

## Part 2: Theoretical Background and Further Information

According to statistics, every 4 to 7 boys in Germany has experienced sexual violence, i.e. an adult of another young person has used his position of authority, his physical/mental dominance as well as the naivety, the trust or the dependence of the boys for their personal sexual gratification and at the same time impose silence on the boys.

Boys (as well as girls) experience sexual abuse/ violence in very different forms and relationships. Sexual assaults occur in most cases from close social contacts: the family, neighbourhood, during sports and leisure activities, but also to a large extent from their own family of origin. Only about 25% of the boys are assaulted by strangers.

Sexual violence includes the following:

- A child is fondled for one's own sexual gratification or the child is lead to touch another's intimate parts;
- A child is forced or persuaded to be seen naked, or exposed to sexual activities;
- A child is used for pornographic purposes or exposed to pornography;
- A child is approached in an exhibitionist manner;
- The intimate parts of a child are touched and the child is forced or persuaded to have oral, anal or vaginal sexual intercourse or any other sexual activity.

For these children, there is hardly any possibility to escape child abuse. Through threats and pressure to keep quiet, the children are forced into silence. Often the sexual violence takes place over a long period of time and leads the victim into a hopeless situation. They are seeking love and protection and they experience a breach of their trust, powerlessness as well as constant demonstration of violence. This has a serious and lasting effect on their future lives.

In the context of male socialisation, on the one hand, being a man/ being a boy and a victim experience have hardly anything to do with each other. Often they must confront myths and messages like a "real boy defends himself!" and "an Indian knows no pain." On the other hand, no male socialization process goes without general victim experiences. These experiences are fed by different experience horizons. Usually they don't belong to the male image and – if at all – are only used in order to degrade others or distance oneself from others. Many boys must live with this conflict and cope with it in one way or the other.

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