

Research trying to find, then help incest victims

United Press International
SAN DIEGO — Eight-year-old Tami tells in her child's words how Daddy touched and kissed her and how he warned her not to tell Mommy.

It went on for three years. Now she is undergoing therapy at a San Diego Child Sexual Abuse clinic. Tightly clasped hands expose nails bitten to the quick. She has dark

streaks under the eyes. The lines on the young face represent the marks left by nights of staying awake on guard against the possible return to her room by her father for one more sexual assault.

It is impossible to estimate the actual number of youngsters who, like Tami, are victims of their own parents and unable to find security

and safety even within their own homes.

Experts agree, however, that cases which finally reach the ears of authorities barely scratch the surface. Now that there are laws on the books making it mandatory for the reporting of such incidents, they are hopeful they will be able to reach and help children before their experiences leave permanent scars.

"It is common knowledge in the field that incest is one of the most under-reported types of child abuse," said Dr. David Sears, technical information specialist of the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect in Washington. "We can make a national estimate of 60,000 to 70,000 cases, but we consider this a basement figure. Other experts as well feel this report figure is too low."

Sears said the number of reported incest cases has almost doubled from 1976 to 1978.

"All professionals are listening to the children more now and listening to them in terms of maybe it really did happen and not that it is just a fabrication on the part of the child to get even with a parent," said Gerald Vernon, director of San Diego's Child Sexual Abuse treatment program.

Sgt. Bill Dunn, head of San Diego Police Department's Child Abuse team, said reports of molestation average one a day in San Diego. In 1979 there were 293 reported cases.

San Diego was targeted by Drs. Marvin Bohnstedt and Peggy Smith of the Social Research Center of Sacramento for a study on child abuse. One of the results of their study — a

Child Victimization Study Highlight report — gives a profile of the incest offender.

He is "most often a natural father, an unrelated male, or step-father living with the victim's natural mother. While many are unemployed, the typical suspect is working, several are employed in white collar jobs. Average suspect age is 32, and victim age 10 or 11 years. The molestation is most likely to be reported by a family member other than the victim."

"Up until very recently," said Smith, whose study is funded by the National Center on Child Abuse, "we have assumed that incest is something that only happens to girls and now that we are making it acceptable to talk about, we're finding out that there are an awful lot of young men who are molested also,

and I think we've just scratched the tip of the iceberg there."

Researchers say the incest victim may suffer a variety of traumas: often has trouble sleeping, may have nightmares; is unable to eat properly; often becomes emotionally unstable; may regress in behavior and become introverted.

Girls experience difficulty in establishing normal relationships with boys, the study continues. They may become runaways or truants, may occasionally turn to drugs or prostitution or may even attempt suicide.

Victims' mothers "suffer horribly," according to psychologist Vernon. "They're women who are usually emotionally and financially dependent on their husbands. Sometimes

they don't even know how and usually don't have any fence. They alternate jealousy and concern when that 'other' woman in the band's life is their own daughter."

Victims' fathers, on the other hand, steadfastly deny the incest, the very beginning. Incest in California and can result in terms of up to nine years. They may recant and rationalize by saying they were drunk. Sometimes they accuse the mother, claiming they were drunk. Or they blame the child who is portrayed as cold and unresponsive.

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American student attends Peking school

Order stressed in Chinese education

Editor's Note: Robert Hiromichi Crabbe, 11, son of UPI's former Peking bureau manager, reports on his year at the Chinese school for foreign children. His new school this fall will be in Sacramento, Calif.

By ROBERT H. CRABBE

United Press International
PEKING — In Peking, the school day begins when you sit down at your desk with your hands clasped behind your back.

Our woman teacher says good morning and starts the lesson.

She speaks only Chinese, of course. For the past year I have been going to the Chinese International School in Peking, where I never heard a word of English.

Its job is to teach foreign children in China to learn Chinese.

There were 18 of us in our classroom, all about 10 or 11 years old. Three are Americans. The rest came from North Korea, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Peru, Japan, Italy, Romania, Ireland and France.

All are children of news persons, diplomats, or foreign experts working in Peking. Most foreign kids go to embassy schools. We were in this one because our parents thought it would be a good idea for us to learn Chinese.

The school works. I did not know a word of Chinese when I started in September 1979. By the time school was out, I could understand most of what the teachers said. I could go around Peking shopping and using buses to travel. I could talk to the Chinese kids.

It would take another year to become really good at Chinese. I would like to have stayed longer.

We shared our playground with a Chinese primary school. Both of us were in red brick buildings.

We foreigners were a little bit spoiled. Our building was nicer than theirs and its washrooms are better than most in Peking. Yet the Chinese school is better than many others I saw.

We often did sports like soccer

and nobody ever goes there. The whole year I was there we never had an air raid drill.

In class it is different from America. When the teacher talks, you hold your hands behind your back. You put them on the desk only when it is time to write or to read a book.

To ask the teacher a question, you raise your hand by putting your

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with the Chinese kids. We never saw them outside school. They couldn't come to our apartments in the diplomatic compound. They didn't invite us to their homes.

The two schools have a brick wall around them. At the start of the year it was painted with slogans from Chairman Mao. Now some of these have been erased.

Inside are a basketball court, a playground and a small soccer field. This year the Chinese paved the basketball court and a part of the playground for small children. The rest of it is dirt.

Under the playground is a big concrete bomb shelter. It could hold all the children in the school. It is very

elbow on the desk. You never hold your hand above your head.

Besides being students we were also janitors. Each day after school three of us swept and dusted the classroom. In the morning we mopped the floor before school started.

We called our teachers only "laoshir," the polite Chinese word for teacher. We never called them by name. I don't know the names of most of them. Neither did the other kids.

Besides Chinese, we had art, science, math, music and sports.

Most kids also study English. The Americans don't have to do this.

The teachers who aren't married live in a house on the school grounds. They have an old woman who cooks for them. The others come every day by bicycle. In winter you can see a big pile of cabbages by the teachers' house. Cabbage is one of the few vegetables you get in Peking in winter. I guess they ate a lot of it.

We went to school six days a week,

Monday through Saturday. Tuesday and Saturday afternoon and Sunday. My mother and the other teachers asked why they didn't go on Tuesday afternoon and Saturday. The teachers weren't the Chinese way.

In the morning before school had us do slow, graceful physical exercises. A Chinese platform led us.

In cold weather they would have us run around the school. A Chinese kid carrying a

Late in the morning we had a five-minute music, and we sang eyes.

Chinese textbooks have covers. The quality is poor. They learned to make book covers out of magazine paper.

Twice a month we would see a film. We went even if it snowed. My favorite was "Ten Days," a picture about Chinese kids lost in the mountains. They all wore the scarves of North Korea's Communist Club for kids.

Every day at the end of six boys gathered at the gate and marched together back to their home on their own.

At the end of the year prizes to the three kids in the class with the best grades. One other American got one. The two went to the North Korean and a North Korean boy. I guess really studied.

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