

Family Abuse

Sociology skills

- Reading and analysing a passage

Key skills

- Communication

Stimulus materials

Family violence is greater in poor households, but it occurs in families in all social classes

Research has shown the incidence of family violence to be highest among urban lower-class families. It is high among families with more than four children and in those in which the husband is unemployed. Families in which child abuse occurs tend to be socially isolated, living in crowded and otherwise inadequate housing.

Research on family violence has tended to focus on lower class groups, but scattered data from school counsellors and mental health agencies suggest that family violence is also a serious problem among America's more affluent households.

Children who are victims of abuse are more likely to be abusive as adults than children who did not experience family violence. Research shows that about 30 percent of adults who were abused as children are abusive to their own children.

Adapted from Tischler(1996:367)

Understanding the stimulus

1. Who wrote the book from which this passage came?
2. What country was being studied?
3. In what sort of families does abuse occur?
4. What sort of families are studied when sociologists are looking for abuse?
5. What percentage of adults who were abused **do not** abuse their own children?
6. Suggest reasons why abuse is often found in families where there are a number of social problems?

Development and Revision

1. What forms of abuse are there?
2. How should children and adults deal with abuse if they suspect that it is happening?