

## **Long-term Effects of Sexual Abuse**

### **Common Physical Effects:**

- General physical symptoms of anxiety or tension
- Sleep disturbances
- Nightmares
- Constant nervousness
- Eating problems/ disorders

### **Common Psychological Effects:**

- Feelings of isolation
- Feelings of being different or damaged
- Low self-worth/ esteem
- Preoccupied (results from repeatedly trying not to think about abuse)
- Distrust
- Extreme amounts of anger and hostility
- Feelings of powerlessness
- Fears
- Problems having normal sexual relations
- Problems in sexual development and identity
- Viewing oneself as a sexual object
- Persistent problems in getting emotionally close to others
- Depression
- Self-destructive feelings
- Putting oneself in destructive situations/ relationships

### **Common Social Effects:**

- Difficulty starting and keeping relationships with both men and women
- Difficulty trusting others
- Problems with sexual adjustment in relationships
- Difficulty feeling and showing affection
- Being an easier target to be sexually re-victimized
- Problems communicating feelings to others
- Getting into abusive relationships

### **Common Behavioral Effects:**

- Getting sexually involved with too many partners
- Prostitution
- Drug and/or alcohol abuse
- Running away
- School problems (attendance, concentration, grades, dropping out)
- Employment problems
- Aggressive behavior
- Acting out or breaking the law