

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BOMBAY, 10 APR 2007

# 53% Indian kids sexually abused

## Parents, Kin Perpetrators Of Crime: Survey

**New Delhi:** In a shocking revelation, a government commissioned survey has found that more than 53% of children in India are subjected to sexual abuse, but most don't report the assaults to anyone.

The survey, released on Monday and which covered different forms of child abuse—physical, sexual and emotional—as well as female child neglect, found that two out of every three children have been physically abused.

Parents and relatives, persons known to the child or in a position of trust and responsibility were mostly found to be the perpetrators of child sexual abuse in the country.

According to the women and child development ministry-sponsored report, which assumes greater significance in the backdrop of the Nithari killings that brought into focus the issue of children's safety, those in the age group of 5-12 years reported higher levels of abuse.


While releasing the survey, women and child development minister Renuka Chowdhury said, "Child abuse is shrouded in secrecy and there is a conspiracy of silence around the entire subject. The ministry is working on a new law for protection of children's rights by clearly specifying offences against children and stiffening punishments."

The survey, carried out across 13 states and with a sample size of 12,447, revealed that 53.22% of children reported having faced one or more forms of sexual abuse, with Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Assam and Delhi reporting the highest percentage of such incidents.

In 50% of child abuse cases, the abusers were known to the child or were in a position of trust and responsibility and most children did not report the matter to anyone.

The survey, sponsored by WCD ministry and carried out by the

### ABUSED INNOCENCE



**Sexual**


- More than 53% children report facing one or more forms of sexual abuse
- Almost 22% faced severe sexual abuse, around 6% said they were sexually assaulted
- 50% of sexual offenders were known to the victim or were people in positions of trust. Most children didn't report the incidents
- Younger children (5-12 yrs) face higher levels of abuse

**Physical**

- cases (89%) from parents
- 65% kids at school underwent corporal punishment

**Emotional**

- Every second girl child reported facing emotional abuse, mostly from parents
- 48% of girls wished they were boys
- Delhi, along with Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Assam, reported highest levels of abuse



NGO Prayas in association with UNICEF and Save the Children, found that over 50% children were subjected to one or the other form of physical abuse and more boys than girls were abused physically.

The first-ever survey on child abuse in the country disclosed that nearly 65% of schoolchildren reported facing corporal punishment—beatings by teachers—mostly in government schools. Of children physically abused in families, in 88.6% of the cases, it was the parents who were the perpetrators.

More than 50% had been sexually abused in ways that ranged from severe—such as rape or fondling—to milder forms of molestation that included forcible kissing.

The study also interviewed 2,324 young adults between the ages of 18 and 24, almost half of whom reported being physically or sexually abused as children.

When it comes to emotional abuse, every second child was subjected to emotional assault and in 83% of the cases, parents were the abusers.