

From: C.A. Childress (2015). An Attachment-Based Model of Parental Alienation: Foundations. Claremont, CA. Oaksong Press.

Pages 312-313:

DSM-5 Diagnosis

The child's display of the three characteristic diagnostic indicators of attachment-based "parental alienation" represent clear and definitive clinical evidence for the presence of the psychological and interpersonal processes that comprise an attachment-based model of "parental alienation." The presence of severely pathological processes in the child's symptoms warrant the following DSM-5 diagnosis for the child:

DSM-5 Diagnosis

309.4 Adjustment Disorder with mixed disturbance of emotions and conduct

V61.20 Parent-Child Relational Problem

V61.29 Child Affected by Parental Relationship Distress

V995.51 Child Psychological Abuse, Confirmed

Child Psychological Abuse

The DSM-5 diagnosis of Child Psychological Abuse, Confirmed is warranted by the presence in the child's symptom display of three separate domains of significant pathology represented by the three diagnostic indicators of attachment-based "parental alienation," that are the product of pathogenic parenting:

1. **Induced Developmental Psychopathology:** The induced suppression of the normal-range functioning of the child's attachment system, a primary motivational system, as the result of extremely distorted pathogenic parenting practices by a narcissistic/(borderline) parent who is using the child in a role-reversal relationship as a "regulatory object" for the pathology of the parent.
2. **Induced Personality Psychopathology:** The presence of five distinctive narcissistic and borderline personality disorder traits in the child's symptom display that are being created by the highly distorted pathogenic parenting practices of a narcissistic/(borderline) parent (or an induced phobic anxiety toward a normal-range and affectionally available parent).

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3. **Induced Psychiatric Psychopathology:** The presence in the child's symptom display of an induced delusional belief created by the severely pathogenic parenting practices of a narcissistic/(borderline) parent.

The parent is the primary case for the delusional belief system, and pathogenic parenting practices are the origin of the child's delusional belief. This induced delusional belief in the child, created by the highly distorted pathogenic parenting practices of a narcissistic/(borderline) parent, is resulting in the child's expressed desire to terminate a relationship with a normal-range and

affectionally available parent who could otherwise act as a protective psychological buffer to the pathogenic psychopathology of the narcissistic/(borderline) parent.

The creation of significant developmental, personality, and psychiatric psychopathology in the child through highly aberrant and distorted parenting practices as a means for the parent to then exploit the induced child psychopathology to regulate the parent's own psychopathology warrants the DSM-5 diagnosis of V995.51 Child Psychological Abuse, Confirmed. The form of the child psychological abuse is a role-reversal relationship in which the child's induced psychopathology is used to regulate the psychological state of the parent. The psychological child abuse is confirmed by the presence in the child's symptom display of the three definitive diagnostic indicators of attachment-based "parental alienation." When the three diagnostic indicators of attachment-based "parental alienation" are present, the DSM-5 diagnosis of V995.51 Child Psychological Abuse, Confirmed is warranted because of the highly destructive developmental impact on the child that is created through the child's role-reversal relationship with the narcissistic/(borderline) parent.

The nature, severity, and developmental impact of the parentally induced psychopathology displayed by the child in attachment-based "parental alienation" elevates the clinical concerns from those of child custody and visitation to prominent child protection considerations.

(Childress, 2015, p. 312-313)