
"It's Normal To Be Normal"

- Abbreviated presentation
 - Excerpted from full presentation by Cathy M. Boyle, PNP, from the Children's Hospital Central California
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Normal To Be Normal?



Amazing People. Incredible Care.

- Dr. Joyce Adams coined this term in an article published in Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics in 1994
 - 236 children with perpetrator conviction
 - Photos reviewed blindly by medical team
 - Classified as 1-5 (1 = normal 5 = abnormal)
 - Average age 9 years (8 months to almost 18 years)
 - Abnormal findings in 1% of the cases

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- Dr. Astrid Heger published “Children Referred for Possible Sexual Abuse: Medical Findings in 2384 Children” in Child Abuse and Neglect in 2002.
 - 2384 children referred to child abuse clinic between 1985-1990
 - Referred because they disclosed sexual abuse, behavioral changes, exposure to abusive environment or possible medical conditions
 - 96.3% had normal exams

What is the definition of "Normal"

- conforming with or constituting a norm or standard or level or type or social expectation;
- not abnormal in accordance with scientific laws
- being approximately average or within certain limits, e.g. intelligence and development; "a perfectly normal child"; "of normal intelligence"; "the most normal person I've ever met"
- convention: something regarded as a normative, for example; "the convention of naming a main character"; "violence is the rule not the exception"; "his formula for impressing visitors"

How Can Findings be Normal After Sexual Abuse?

- Healing by the body
 - Length of time between assault and exam
 - Type/nature of sexual contact
 - Examination techniques
 - Patient cooperation during the exam
 - Estrogen
 - Examiner's experience and training
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Validity of injuries

For those times when findings are seen from suspected child sexual abuse exams, what adds to their validity?

- Written description of injuries matches what is captured in the photos
- Multiple positioning of the child and/or multiple techniques (traction, separation, etc) affirm the same finding

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