

Hartt, J., & Waller, G. (2002). Child abuse, dissociation, and core beliefs in bulimic disorders. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 26*, 923-938.

Objective: This study of bulimic women examined the relationship between the severity of four forms of reported child abuse (emotional abuse, neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse) and bulimic pathology. In addition, it investigated the relationship of abuse with dissociation and core beliefs.

Method: A sample of 23 women with bulimic disorders completed standardized self-report measures of child abuse, dissociation, core beliefs, and bulimic symptomatology. They also completed diary records of bulimic behaviors.

Results: No dimensional relationship was found between any form of child abuse and bulimic pathology. However, within this group of bulimics, neglect and sexual abuse were correlated with dissociation. In addition, a subset of core beliefs was associated with child abuse, with different cognitive profiles associated with each form of trauma.

Conclusions: The findings need to be interpreted with caution because of the small, heterogeneous sample involved. Further research involving larger, homogenous samples is needed to investigate the generalizability of these findings, in order to determine if particular abusive experiences and core beliefs need to be addressed therapeutically in such cases. In addition, future research should consider the relationships between abuse, core beliefs and other impulsive behaviors.