

Child maltreatment and mental health disorders

We examined associations between Australians' experience of any type of child maltreatment (physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and exposure to domestic violence) and subsequent mental health disorders) using a diagnostic instrument.

Surveyed **8500**
Australians aged 16-65+

Australians who experience maltreatment are:

2.8 x more likely to have any mental disorder
48% vs 21.6% *


4.6 x more likely to have current PTSD
7.8% vs 1.3% *


3.1 x more likely to have current generalised anxiety disorder
16.1% vs 4.3% *


2.6 x more likely to have current severe alcohol use disorder
6.1% vs 1.9% *

3.2 x more likely to have had major depressive disorder
24.6% vs 8.1% *

Child maltreatment is **strongly associated** with mental health disorders in Australia.

48% of those who experience maltreatment go on to develop a **mental disorder**
compared with 21.6% of those with no maltreatment experience 

1 in 4 who experienced child maltreatment had lifetime: **major depressive disorder** compared to one in 12 who didn't 

Emotional abuse and sexual abuse are most strongly related to **mental disorders** 

Child maltreatment influences mental health across life. In people aged 45 and older **mental health disorders** are far more common in those who experienced maltreatment than those who did not.

38.3% vs 16.6%

Scott, JG, et al. (2023). The association between child maltreatment and mental disorders in the Australian Child Maltreatment Study. Med J Aust. 218 (6).

For information about the ACMS and support services visit www.acms.au

* Odds account for other explanatory factors