

Why do our students experience such an increased risk for abuse and neglect?

- Increased risk of students for neglect and abuse thought to be due to the following reasons:
 - Children w/ Disabilities:
 - Impaired communication skills that limit their ability to disclose , be understood, and believed, thus they are “safer” targets for abusers.
 - Lack of privacy (e.g., at residential schools) and social isolation
 - Lack of education concerning sexuality and self-protection

– Parents & Professionals who Work with Children w/ Disabilities:

- Reduced ability to understand children’s disclosure statements.
- Lack of awareness that children with disabilities are at higher risk for neglect and abuse + “risky” situations + knowledge of how to recognize and respond to behavioral indicators that suggest a child may have experienced abuse
- Lack of expectation that children with disabilities need information re. sexuality.
- Desire to reduce their child’s relative social isolation, combined with the previous identified factors, may serve to lower parent’s “guard” re. interactions between their child and other individuals.

([Chandler, 2007](#); [Hibbard & Desch, 2007](#); [MacDougall, 2000](#); [Miller, Vernon & Capella, 2005](#); [Obinna, Kruger, Qsterbaan & Sadusky, 2005](#); [Project Ability](#); [Sullivan, Brookhouse, & Scanlan, 2000](#); [Sullivan, Vernon, & Scanlan, 1987](#); [Vernon & Miller, 2002](#))

Note: additional information concerning causes of neglect and abuse can be found by “clicking” [HERE](#)