **Clothing:** When a child lacks appropriate clothing, such as not having appropriately warm clothes or shoes in the winter.
- **Reckless:** disregard for the child's safety and welfare (e.g., driving while intoxicated with the child, leaving a young child in a car unattended).



# Inadequate Supervision



- **Most common:** parents leave their children unsupervised during the hours when the children are out of school.
- Unable to arrange childcare services to meet their needs. May not regard themselves as “neglecting their children,”
- Children left in these circumstances may be particularly vulnerable to accidents, injuries, or crime.
- Considerations
  - the age when children should be left alone
  - societal and community responsibilities to provide resources
  - governmental requirements (10 years old in CO)

# Medical neglect

- Failure to seek medical or dental treatment or to comply with medical advice for a health problem or condition that, if left untreated, could become severe enough to represent a danger to the child.
- **Denial of health care:** the failure to provide or to allow needed care for a physical injury, illness, medical condition, or impairment.
- **Delay in health care:** timely and appropriate medical care for a serious health problem that any reasonable person would have recognized as needing professional medical attention.
- **Examples**
  - preventive medical or dental care
  - not obtaining care for a sick child, or not following medical recommendations.
  - Not seeking adequate mental health
  - **A lack or delay in health care may occur because the family does not have health insurance.**

# Signs and Behaviors in the Child

- Wears soiled clothing or clothing that is significantly too small or large or is often in need of repair
- Seems inadequately dressed for the weather
- Always seems to be hungry; hoards, steals, or begs for food or comes to school with little food
- Often appears tired with little energy
- Frequently reports caring for younger siblings
- Demonstrates poor hygiene, smells of urine or feces, or has dirty or decaying teeth
- Seems emaciated or has a distended stomach (indicative of malnutrition)
- Has unattended medical or dental problems, such as infected sores
- States that there is no one at home to provide care.

# Behavioral Health Symptoms of Neglect

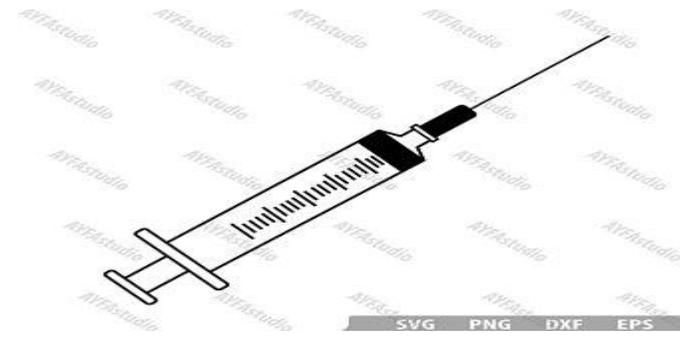
- Mood problems especially Depression
- Oppositional Behavior
- Antisocial Behavior
- Anxiety
- Sleep Disturbance
- Irritability
- Traumatic Stress Sx: Nightmares, Hypervigilance, Poor Concentration
- Greater than 33% of adolescents with a report of abuse or neglect will have a substance use disorder before their 18th birthday
- 66% of the people in treatment for drug abuse report being abused or neglected as children.



# Signs and Behaviors of the Guardian

- Appears to be indifferent to the child
- Seems apathetic or depressed
- Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner
- Abuses alcohol or drugs
  - Probably the most common cause
- Denies the existence of or blames the child for the child's problems in school or at home
- Sees the child as entirely bad, worthless, or burdensome
- Looks to the child primarily for care, attention, or satisfaction of emotional needs

# Substance Use



- Statistics show that a common effect of parental alcoholism and substance abuse is child maltreatment primarily neglect
- 1/3 to 2/3 of child maltreatment cases involve substance use
- Children whose parents abuse alcohol and drugs are 3X times more likely to be abused and more than 4x more likely to be neglected
- 11.5% of children have a parent/caregiver alcohol abuse risk factor.
- 28.5% of children have a parent/caregiver drug abuse risk factor.
- 25.0% – 33.2% of children have a domestic violence abuse risk factor.

## Case Vignette

Tommy is a 4 year old boy. He lives with his mother, father and 7 year old sister. Neither he nor his sister have been at an appointment for over one year. He comes to the WCV with his Mother, Jane. Jane is somewhat unkempt and seems distracted and is hard to engage. She answers your questions with single words or short sentences. She reports no concerns about Tommy's health or behavior and apologizes for not bring him for a visit last year. She stated that last year was very busy and appointments slipped her mind.

There is a record of Tommy being see in the ED for a URI with fever.

Tommy is casually dressed. He is casually, but appropriately dressed. Since his last visit Tommy has only gained 3 pound and has grown an inch. He has fallen off his growth curve. Furthermore, he has bug bites all over his body and several small scars that were not noted at his 2 year exam.

1. What are you concerned about?
2. How do you discuss your concerns with Jane?
3. Should you call CPS?