




# RESEARCH STUDY ON CHILD ABUSE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN TURKEY

## SUMMARY REPORT





RESEARCH  
STUDY  
ON CHILD  
ABUSE AND  
DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE  
IN TURKEY

SUMMARY  
REPORT

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*(Hereafter referred to as SHCEK)*

UNICEF – Turkey  
*(Hereafter referred to as UNICEF)*

**Name of consultant firm as the national coordinator:**

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## STUDY ON CHILD ABUSE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN TURKEY

The World Health Organization defines “any act committed intentionally or unintentionally by an adult, society or country which has a negative effect on a child’s health and physical development” as child abuse. The Convention on the Rights of the Child which has also been signed by our country clearly states that children should be protected against “all kinds of physical and mental violence” while they are under the care of their parents or others.

Many studies about children have been conducted in our country. However, a review of these studies reveals that there is not detailed information about child abuse and domestic violence obtained through comprehensive and in-depth studies. Section 46 entitled “Child Abuse and Neglect” of the Conclusions and Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child which has reviewed our first country report drawn up pursuant to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child says: “... the contracting state is recommended to ensure that all kinds of abuse, including domestic violence and sexual abuse is investigated...”

The study in question was coordinated by the Directorate General and conducted by TNS Piar Polling Company based on samples proposed by TUIK, technical support provided by UNICEF and the financial contribution of the European Union. The study involves a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the opinions of people who have been subjected to abuse and maltreatment and those who have abused others, by taking account of the conclusions and observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

This study aims to obtain data for developing protective and preventive policies and service models for protecting all children in our country against all kinds of abuse and violence. The current situation has been analyzed after a preliminary research regarding current policies and regulations about child abuse and domestic violence in our country to determine the priorities of the study. The study also contains suggestions expressed by the respondents regarding the prevention of abuse.

The study concluded that it was inevitable to launch education campaigns aimed at creating sensitivity in the general public to protect children and improve their conditions; steps for improvement targeting parents, teachers, and children would be necessary after raising awareness; it would not be sufficient to conduct studies only covering children or parents for preventing domestic violence and protecting children against abuse; and protecting children against abuse.

Based on the conviction that the Study on Child Abuse and Domestic Violence in Turkey is a major step towards the protection of our children against all kinds of violence and abuse, I hope that this study will shed light on studies and future steps which should be carried out by all stakeholders and all parts of society.

**Dr. İsmail BARIŞ**  
SHÇEK Director General



Just like adults, children also have basic human rights. These rights are specified in the clauses of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. As accepted by the states that signed it, the Convention stipulates that children:

- shall be protected against all kinds of bad behaviour including physical and emotional violence or abuse, neglect and sexual abuse;
- shall be protected against violence or other cruel, inhumane, degrading treatment or punishment; and
- shall be given school discipline within a framework of human dignity and in line with the clauses of the Convention.

In addition, states that are party to the Convention are also obliged to provide children with the opportunities to express their opinions regarding the aforementioned subjects and to take these opinions into consideration.

Having signed the Convention in 1990 and ratified it in 1994, Turkey is also obliged to recognise these and all other rights of children. Unfortunately, many of us personally witness children being abused physically and emotionally, not only in their homes, but also at schools and work places in the name of “punishment and discipline” in Turkey as well as in many other countries. In its latest observations regarding the Initial Report of Turkey, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has emphasised the need to conduct studies on abuse, including domestic violence, maltreatment and sexual abuse, in order to make it possible to understand the scale, scope and nature of these practices, to adopt the necessary precautions and policies and to contribute to behavioural change. The Committee has recommended using children’s own experiences as a starting and reference point in understanding violence.

No adequate in-depth study of child abuse has previously been conducted in Turkey. Moreover, this is a “delicate” issue and one which is difficult to comprehend. Accordingly, the present study was undertaken by the Government of the Republic of Turkey with financial support from the European Union and technical support from UNICEF-Turkey. The study was coordinated by SHCEK Head Office and conducted by TNS Piar Research Company based on a sample proposed by the Turkish Statistical Institute. The research was conducted under the guidance of national and international consultants using both a qualitative and a quantitative approach, taking children as the starting point in line with the recommendation of the Committee.

The Committee has also recommended that all states that are party to the Convention should circulate widely the results of comprehensive research on violence towards children, and that these results should be used in structuring programmes and policies. The research study was therefore planned in such a way as to provide information that will facilitate the adoption of an attitude of prevention, protection and healing. In the light of this information, detailed and comprehensive data on abuse has been obtained, especially through the use of focus group discussions conducted with children and adults. I hope that this study will show the way forward for the institutions involved in the prevention of child abuse and the protection of children in Turkey.

**Ümran Korkmazlar-Oral, Ph.D.**  
National Consultant

# 1

## General Information About The Study

The World Health Organization (WHO, 1999) defined child abuse as treatment likely to harm the child's survival, health, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. The violence, abuse and neglect to which people are exposed in childhood leaves deep marks on them and negatively affects their mental health. Research on domestic violence and child abuse reveals that violence breeds violence, and that violence is mainly learned at a younger age. There is a high probability that children and young people who grow up in an environment where violence is used as the main way of solving problems or achieving status and respect will themselves inflict violence on their spouses or children when they become parents. As protecting children from violence leads to purifying societies from violence, all work done in this field is extremely important.

Unfortunately, beating is still used in Turkey, where it is perceived as a method of discipline and legitimized both in the family and the public sphere. Moreover, attempts are made to normalise abuse through sayings in Turkish such as "Roses

grow where mothers hit”, “Beating comes from heaven” or “The flesh is yours; the bones are mine”. There are not enough detailed and in-depth survey findings on child abuse and domestic violence in Turkey. In its initial report on Turkey, the Committee on the Rights of the Child made a recommendation in this connection to the effect that Turkey “undertake studies on domestic violence, ill-treatment and abuse, including sexual abuse, to enable it to understand the extent, scope and nature of these practices, adopt adequate measures and policies, and contribute to changing attitudes”.

In order to gather detailed and in-depth data and improve our knowledge in this area, this study was undertaken by the Government of the Republic of Turkey with the financial support of the European Union and with the technical support of UNICEF-Turkey. It was coordinated by SHCEK Head Office and conducted by TNS Piar Research Company, based on a sample proposed by Turkstat. The research was conducted under the guidance of national and international consultants using both a qualitative and a quantitative approach, taking children as the starting point in line with the recommendation of the Committee. The points of view of both people exposed to abuse and of perpetrators were explored qualitatively and quantitatively.

## 1.1 Purpose of Assignment

The main objective of the study is to obtain information that will assist in the preparation of programmes to combat and prevent violence against children and to purify society from violence. To achieve this aim, both quantitative and qualitative methods have been used, and answers have been sought to the following research questions:

- the types of abuse to which children are subject to in their everyday lives,
- their perceptions regarding the reasons for abusive behavior,
- their perceptions regarding the effects that abuse has on them,
- the strategies which they use in order to deal with and to protect themselves from abuse,
- their suggestions for precautions to prevent abuse.



## Method of the Study

At the beginning of the study, a desk review was conducted by the National Coordinator about existing policies, regulations and research regarding Child Abuse and Domestic Violence in Turkey, and a detailed report was prepared.

In the first phase of the study, Focus Group Discussions were used as a Qualitative Research Techniques for gathering detailed and in-depth information on child abuse and domestic violence, . Following the qualitative phase, the quantitative phase of the study was conducted in the lights of the results from the qualitative phase. All methods used in the study were developed with the contributions of the National Consultant, TNS Piar and the International Consultant. During this process, feedback iwas obtained from UNICEF and SHCEK on the survey materials. The Focus Group Discussion Guide used at the qualitative stage was prepared by the National Consultant, who is specialized and has academic experience in the field of the study. Further, the whole research team was trained by the National Consultant and TNS Piar regarding the skills needed for the qualitative and quantitative interviews and the way in which these special interviews are to be conducted. Psychologists took part in all focus group discussions. All fieldwork was conducted under the full supervision of TNS Piar and the National Consultant.

## 2.1 Qualitative Research Method

To gather detailed and in-depth data on child abuse and domestic violence, qualitative research methodology in the form of focus group discussions was applied implemented for the first phase of the study. The qualitative research was conducted in six provinces of Turkey in order to capture disparities between the experiences / perceptions of children and adults living in different regions. The provinces were selected by SHCEK and TNS Piar from different geographical regions of Turkey with the most heterogeneous populations in terms of their socio-economic and cultural characteristics with a view to capturing different perceptions and experiences, to the greatest possible extent, under the given circumstances of the study. Accordingly, the research was held in: İstanbul, Samsun, Konya, Şanlıurfa, Adana and Erzurum – provinces considered to project best the socio-cultural patterns of their region. A total of 30 group discussions were held in these provinces, with 235 participants in all. The distribution of the participants is given in **Table 1**.

The field work for the qualitative part of the study commenced on January 24, 2008, and was completed on March 23, 2008.

Groups	Total Completed Number of FGDs	Total Number of Participants
Girls aged 7-10	2	14
Girls aged 11-14	3	25
Girls aged 15-18	3	25
Boys aged 7-10	3	22
Boys aged 11-14	3	23
Boys aged 15-18	2	17
Mothers	5	38
Fathers	4	31
Grandmothers	2	15
Grandfathers	1	8
Teachers	2	17
TOTAL	30	235

Table 1 - Completed Focus Group Discussions / Total Number of Participants

## 2.2 Quantitative Research Method

In the second stage of the research, the quantitative research technique of “face-to-face interviewing” was used with the a sample of 7-18 year-old children, representing the population aged 7-18 years in Turkey. Questionnaires were filled out in pen and paper.

## Sampling design

The size of the sample and the sample households used in the study were determined by the Turkish Statistical Institute (Turkstat). The “two-stage cluster sampling” technique was used by Turkstat in the drawing of the sample. The Quantitative Phase was conducted in 61 provinces determined by Turkstat according to the NUTS 2<sup>1</sup> classification. Accordingly, it was planned to interview all children between the ages of 7-18 years living in approximately 3.500 households. The survey was conducted, in total, in 1,328 households with 1,886 children. 54 percent of the children interviewed were male and 46 percent of them were female.

Turkstat provided 9,090 block household addresses – 3,030 of them as principal targets and 6,060 as substitute addresses - and 32 village addresses. Of the 9,090 block household addresses, 7,200 were located in urban settlements and 1,890 in rural settlements as defined by Turkstat. A summary of the results of the screening process results in given households and villages, broken down by urban and rural location, is seen in Table 2.

Summary of the screening results in 9,090 Households+ Households in 32 Villages	
Number of households where interviews were completed	1328
Number of households where no interviews could be conducted for various reasons *	1781
Number of households in urban areas that were not contacted after 15 households in a block of 45 addresses (15 main target + 2 substitutes for each) were accepted as “successful”	1652
Number of households in rural areas that were not contacted after required number of interviews were accomplished in the block	1122
Çeşitli sebeplerle görüşme gerçekleştirilemeyen hane sayısı*	3207
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS</b>	<b>9090</b>

Table 2 - Summary of the screening results in given blocks

\* These various reasons were stated in general report in details

## Survey Instruments Used in Quantitative Survey

The following survey instruments were used in the quantitative survey:

- Questionnaire
- Screening Questionnaire
- Contact Sheet

1 NUTS 2: NUTS is the statistical regional classification determined in the adaptation process of Turkey into the European Union. Three different levels of NUTS regions (The Nomenclature of Territorial Units of Statistics) has been classified. NUTS 2 represents 26 regions.



The screening questionnaire was used to gather information about the household and the target group of children. For all unsuccessful contacts a contact sheet was filled out and the reason for not being able to conduct an interview was recorded.

For the quantitative phase of the study, the children were interviewed outside of the household in all possible situations to reduce the feeling of pressure from other members of the household on the child. Where this was not possible, every effort was made to conduct the interview in a separate room where the interviewer and the child were alone. For situations where this could not be the case, a parent questionnaire was provided, and the parents were asked – if they wished – to fill out this form during interviews with children.

### 2.3 Data analysis and reporting

The analysis, interpreting and reporting of the qualitative findings of the study were done by the National Consultant.

The data entry was carried out by TNS Piar, using the Qxgir program designed specially for TNS Piar. The SQL database was used to store the collected data for the quantitative phase and the tabulation analysis was made with the aid of the Quantum Program.

Data collected through the quantitative survey have been cross-analysed with age and gender variables.

### 2.4 Ethical Considerations

- At both the qualitative and quantitative stages of the study, attention was paid to sequencing in order to create a protective – healing effect on the participants. During the carefully selected activities of the qualitative stage, use was made of a number of techniques which are employed in the diagnosis and psychotherapy of abuse – namely: story-telling, letter-writing, expression through art and EMDR. During the flow of the implementation, care was taken to adopt an approach which makes it easier for the participants to identify with one another and share their experience, and which leaves a healing effect on the participant.
- Given that the research subject is difficult and delicate, the flow of the focus group discussion was planned in such a way as to evolve from negative to positive. The aim of this approach was to reach the information required by the aim of the study while at the same time creating awareness among the participants about their own abilities and strengths. One of the most important and powerful

sections of the Group Discussions Guide was devoted to "improvement". Thus, ethically, attention was paid not just to the contributions of the participants to the survey but also to the positive effect of the survey on the participants.

- In order not to harm participants, the aim of the survey was explained to the participants clearly, and the term "unwanted / negative behaviour" was used instead of "abuse" and "violence".
- Focus group discussions were audio-taped upon the participants' consent in order to be able to collect correct information and prevent any information from being misreported or going missing. Participants were informed that audio-taping was a matter for their consent, their consent was documented, and the audio records were trusted to TNS Piar strictly not to be shared with third parties. Where the participants's consent could not be obtained, the interviewers took notes instead.
- The information provided by participants has been and will be used anonymously. It was underlined that everything they said would be kept confidential and that their names would not be shared with anyone else.
- In order for the study method to proceed efficiently, whenever any of the participants who took part in the qualitative or quantitative interviews requested any help, these participants were given the number of the "Alo 183 – Family, Women, Children and Handicapped Social Service Consultancy Line", which can be reached from any part of Turkey.
- Given the difficulty of the subject matter of the survey, attention was paid to ensuring that the teams were composed of at least two people, and the moderators were required to share their experiences with the national coordinator at the end of the day, as a way of protecting them from traumatic effects.

# 3

## Findings And Results

### 3.1 Qualitative Findings

The qualitative findings of the research were obtained by the “focus group discussions” method using “group discussion guides” prepared for children and adults. These group discussion guides included activities intended to draw out the perceptions of participants regarding cases of abuse towards children and violence in the family which they had either witnessed or experienced directly. A number of techniques which are used in the diagnosis and psychotherapy of abuse cases – namely, story writing, letter writing, expression with and through art and EMDR, techniques which are used in diagnosis and psychotherapy of abuse cases - were integrated into those these carefully selected activities. Throughout the research, special care was devoted to sequencing the activities in a way that would make it easier for the participants to to identify with one another and express themselves, and which would have a protective-curing impact on them.

### 3.1.1 Findings about Abuse

#### 3.1.1.1 Findings from Children

All child participants, regardless of age, gender or region, stated that abuse took place at home, in school and on the street, in that order, and that the perpetrators of the unwanted behavior were fathers, teachers, mothers, friends and neighbors, in that order. Also, many children of all age groups reported experiencing physical and emotional abuse by their teachers at school. Incidents that involved negative behavior on the part of school friends or neighborhood friends became more frequent with the advancing age of the child.

Girls in the 7-14 age group stated that they were subject to emotional abuse mostly by their friends, teachers, fathers and mothers, in that order. Boys in this age group named the perpetrators of emotional abuse as mostly teachers, friends and fathers. Boys in the 15-18 age group stated that they were subject to emotional abuse by their friends and fathers, whereas girls of the same age group were subject to emotional abuse by their teachers and mothers. The most frequently-reported forms of emotional abuse were insulting, mocking, name-calling, threatening, yelling, not asking for the child's opinion, exerting pressure, demeaning, accusing, blaming and comparing with others.

\* "We have this English teacher who yells at us and insults us when we do not know the answer." (Girl, 11-14 years, not poor, urban, Adana)

\* "The music teacher made us all stand on one leg in the yard; because she said we were noisy in class." (Boy, 11-14 years, non-poor, urban, Samsun)

"I was sitting in the classroom and he called me four-eyes, and I said, 'I am not four-eyes'. I do wear glasses, but not because I want to." (Girl, 7-10 years, non-poor, urban, Istanbul)

In the case of physical abuse, girls in the 7-14 age group stated that they were abused mostly by their mothers, fathers, teachers, friends and elder siblings, in that order. Boys, however, experienced physical abuse mostly at the hands of friends, teachers, fathers, elder siblings and people that they do not know. Boys in the 15-18 age group were more likely to mention incidents of physical abuse than girls in the same age group. They listed the main perpetrators as their fathers, friends and people they do not know. In all age groups, the main form of physical abuse inflicted by mothers was "throwing slippers", which is not observed in other cultures. Beating and ear- or hair-pulling are other frequently used methods of physical abuse. No difference is observed between rural and urban areas or among different socio-economic groups.

None of the child participants of the focus group discussions recounted stories of sexual abuse. However, the inference that none of the children who attended the

focus group discussions were subject to sexual abuse should not be drawn from this. A highly sensitive subject like sexual abuse is the hardest issue to share when the nature of group studies is taken into consideration. Information about sexual abuse was not directly sought, as it is would only be appropriate to do so if this if therapy was planned in a child friendly environment.

\*“One day I was at school. There was an older guy. We were playing ball, and the ball touched the foot of this older guy. I apologized, but he hit me. I cried” (Boy, 11-14 years, non-poor, urban, Şanlıurfa)

\*“The teacher yelled at us and beat us all. She has a metal ruler and she hits our hands, hits haphazardly.” (Boy, 7-10 years, poor, rural, Istanbul)

\* “My mother beats me sometimes, she always says bad words, and she says ‘it is your father who gave you this much freedom’. Always exams and exams... I solve math problems even in the bathroom.” (Girl, 15-18 years, non-poor, urban, Istanbul)

\*“Sometimes my elder sister beats me at home. I tell her not to do it, but she still does.” (Boy, 7-10 years, poor, urban, Konya)

The number of children mentioning neglect was very few. The adults who neglected the needs of children were named as fathers, mothers and teachers. The most frequently mentioned form of negligent behavior was failure to express love. Not Other types of negligent behavior experienced included not paying attention to children, not striving to explain things to them, not buying the items which they need (stationery goods, school uniform etc.) and, not sending them to school.

### **3.1.1.2 Findings from Adults**

Mothers stated that it was mothers, fathers, stepmothers, elder siblings, teachers and friends who abuse children, in that order. They stated that children primarily faced emotional abuse from their mothers and fathers, followed by physical abuse and neglect. In stories told by the mothers, emotional and physical abuse were inflicted more by mothers than fathers. Furthermore, some of the mothers from the poor segment stated that stepmothers neglected children and treated them badly.

\*“When my daughter was small, I got very angry with her, and I beat her so much that blood came out of her nose.” (Mother, poor, rural, Şanlıurfa)

\* “I took my son shopping. He asked me to buy something and I could not afford to buy it then: my husband had just gone bankrupt. The kid kept on asking, and then he finally started crying. I lost my temper and slapped him.” (Mother, poor, urban, Adana)

Fathers who attended the group discussions stated that children were mostly abused by their fathers. Participant fathers generally stated that fathers primarily inflicted emotional abuse on their children, followed by neglect and physical abuse,

whereas mothers tended to inflict mostly emotional abuse and neglect. Among the fathers of poor socio-economic status, some mentioned step-mothers treating children badly by neglecting them (discriminating between their own children and their stepchildren, not meeting their basic needs, not feeding them, not buying them clothes...).

\* "It was during my daughter's adolescence, the period when she was trying to assert her personality. I had beaten her up when I was angry about something else, and then I regretted it. But I understood that it was not something to worry too much about" (Father, non-poor, urban, Istanbul)

\* "I am not able to do what my child asks for, and she insists on it and cries. Because I cannot afford it, I lose my temper and slap her/him". (Father, poor, urban, Erzurum)

\* "My father used to beat me a lot when I was a child. He used to beat me so much, and it continued like that until I grew up. So there was, and still is, a distance between me and my father. I never remember sitting on his lap. But now my children almost live on my lap." (Father, non-poor, urban, Samsun)

Unlike other adults, grandmothers and grandfathers generally talked about positive relations with their grandchildren. The experiences of abuse which they shared were generally incidents from their own childhoods or cases of negative behavior between them and their own children. Grandmothers and grandfathers stated that it was that fathers who abused children the most.

\* "I was beaten so badly by my father in my childhood years. He used to hit me under my feet with a stick. I still experience fear and wake up in panic. I still see these in my nightmares. I felt as if I experienced those moments just now" (Grandmother, non-poor, urban, Istanbul)

\* "I recalled the past mistakes that I made. I beat my daughter a little. I wish I hadn't. I used to get mad at my mother-in-law and take it out on my daughter" (Grandmother, non-poor, urban, Istanbul)

\* "Because I experienced it too, escaping under the bed. My father used to tie my hands and feet, and I used to flee under the sofa for my life. He used to cut a big stick and hit me all over the body. I don't see with my right eye now" (Grandmother, non-poor, urban, Konya)

Teachers mostly recited incidents where teachers were responsible for the abuse of children. They said that children mostly experience physical abuse in the form of degrading methods of discipline/ punishment imposed by their teachers, such as having their ears or hair pulled, being lined up and beaten in turn, being slapped, being ordered to leave the classroom or being forced to stand on one foot.

\* "I had a very naughty student; he could not do it. One day I was angry and I slapped him a little, and said, 'Go, there's no point in your staying here; you will not learn anything here'. He left the class and I watched him go. I thought about how I would win that child back. I said to myself, 'If this student leaves this class right now, it will be completely over', so I called him just as he was about to go and I apologized and asked him to come back in. No matter what a student does, she is too valuable to lose. That student made me more mature." (Teacher, Adana)

\* "We were practicing for the May 19th ceremonies and I was a very young teacher. Although I had warned the students, one of them (the meekest student actually) did something bad and I slapped him/her. I think that at that time, I lost it and I was not a human being." (Teacher, Adana)

Regarding domestic violence, mothers were the next most likely to be exposed to abuse and violence after children. As persons who treated mothers badly, fathers used forms of physical abuse such as beating, hitting, battering, and expulsion from the home, and forms of emotional abuse such as yelling, ridiculing, swearing, exerting pressure and, threatening. These were similar to the forms of abuse that were inflicted on children. The main perceived reasons for domestic violence were the father's excessive drinking, his ignorance or his irritable character. The fact that mothers who were subject to maltreatment had no economic power and the belief that they needed to put up with the situation for the sake of their children caused the violence to continue until the children grew up

\*"My mother and father were continuously at odds. I was in the first class of primary school and my father was beating my mother. When we grew up, my mother petitioned my father in court and they were divorced, but they did not separate until the time we were able to earn a living." (Father, poor, urban, Erzurum)

\*"The persecutions in marriage...beating, other women, drinking... I went through it all. He really enjoyed beating me. He wanted to be served when he was drinking". (Grandmother, non-poor, urban, Konya)

### 3.1.2 Findings about the Reasons for Abuse

#### 3.1.2.1 Findings from Children

With respect to the reasons for child abuse, the perception that "It was my fault, my mistake," which has been observed in children subject to violence, was also observed among the child participants in this study. There were children who thought that the person responsible for the abuse was the child herself. During the focus groups, all the child participants associated themselves with a story on domestic violence and abuse towards children which was read out to them and expressed their perceptions about violence in the form of thoughts, emotions and physical reactions. Irrespective of age, gender and region, their common perceptions was that the father was wrong to use violence on his children (beating and yelling). The abusive behavior described in the story was mostly attributed to the father's negative personality – to: the fact that he was an irritable, violent, irresponsible and ignorant person. The mother in the story was criticized for not being able to protect her children and for allowing the unwanted incidents which she experienced with the father to affect the children. The teacher was also perceived as behaving in a faulty way. The teacher's scolding the child unjustly and belittling him in

front of his friends were criticized. At the same time, some children thought that their parents carried out the abuse for the children's good. Children from different socio-economic groups and different regions had similar perceptions regarding the reasons for the abuse of children.

\*"I think he was right to beat me. He says, 'Do not touch this', but I touch it just to make him mad and he beats me." (Boy, 7-11 years, Konya)

\*"It is really bad of the mother to yell at her children. It's not their fault; it's the father's." (Girl, 11-14 years, Adana)

### 3.1.2.2 Findings from Adults

Adult participants perceived the adult's financial difficulties to play a significant role in the abuse of children. Adults shared the opinion of children when it came to seeing their own anger and aggression as a cause of abuse. Adults saw children as being responsible for the abuse they faced to a lesser extent than children themselves did. The child being naughty (on a single occasion or repeatedly), doing something wrong, not listening to what the adult says, not doing what the adult wants, being insistent, being deceitful, not studying, or doing something without permission were viewed as reasons for abuse.

\*"My kids were very young. They used to get into the fountain, and I used to beat them a lot. My depression had a big effect on them. I had a one-room house. My husband was not working; only I was working. I was trying to keep the whole family going on just a bucket of milk." (Mother, poor, rural, Samsun)

\*"My mother and my father were having an argument... There was a silence due to the conflict between them that was affecting us, too." (Father, non-poor, urban, Samsun)

\*"I have been out of work for the past four months. We have been having financial difficulties and I am depressed. I mean we have debts and this situation is affecting our family life." (Father, poor, rural, Konya)

\* "Not knowing what is what; I was uneducated, very young and inexperienced at the time." (Grandmother, non-poor, urban, Konya)

\*"So it will be a lesson to them and they will not do it again." (Grandfather, poor, rural, Adana)

## 3.1.3 Findings about the Impacts of Abuse

### 3.1.3.1. Findings from Children

The study also explored the effects of abuse. The effects most frequently mentioned by children were emotional effects. Girls and boys in all age groups felt sorrow and felt down and demoralised about the abuse they experienced. The majority of the participants said that abuse had negative emotional and physical effects on



children and also had various impacts on their daily lives. They described their feelings towards the perpetrator after the abuse as anger, rage, hatred, not wanting to see her face, and the desire to take revenge. Emotional effects that were observed in children were the wish to be left alone, feeling it in the heart, and a feeling of pain. Maltreatment also led, among children, to feelings of fear, embarrassment and low-spiritedness, to a sense of being demeaned, and a desire not to be treated in the same way again, to finding it hard to cope with and even to wanting to die. The physical impact mentioned most often by children was trembling.

\*"I felt very angry and sad when I thought of it. I felt like hitting him." (Boy, 11-14 years, non-poor, urban, Şanlıurfa)

\*"My Science teacher despised me because of certain personal characteristics of mine and, whenever I saw him/her, I hated him/her." (Girl, 15-18 years, non-poor, urban, Istanbul)

\*"It has left its mark on me. I have even thought of getting my revenge." (Girl, 15-18 years, non-poor, urban, Konya)

\*"One day my teacher scolded me at school. I had forgotten to put my book in my school bag as my school bus arrived... I felt very upset and embarrassed and, during that lesson, I could not even look at my friends' faces. "I was angry with the teacher. I still feel embarrassed when I think of it today." (Boy, 11-14 years, non-poor, urban, Şanlıurfa)

### 3.1.3.2 Findings from Adults

Adults had different opinions about the effects of abuse on children: while some thought the impact was negative, others perceived that the impacts of abuse were either positive or non-existent. Most of the adults thought that abuse affected children negatively, leading to lack of confidence, difficulty in making friends, difficulty in expressing themselves and fear of family. Other negative impacts on children mentioned by adults included becoming aggressive, grumpy or, jealous, and poor performance at school. However, some of the adults thought that the abuse which they engaged in were was a kind of "lesson" for their children, as a result of which the child understood her error and did not do it again. Becoming more compliant and well-mannered were the other positive impacts mentioned by adults. Adults said that they felt sadness and regret after they engaged in abuse.

\*"We are 5 brothers and sisters. My father used to say, 'One of you go with the cows, one of you go with the sheep'. We used to see each other only in the evening. He used to say, 'You will study, become teachers, then what?' He did not let us go to school." (Grandfather, poor, rural, Adana)

\*"My late father used to hit me with a belt when I could not say my multiplication tables correctly. Still, whenever I see a belt at home, I remember that moment and I can't look at it." (Grandmother, non-poor, urban, Istanbul)

### 3.1.4 Findings about Coping Strategies for Abuse

#### 3.1.4.1 Findings from Children

As safe places that helped in coping, children referred to their families, their friends, the places where they were together with their grandparents during holidays (village house, summer house), times when they were alone with nature and places where they did a favorite activity (playing soccer). The family was perceived as safe people by boys and girls of all age groups. The other safe people that children aged 11 years and above frequently mentioned were friends.

Children's Children used a wide range of methods of coping with the negative effects of abuse, such as getting support from an adult, using their own resources, seeing it as their own mistake and apologizing, retreating, giving gifts, denial, and not doing anything. Younger children frequently saw the bad behavior as their own fault and apologized. This brings to mind observations that small children believe it is their own fault even when they are subject to sexual abuse. Some of the boys were inclined to take abusive behavior as a model and to think that they would have liked to act badly towards the perpetrator, as well.\* "I think of people I love, my friends and all; then my aggression fades." (Girl, 11-14 years, poor, urban, Şanlıurfa)

\* "I usually want to be alone and to think about these things again. I think, 'Did I do anything wrong?'" (Girl, 15-18 years, non-poor, urban, Istanbul)

\* "I try to listen to music in order not to feel sad, but it just doesn't work." (Girl, 15-18 years, poor, rural, Erzurum)

\* "I thought of dying, too." (Girl, 15-18 years, non-poor, urban, Konya)

\* "I thought about running away after this incident took place." (Girl, 15-18 years, non-poor, urban, Konya)

#### 3.1.4.2 Findings from Adults

Adults selected their homes, the places where they were born, the village house where they go in summer, natural environments, the sea or the seaside as safe places. For some mothers, a safe place meant their dream house or a house where they could live separately from their mothers-in-law. Most of the fathers and male teachers chose nature natural environments as their safe place. A small number of adults mentioned mosques, Koran courses or places where no one knows them as their safe places. Grandmothers and grandfathers regarded the time which they spent with their grandchildren as safe.

Perpetrator adults used coping strategies such as feeling pangs of conscience, feeling regret, feeling sorrow, getting support from other adults, winning the heart of the person who experienced the abuse, not doing it again, understanding their mistake, controlling their anger and seeing themselves as right. The self-protective techniques which adults frequently used to cope with the abuse they experienced in their childhood were being patient, remaining silent and crying. \* "I yell at them, but then I feel sad about it." (Father, poor, rural, Konya)

\*“We feel regret and wish we had not said what we did.” (Father, poor, rural, Konya)

\*“I behaved that way with my child without meaning to. My son gives me a look as if to say, ‘I do whatever my mother says’. I do not want him to be like this; I want him to be strong.” (Mother, poor, rural, Istanbul)

\*“Naturally that incident made us understand. We will never do such things again.” (Father, poor, rural, Konya)

\*“He is your own child. You beat him but also feel guilty and sad. I wish it would not happen, but they are children, after all, and such things do happen. We had similar experiences when we were children.” (Grandfather, poor, rural, Adana)

### 3.1.5 Participants’ Learning from Group Discussions

As the guideline used in the group discussions had the aim of protecting participants and creating awareness, a section of the discussion evaluated what participants learned and came to realize as a result of this study. Children stated that they had learned: the meaning of positive and negative behavior and the impacts of such behavior; their own positive and negative characteristics: the concept of domestic violence; the fact that others also faced violence, and that unfortunate problems did not only exist in their own lives but also in others’ lives; how to get to know themselves better; how to think more deeply, and how to express their emotions and thoughts.

Regarding coping, children said that they had learned about how to treat people; not to do anything to others that one did not want done to oneself, to treat everyone well, and not to act in bad ways. They realized that it was possible to be on good terms with everyone, and to have good intentions towards everyone all the time. They understood that nothing could be handled with sheer force, and that one should not be aggressive, but should have tolerance and confidence, should not mock one’s parents and should not ask questions when adults are angry.\*“Today is the first time I felt this safe. I learned certain things, and I felt relieved by talking about things I had not been able to talk about before.” (Girl, 15-18 years, non-poor, urban, Konya)

\*“I learned how to express my feelings and thoughts through talking. I like you a lot, and I would like to thank you all for offering us this opportunity.” (Girl, 11-14 years, non-poor, urban, Adana)

\*“No one ever showed us so much care. This is the first time we had an opportunity to express ourselves in such an open way.” (Girl, 15-18 years, non-poor, urban, Konya)

\*“I now feel more at peace. I was so angry when he swore at me.” (Boy, 15-18 years, Adana)

\*“We poured our hearts out. We remembered things from our childhood. We forgot our shyness.” (Boy, 11-14 years, non-poor, urban, Şanlıurfa)

\*“I thought that children become very unhappy and that beating a child or persecuting him is a very bad thing.” (Girl, 11-14 years, Adana)

\*“I thought that others behave badly towards children for no good reason.” (Boy, 7-10 years, poor, Istanbul)

\*“I thought that we would get bored here. I thought two old men would come and talk and talk, and then we would go home” (Girl, 15-18 years, non-poor, urban, Konya)

In order for the participants to benefit from the group discussion, gain insight and have a hopeful attitude towards the future, an activity called the "Picture of Hope" was also conducted. Some children focused on more than one subject while picturing their hopes and simultaneously they expressed reality together with dreams. The symbols that children used most frequently to express hope were cars, cartoon characters, popular actors/singers and nature.

It was observed that most of the children had the opportunity to "re-process" their memories regarding abuse during the flow of the group protocol. However, a small number of children were thought to be under the traumatic effect of memories of bad treatment and in need of support. After the group discussions, the addresses and telephone number of the relevant centers were given to children needing assistance.

Adults said that they had faced up to their past during the group discussion, evaluated today and thought about how they should behave in the future. They also reported that they had discovered different aspects of themselves and re-evaluated the relationships that they established with their children. Like the children, the adults also said that they had come to realize that the problem of abuse was not specific to them but also existed for others, and that domestic violence was more widespread than they had previously imagined. \**"I came to understand the idea of empathy a little. I knew myself better. I understood what I want better."* (Mother, poor, urban, Adana)

\**"It made us remember certain things again. It helped to refresh old memories and encouraged us to work on our shortcomings."* (Father, poor, rural, Samsun)

\**"I overdid it a little. I should not have punished my son."* (Mother, poor, urban, Adana)

\**"If I could go back to the past, I would never be violent with my children. I am now aware that what I did was wrong."* (Mother, poor, urban, Adana)

\**"It was like a group therapy - very useful in terms of self-development"* (Father, non-poor, urban, Istanbul)

\**"We opened up; we said the sorts of things we could not have said in different circumstances."* (Teacher, Istanbul)

\**"I was happy. I would take part if these were held every once in a while."* (Grandmother, non-poor, urban, Konya)

\**"Actually, if these were held on an ongoing basis and if we were informed, we would have a chance to talk and relax. That would be great. I really enjoyed it."* (Father, non-poor, urban, Samsun)

\**"It was cathartic."* (Grandmother, non-poor, urban, Istanbul)

\**"You did not talk only about teachers' or your opinions; you patiently listened to the feelings and opinions of others. That was very nice."* (Mother, poor, urban, Adana)

The majority of adults, similar to children, had the opportunity to re-process their memories regarding bad behaviour during the flow of the group protocol. However, some adults said that they were still under the influence of bad behavior which they experienced in their childhood. It was also thought that some adults who had perpetrated bad behavior might be in need of similar support. After the group

discussions, participants were given the addresses and telephone information of centers to which those in need of assistance could apply.

### 3.1.6 Participants' Recommendations for Preventing Abuse

The suggestions which child and adult participants made regarding abuse towards children and domestic violence included: talking and coming to an agreement; acting with tolerance and maturity; seeing one's own mistakes; accepting it when one was not right; not doing evil things; having good intentions; having a positive approach; smiling a lot; being more understanding; not lying; warning those who displayed bad behavior, sharing troubles with close relatives and acquaintances; communicating strongly with others, and apologising. Children's suggestions about their own behaviour were: to behave with respect towards adults; to behave the way adults wanted them to; not to be naughty; to study harder; to do their homework; to listen in class; to develop good family manners, and to pretend not to hear.

In order to prevent abuse towards children and domestic violence, children expected adults to love their children, not to get angry, to trust and believe their children, to listen to the children, to explain things without yelling, to allow the children to play games, not to compare them with others, and to behave sensibly when the children reach the age of puberty. Children also expected schools to have a psychological consultant and to give informative training for families and children. They expected: adults to receive psychological support; perpetrators of abuse to be punished; police to interfere; bad children to be sent to other schools; violence to be banned in schools, and the unemployment problem to be solved.

Adults made many suggestions regarding their own behavior and outside external factors (education, laws, the police, etc) in order to prevent abuse. However, they made far fewer suggestions regarding children's behaviour. This showed that adults saw either themselves or external factors as responsible for the prevention of abuse.

Mothers and grandmothers thought that in order to prevent abuse they themselves should develop the habits of talking; having a sweet attitude; not behaving in an angry manner; having a friendly attitude towards the children; listening to the children; supporting their education; behaving in a tolerant, caring, kind and patient way; giving advice to the children, and showing the children the way. In order for this to be achieved, they emphasised the need for of women to have general and economic independence, for peaceful homes, for the husband to be by the woman's side, for self-sacrifice and for alcoholic fathers to be kept away from the

family. They also stated that they should give up the frequent practice of complaining to their husbands about the children.

Fathers and grandfathers said that in order to prevent abuse they should pay attention to their own behavior, which should include communicating; listening to the children; communicating with them; paying them more attention; sparing more time; giving them a good education; not applying strict discipline; teaching children about right and wrong; setting role models for them, and being understanding and kind. Like the female participants, males also emphasised the significance of the spouse's support and of better economic circumstances for preventing abuse.

Teachers' suggestions about their own behaviour for the prevention of abuse were: talking to the students; displaying love and affection; behaving as if the student was one's own child, and not reflecting the problems at home in their treatment of the students. Teachers also suggested that families, teachers and children should receive training; that families should care for their children better; that special care should be paid to children who needed it; that laws should be implemented; that their economic conditions should be improved, and that the Ministry of National Education should care more strongly for teachers.

### **3.1.7 Lessons learned from the Qualitative Part of the Study**

Finally, the research team made various observations related to the guideline used in the focus group discussions, and the procedure followed in the study. These observations and lessons learned are as follows:

- 1- The fact that the project team experienced the group procedure personally and thereby learned the flow contributed to the project.
- 2- The fact that each group discussion was conducted by one researcher and one psychologist as moderators increased the productivity in terms of data acquired. Also, the fact that two moderators worked in each group discussion made it easier to provide psychological support to the participants whenever needed.
- 3- The fact that a note-taking assistant (computer data recording assistant) took part in each group enabled the data to be recorded correctly and illiterate participants to be assisted during the activities.
- 4- As each group discussion was conducted by two moderators, it was decided that it would be appropriate for 7-9 participants to participate. In view of the intensity of the activities, it is thought that a higher number of participants would have negatively influenced the acquisition of in-depth information.

- 5- The language and terminology used in the group discussions were selected in consideration of the profile of each group. Especially when working with children aged 7-14 and with participants from rural areas, the language used in the introductory phase, where the project objectives are explained, was simplified. In explaining the objectives to children, they were asked what they understood by “unwanted behavior”.
- 6- The materials helped respondents to express themselves. Young children in particular preferred to draw or use play dough as well as writing. Adults, however, rarely drew pictures or used the play dough. In the picture of hope activity, most participants preferred to make a collage from magazines. As they evaluated the group discussion, the participants mentioned that writing and using the materials was good for them.
- 7- Group discussions were carried out in a seating order made up of tables and chairs in cities, while sitting on the ground was preferred in rural areas. In urban areas, sessions were held in a meeting room of a the participating recruitment company or in a well-known hotel. In rural areas, the most convenient location for participants was preferred. It was important to select a venue where respondents would feel comfortable.
- 8- At the end of the group discussions, participants given the contact information of the SHÇEK administrator in the related city and the number of the “Alo 183 – Family, Woman, Children and Handicapped Social Service Consultancy Line” at the end of the group discussions. This was important as it showed the participants that there were places that they could go for help whenever they needed.
- 9- Brochures, booklets and posters provided by UNICEF were handed out to participants at the end of the group sessions. This was carried out in order to remind participants of the group discussion experience and to enable them to establish bonds.
- 10- The project team carried out verbal feedback and sharing meetings after each session and shared their ideas with the national consultant. This contributed to the team’s implementation of a healthy working strategy throughout the study. In addition, a psychological support group session was conducted among the project team with protective objectives after the end of the fieldwork, led by the national consultant.

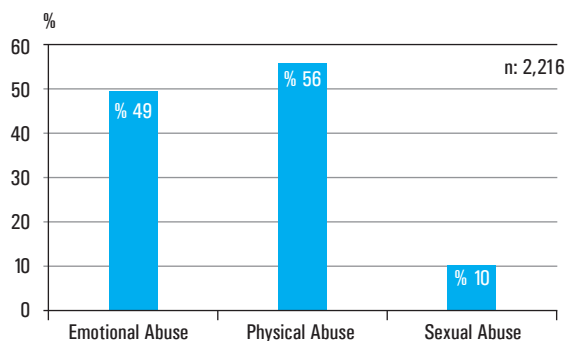
## 3.2 Quantitative Findings of the Study

The objective of the quantitative study, conducted as the second stage of Research on Child Abuse and Domestic Violence, is, as mentioned in the Methodology section, “to enhance the present understanding of behavior which is harmful to children at home, at school, and on the street from the perspective of children and selected adults.” and to quantify data on other special objectives of the study. The data acquired in the quantitative stage of the study was obtained through “face-to-face interviews” carried out with a sample representing Turkish children in the 7-18 age group.

### 3.2.1 Abuse Witnessed

To begin with, the respondent children aged 7-18 were asked about the various types of abuse that they had witnessed within “the past year” and the places where they witnessed the abuse

**Figure 1 - Types of abuse witnessed by children aged 7-18<sup>1</sup>**



As shown, 56 percent of the children and young people aged 7-18 living in Turkey had witnessed physical abuse, 49 percent emotional abuse and 10 percent sexual abuse (Figure 1).

<sup>1</sup> The given results are weighted results



**Table 3 - Types of emotional and physical abuse witnessed by children aged 7-18 and the places where they witnessed the abuse<sup>2</sup>**

Type	Rate of Observing	Location
<b>Emotional Abuse</b>	<b>49%</b>	
Children who stated that they have seen or heard adults shouting at, arguing or getting angry with each other in a way that upset or frightened them	38%	Home 19%
Children who stated that they have seen or heard adults shouting at, arguing or getting angry with a child in a way that upset or frightened them	37%	In the street/ neighbourhood/ environs/ district where they live/ in neighbours' homes 21%
<b>Physical Abuse</b>	<b>56%</b>	
Children who stated that they have seen/ heard adults hurt each other physically by hitting, kicking, slapping, punching or in other ways	31%	In the street/ neighbourhood/ environs/ district where they live/ in neighbours' homes 20%
Children who stated that they have seen/ heard adults hurt a child physically by hitting, kicking, slapping, punching or in other ways	32%	In the street/ neighbourhood/ environs/ district where they live/ in neighbours' homes 19%
Children who stated that they have seen/ heard children/young people hurt a child physically by hitting, kicking, slapping, punching or in other ways	41%	In the street/ neighbourhood/ environs/ district where they live/ in neighbours' homes 28%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,216</b>	<b>2,216</b>

Physical abuse was mostly witnessed outside the home, whereas emotional abuse was witnessed at similar rates at home or outside the home. (Table 3). Children/ young people who witnessed physical abuse mostly observed it being inflicted on a child/ young person by other children/ young persons.

<sup>2</sup> The given results are weighted results

**Table 4 - Types of sexual abuse witnessed by children aged 7-18, the places where they witnessed the abuse, the person responsible, the reason for the abuse and its impacts<sup>3</sup>**

Type	Rate	Location	Person Responsible	Reason	Emotional Impacts	Physical Impacts	Other Impacts
<b>Witnessing</b>							
<b>Sexual Abuse</b>	<b>10%</b>						
Children who stated that they have seen someone make a child/ young person upset by speaking to and/ or about them in a sexual way or writing sexual things about them or have been told by a child/ young person around them or a friend of theirs about an experience of theirs like this	10%	School 6%	Another young person/ child 7%	Due to the personality/ nature/ character of the perpetrator 2%	Angry 2% Sad 2%	-	Relationships with other people 0,1%
Children who stated that they have seen someone make a child/ young person watch a sex video or look at sexual pictures in a magazine or on a computer when they did not want to or have been told by a child/ young person around them or a friend of theirs about an experience of theirs like this	3%	School 1%	Another young person/ child 2%			-	
Children whostated that they have seen someone behave with a child/ young person in a sexual way – such as touching the child/ young person or making the child/ young person touch them, or more, when the child/ young person did not want to or have been told by a child/ young person around them or a friend of theirs about an experience of theirs like this	4%	In the street/ neighbourhood/ environs/ district where they live/ in neighbours' homes 2%	Another young person/ child 3%			-	
<b>Base</b>	<b>2216</b>	<b>2216</b>	<b>2216</b>	<b>2216</b>	<b>2216</b>	<b>2216</b>	<b>2216</b>

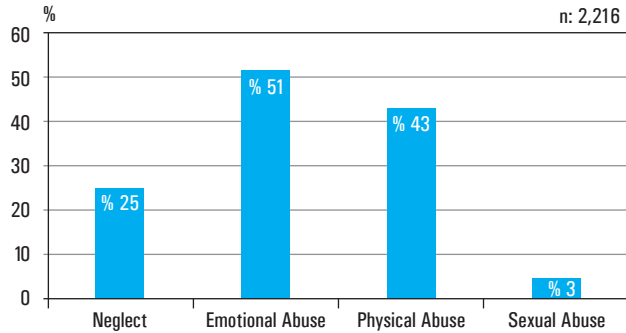
Sexual abuse is witnessed within the scope of the definitions in Table 4 mostly in the school setting, again exercised by other children/ young persons. The place where one lives is another setting where sexual abuse is witnessed. Children/ young people give the reason for this behaviour as the character/ personality of the perpetrator.

### 3.2.2 Abuse to which Children were Subjected

This part of the questionnaire examined the neglect and abuse that children aged 7-18 in Turkey had personally experienced and been subjected to within the past year.

<sup>3</sup> The given results are weighted results

**Figure 2 - Types of abuse to which children aged 7-18 were subjected<sup>4</sup>**



It was found that 25 percent of the children had been subject to neglect. Being subject to unwanted behaviour falling within the definition of emotional abuse was a notion that was experienced by one out of every two children/ young people in all age groups from 7 to 18. The rate of those who stated that they were subject to physical abuse was 45 percent (Figure 2).

**Table 5 - Types of neglect experienced by children aged 7-18, the reasons for neglect and its impacts<sup>5</sup>**

Type	Rate	Location	Person Responsible	Reason	Emotional Impacts	Physical Impacts	Other Impacts
<b>Being Subject to</b>							
<b>Neglect</b>	<b>25%</b>						
Those who were left on their own when they felt someone older should have been there	13%	-	-	The perpetrator had money problems 8%	Sad 10%	-	Emotions about self 3%
Those who did not get the attention/ love they felt they needed, or felt they were not valued enough	9%	-	-		Sad 2%	-	Emotions about self 1%
Those who had to wear dirty clothes, or clothes that were torn, not warm enough/ too warm, too small or too big	8%	-	-		Sad 0,1%	-	Emotions about self 0,2%
Those who were not taken care of when they were ill or hurt, e.g. not taken to see a doctor or not given the medicines they needed	3%	-	-		Sad 5%	-	Emotions about self 2%
Those who experienced occasions when they were not allowed to eat enough/ were let go hungry although they wanted to eat	3%	-	-		Sad 2%	-	Health was affected in a bad way 1%
Those who experienced occasions when they were not allowed to go to school	3%	-	-		Sad 1%	-	Health was affected in a bad way 0,4%
Those who were not helped to go to school although they couldn't go on their own	0.7%	-	-		Sad 7%	-	Emotions about self 2%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2216</b>	<b>2216</b>	<b>2216</b>	<b>2216</b>	<b>2216</b>	<b>2216</b>	<b>2216</b>

4 The given results are weighted results

5 The given results are weighted results

Among the various types of neglect, the one encountered most often by the children aged 7-18 turned out to be being left alone. For all types of neglect, children/young people most frequently gave the economic / money problems of the perpetrator as the reason for the neglect. Children who were subject to neglect reported that this caused damage to their feelings about themselves (Table 5).

**Table 6 - Types of emotional abuse experienced by children aged 7-18, the places where they experienced the abuse, the person responsible, the reasons for the abuse and its impacts<sup>6</sup>**

Type	Rate	Location	Person Responsible	Reason	Emotional Impacts	Physical Impacts	Other Impacts
<b>Being Subject to</b>							
Emotional Abuse	51%						
Children who said that someone exerted pressure about their studies	33%	-	Mother 24%	Because the child subject to abuse did not do something s/he should have done 11%	Sad 19%		Studies 4%
Children who said that someone scolded them in an angry way	35%	Home 25%	Mother 17%		Sad 24%		Emotions about self 5%
Children who said that someone said things to them that upset him	35%	School 23%	Another young person/ child 27%		Sad 18%		Emotions about self 4%
Children who stated that they were threatened with being kept/ thrown out of the house by someone from the household	1%	-	Father 0.1%		-		-
Children who stated that they were threatened with being abandoned by someone from the household	1%	-	Mother 0.1%		Sad 1%		Emotions about self 0.1%
Children who stated that they were subject to any other behaviour or speech that created more sorrow or hurt more than scolding, yelling, hearing things that upset them or being threatened with being thrown out of the home or abandoned	5%	In the street/ neighbourhood/ environs/ district where they live/ in neighbours' homes 2%	Another young person/ child 2%		Sad 4%		Emotions about self 2%
Base	2,216	2,216	2,216	2,216	2,216	2,216	2,216

The most common form of unwanted behaviour experienced by 7-18 year-olds was being pressurised over schoolwork. Being scolded and hearing things that upset them were also widespread types of emotional abuse. Scolding was most frequently experienced at home from the mother, while unwanted words were heard at school from other children or young people. The most intense emotion created by exposure to such behavior was sadness (Table 6).

<sup>6</sup> The given results are weighted results

**Table 7 - Types of physical abuse experienced by children aged 7-18, the places where they experienced the abuse, the person responsible, the reason for the abuse and its impacts<sup>7</sup>**

Type	Rate	Location	Person Responsible	Reason	Emotional Impacts	Physical Impacts	Other Impacts
<b>Being Subject to</b>							
<b>Physical Abuse</b>	<b>45%</b>						
Children who were subjected to behaviour that hurt physically, such as hair-pulling, pinching or ear-twisting	30%	School 20%	Another young person/ child 17%	In order to punish the child who was subject to the abuse 7%	Angry 16%	Mild pain 21%	Emotions about self 5%
Children who said that something had been thrown at them	19%	School 7%	Another young person/ child 11%		Angry 8%	Mild pain 7%	Emotions about self 1%
Children who said that they were shaken by someone	9%	School 5%	Another young person/ child 5%		Sad 5%	Mild pain 5%	Emotions about self 2%
Children who said that they were hit or slapped with the bare hand	24%	Home 12%	Another young person/ child 8%		Sad 15%	Mild pain 13%	Emotions about self 6%
Children who said that they were subject to another form of behaviour that really physically hurt or upset them	3%	School 1%	Another young person/ child 2%		Sad 1%	Mild pain 1%	Health was affected in a bad way 0.5%
Children who were subject to behaviour that caused them physical strain like making them stand in an uncomfortable position, or do strenuous physical movements repeatedly, or confining/locking them up somewhere as a punishment	7%	School 6%	Teacher 6%		Sad 4%	Mild pain 2%	Emotions about self 2%
Children who were subject to behaviour that made them feel that their life was in danger, meaning making them feel they could end up getting wounded, or really scaring them	3%	School 1%	Another young person/ child 2%		Frightened 1%	Mild pain 1%	Health was affected in a bad way 1%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,216</b>	<b>2,216</b>	<b>2,216</b>	<b>2,216</b>	<b>2,216</b>	<b>2,216</b>	<b>2,216</b>

The most frequently observed types of physical abuse were hair-pulling, ear-twisting, having an object thrown at one, hitting with the bare hand and slapping. Children/ young people were subject to these behaviours most frequently at school. The perpetrators were mostly other children or young people. For the physical abuse that was exerted as a punishment, the teacher was perceived as the person responsible. The emotions created by physical abuse were anger and sadness. Other impacts of physical abuse were physical pain and damage to feelings towards oneself (Table 7).

<sup>7</sup> The given results are weighted results

**Table 8 - Types of sexual abuse experienced by children aged 7-18, the places where they experienced the abuse, the person responsible, the reason for the abuse and its impacts<sup>8</sup>**

Type	Rate	Location	Person Responsible	Reason	Emotional Impacts	Physical Impacts	Other Impacts
<b>Being Subjected to</b>							
Sexual Abuse	3%						
The proportion of those who replied positively to the question of whether they themselves had experienced a similar situation after being asked the question of whether they had seen anyone make a child/ young person upset by speaking to and/ or about them in a sexual way or writing sexual things about them, or had been told by a child/ young person around them or a friend of theirs about an experience of theirs like this	2.5%	School 2%	Another young person/ child 2%	Due to the personality/ nature/ character of the perpetrator 1%	Angry 1%	-	Emotions about self 0.4%
The proportion of those who replied positively to the question of whether they themselves had experienced a similar situation after being asked the question of whether they had seen anyone make a child/ young person watch a sex video or look at sexual pictures in a magazine or on a computer when they did not want to, or had been told by a child/ young person around them or a friend of theirs about an experience of theirs like this	0.9%	School 0.4%	Another young person/ child 0.7%			-	
The proportion of those who replied positively to the question of whether they themselves had experienced a similar situation after being asked the question of whether they had seen anyone behave with a child/ young person in a sexual way – such as touching the child/ young person or making the child/ young person touch them, or more, when the child/ young person did not want to, or had been told by a child/ young person around them or a friend of theirs about an experience of theirs like this	0.5%	In the street/ neighbourhood/ environs/ district where they live/ in neighbours' homes 0.3%	Another young person/ child 0.2%			-	
Base	2,216	2,216	2,216	2,216	2,216	2,216	2,216

Children and young people reported witnessing sexual abuse at a lower rate than any of the other types of abuse included in the research. One percent stated that they had been shown a film with sexual contents or been exposed to pictures with sexual contents in a magazine or on a computer within the past 1 year although they did not want to look or watch. 0.5 percent said that someone had exerted sexual behaviour, such as touching the child or making the child touch him/ her without the child's consent. (Table 8).

The relatively low incidence of experience of sexual abuse reported by the survey, by comparison with other types of abuse studied, should definitely not lead to the conclusion that only such a small proportion of children in the 7-18 age group are subjected to sexual abuse in Turkey. Sexual abuse is a very intimate and delicate issue that needs to be studied and questioned in clinical settings by experts using special techniques. It is quite understandable that such a finding could not

<sup>8</sup> The given results are weighted results

be acquired by field teams during interviews that were mostly conducted in the children's homes and in the company of adults or others.

### 3.2.3 Coping Strategies

In this section, respondents were asked how they coped with the abuse and protected themselves. The quantitative study findings are overall parallel to the qualitative findings.

**Table 9 - Coping strategies and getting support<sup>9</sup>**

What children do when they face any bad treatment in the home, school or neighbourhood, in order to get rid of any bad feelings, or to make themselves feel better (10 most frequent responses)		People whom the child shares these things with, who help the child when he faces these kinds of bad treatment (9 most frequent responses)		How these people helped the child (10 most frequent responses)	
I tell my friends	3,8	My mother	27,0	By talking	18,4
I talk to/ tell my mother	3,6	My friend, my friends	13,3	They give advice	6,3
I listen to music	2,2	My father	8,8	They listen	6,0
I go out and stroll around	1,8	My family	6,2	They help/ try to help about everything	3,9
I want to stay alone	1,8	My older sister	5,0	They warn	1,6
I play games	1,8	My older brother	2,9	They console	1,2
I play computer games	1,6	My teacher	1,5	They support	1,0
I read books	1,5	My siblings	0,6	They protect	0,9
I watch TV	1,5	Other people	0,5	They show love	0,8
I cry	1,4			They uplift one's mood	0,7
Base	2216	Base	2216	Base	2216

Children stated that they try to dispel the emotions that are created by abuse at home, at school or in the environs where they live by talking to people close to them. Children also turn to music, going out, playing games, computers and books as ways of relieving negative emotions. Mothers and friends were mentioned as the individuals that they most frequently share their experiences with (Table 9).

**Table 10 - Coping strategies of children subjected to any bad behavior**

Whether the child had ever told the school guidance unit or any of his teachers after being subjected to bad behavior	%	Whether this helped in any way	%
Yes, with school guidance unit	10,9	Yes	85,4
Yes, with another teacher	8,8	No	14,6
No	80,3	*****	
Base	2216	Base [Children who get support]	437

<sup>9</sup> The given results are weighted results.

A significant finding obtained from this part of the questionnaire was that only a small minority of children talk to legal authorities when they are subjected to any type of abuse. Approximately 20 percent of the children stated that they had told the school guidance service or another teacher about bad behavior towards them, and 85 percent of these children said that this sharing was beneficial for them

### 3.2.4 Children's Suggestions for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

As the final section of the quantitative study, children were asked to suggest three things that could be done to prevent people from treating children/ young people in ways that they do not want.

**Table 11 - Children's suggestions on how to prevent abuse and neglect of children / young people<sup>10</sup>**

The weighted average of the three suggestions is taken and the top 10 suggestions are listed below.	%
Education should be given/ they should be educated	7,3
They should understand/ get to know/ listen to children better	5,1
That person should be punished/ warned	4,2
There should be love and respect	4,2
They should behave well	3,7
There should not be any beating/ fights/ violence/ bad words	3,2
The families should be conscious/ educated	2,0
They should be given good manners/ should be well brought-up	2,0
They should be understanding/ tolerant/ considerate	2,0
Families should be informed	0,8
No others	17,9
I do not want to reply	37,1
*****	
<b>Total Replies</b>	<b>2216</b>
<b>Base</b>	<b>2216</b>

Thirty seven percent of the children who were interviewed did not want to reply/ make any comments on this question. The most common of all the replies given was that "education should be provided" (Table 11).

<sup>10</sup> The given results are weighted results



# 4

## Conclusion

In the light of the above findings, it is considered that qualitative research techniques are more suitable for such a research project taking into consideration the children's ages and experiences. As a result of this research, data was acquired that displays that all participants experienced abuse to various degrees. The behaviors that participants were subjected to or which was inflicted on them constituted abuse in terms of the definition of the WHO, and some provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child were being violated. The most significant sources of such behavior were close family members, teachers and peers.

Taking into consideration the harmful effects of abuse on children and the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, it is indispensable, in order to protect children from abuse, to launch education campaigns that will create widespread sensitivity in society. After raising awareness in this way, the necessary steps should be taken in order to correct the behavior of families, teachers and children. Governmental institutions should issue a clear message to all relevant

ectors to the effect that a physical/ demeaning concept of punishment is unacceptable in educational institutions.

In conclusion, a lot of data has been gathered in this study that can show the way forward o create a peaceful worldview that encourages the use of positive discipline methods and establish the right approach for a healthy future to bring about changes in the perceptions and attitude of teachers, parents and children. It is thought that the data obtained from the result will shed light on the preventive measures to be taken.

## Proposals

Working with families and children alone will not be enough to protect children from abuse and to prevent violence within the family. Multidisciplinary research needs to be carried out in various fields. These fields are:

- Parents / Families
- Children and young people
- Schools / Teachers / Educationalists
- Child and adolescent psychological health workers
- State policy / Laws
- Public and Private Institutions / Civil Society Organisations
- Legal Channels / The Police
- Scientific Research / Field Research
- Society
- The Media.

In view of the harmful effects of negative behavior towards children and the need to conform to the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, it is essential to launch education campaigns with a view to creating sensitivity in society in the broadest possible sense. While raising awareness in this way, the necessary steps must be taken to change the behavior of families, teachers and children in a positive direction.

Current efforts focus for the most part on interventions directed at the individual who is subjected to abuse, and on providing support for this individual. Yet if violence is to be prevented, it is extremely important and necessary to rehabilitate

the perpetrator of the abuse as well. Both parties should benefit from effective techniques for correcting their psychological health.

If the dimensions of the problem are not to grow further, it appears vital to increase the sensitivity of those working in all kinds of bodies and institutions that provide services for children, such as health and education, together with local government, civil society organisations and the media, to take concrete steps towards solving the problem through plans based on evidence, and to show determination in putting into effect the measures which it is decided to take.

This survey has opened a door for the necessary work to be done on an important and sensitive subject, and shed light on statistical data which have been lacking. The topic is broad and multi-faceted, and it is clear that more research needs to be done in order to study it in detail and to identify evidence of cause and effect relationships for its various sub-categories. It is our hope that this Research Study on Child Abuse and Domestic Violence will point the way for subsequent research.



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