As a Matter of fact
The Relationship Between Child Maltreatment and Adult Health

The lasting adverse effects of child maltreatment on adult health issues are clear. Adults who were abused or neglected as children are at a greater risk for a variety of adverse physical and mental health conditions when compared with adults who were not maltreated as children. Preventing child abuse and neglect not only protects children, it creates healthier adults.¹⁻⁵

Individuals who experienced childhood abuse and neglect have an increased risk for a variety of physical ailments, including:¹⁻⁶

1. Autoimmune Disorders⁶⁻⁸
2. Arthritis⁶⁻⁸⁻⁹
3. Lung Disease⁶⁻⁹⁻¹⁰
4. Heart Disease⁶⁻¹¹
5. Obesity & Increased BMI⁸⁻¹²⁻¹⁵
6. Migraines & Frequent Headaches¹⁶⁻¹⁸
7. Hypertension⁶⁻¹⁹
8. GI Disorders⁶⁻²⁰
9. Peptic Ulcers⁶⁻²¹
10. Type 2 Diabetes⁶⁻²²
11. Liver Disease⁶⁻²³
12. Chronic Pain²⁴⁻²⁵

Adults who experienced child abuse and neglect may also experience negative mental health conditions well into adulthood, including:²⁶⁻²⁹

13. Depression²⁶⁻²⁹
14. Anxiety²⁶⁻²⁹
15. PTSD²⁶⁻²⁹
16. Suicide Attempts²⁶⁻²⁹⁻³¹
17. Sleep Disorders²⁹
18. Panic Disorders²⁶
19. Phobias²⁶

Adults who were maltreated as children are more likely to engage in behaviors that put them at further risk for negative physical and mental health outcomes, including:¹

20. Alcohol Related Problems⁸⁻²⁶⁻³²
21. Drug Use²⁸
22. Eating Disorders¹²⁻²⁹
23. Poor Pre- and Post-Natal Care³³
24. Anti-Social Behaviors²⁸
25. Sexual Risk Behaviors³⁻³⁸⁻³⁶
26. Daily Cigarette Smoking³⁷
27. Self-Mutilation⁶⁰

Individuals who experienced maltreatment during childhood utilize more medical and mental health services, including more emergency room visits resulting in higher healthcare costs.³⁸⁻⁴¹

Women with a history of child sexual abuse are much more likely to be revictimized sexually and physically as adults.⁸⁻³⁵⁻⁴²⁻⁴³