

The Needs of Children Exposed to Domestic Violence

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Overview

- What is exposure?
- How are children exposed?
- How children get involved in violent events?
- What do children need in responses from us?





Child Exposure



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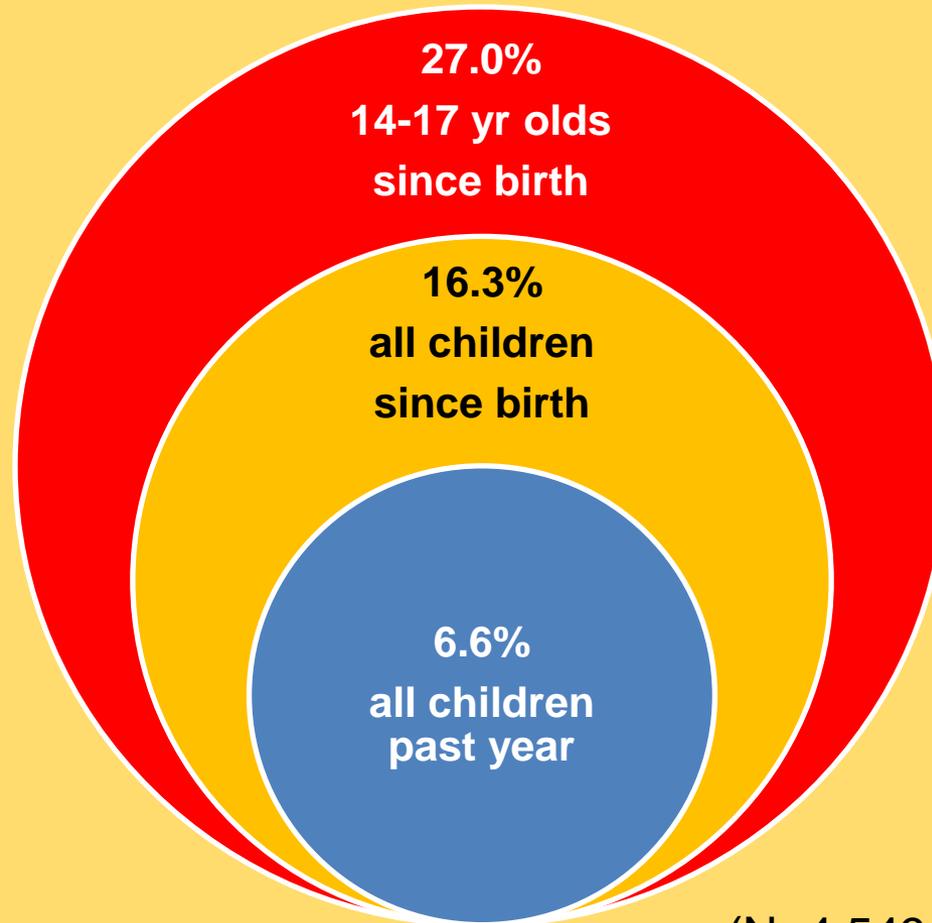
Defining DV Exposure



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Child exposure



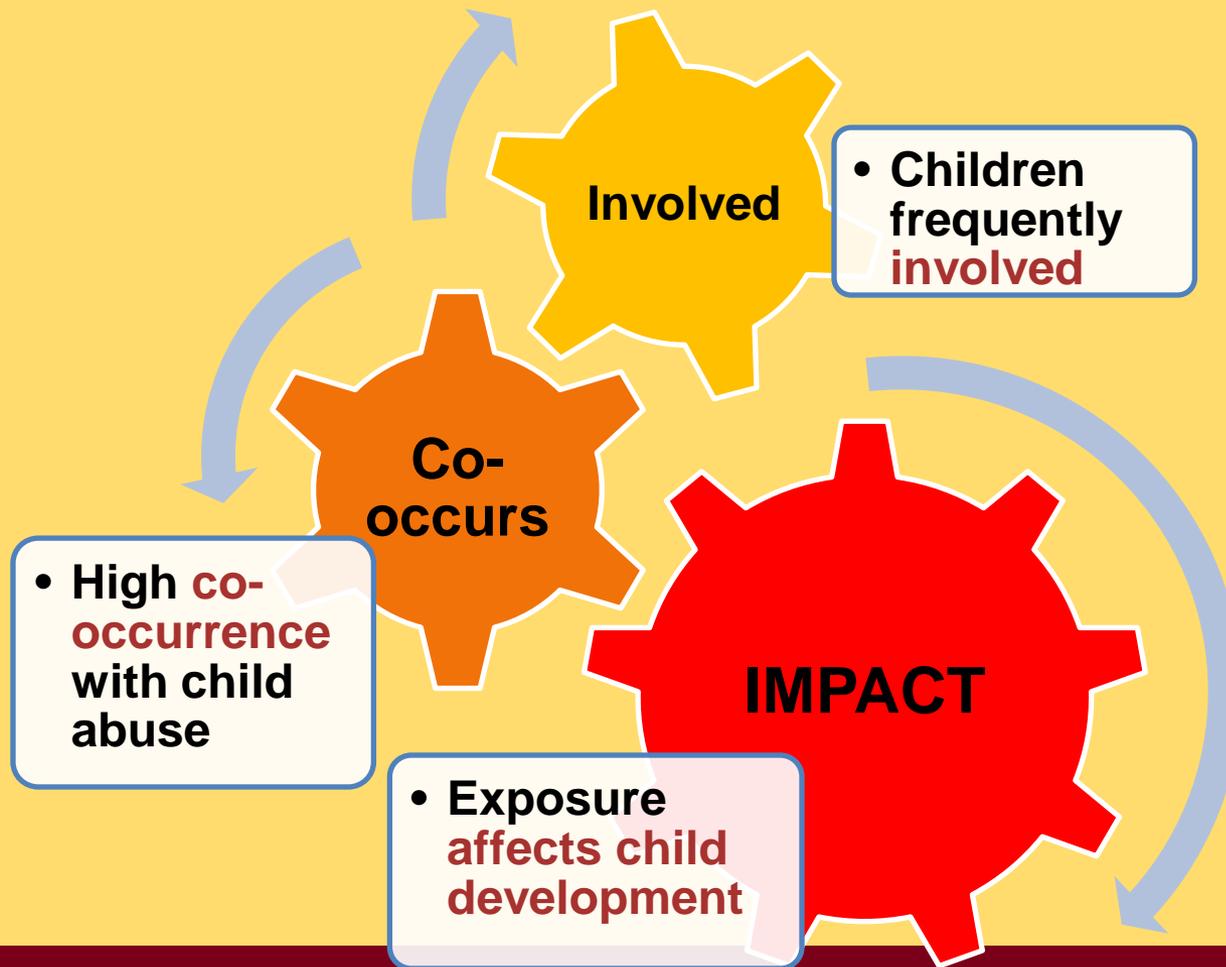
(N=4,549; Finkelhor, et al, 2009)



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Why exposure is important



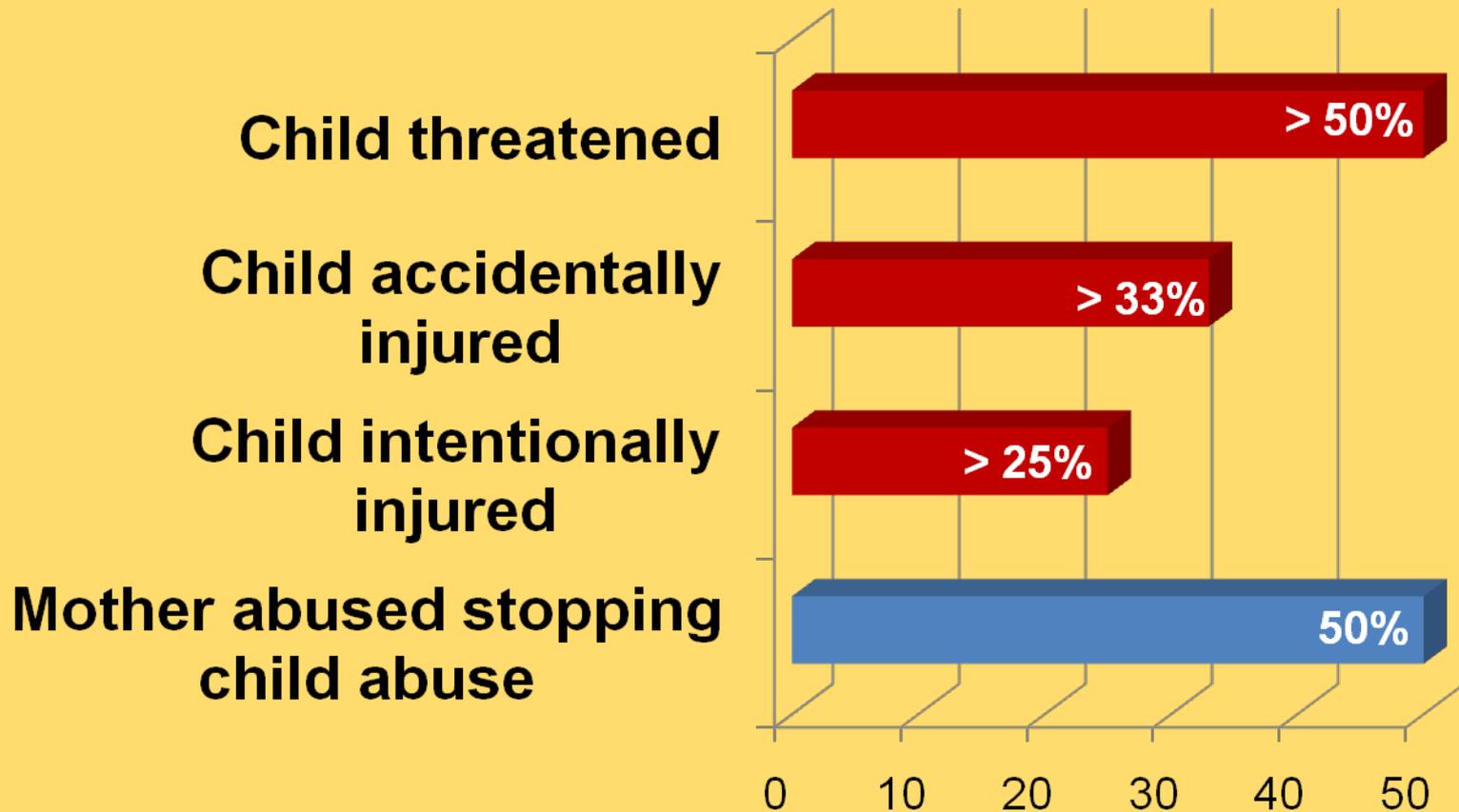
Children are involved (1)

- 36% of the children frequently or very frequently **yelled to stop violent conflicts**,
- 11.7% frequently or very frequently **called someone for help** during a violent event,
- 10.8% frequently or very frequently **physically intervened** to stop the violence.

Edleson et al. (2003)



Child are involved (2)



Edleson et al. (2003)

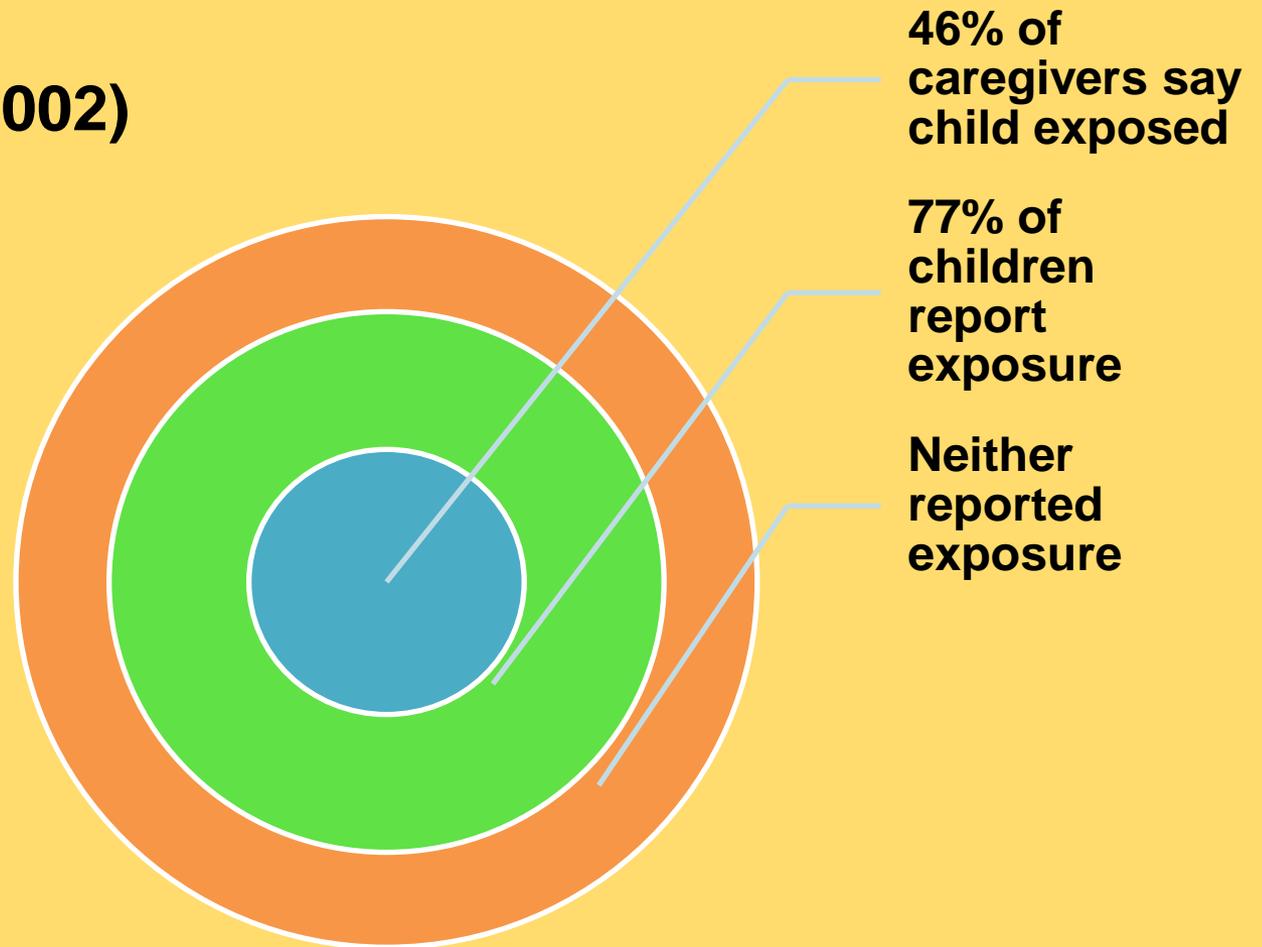


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What children know

Johnson et al. (2002)



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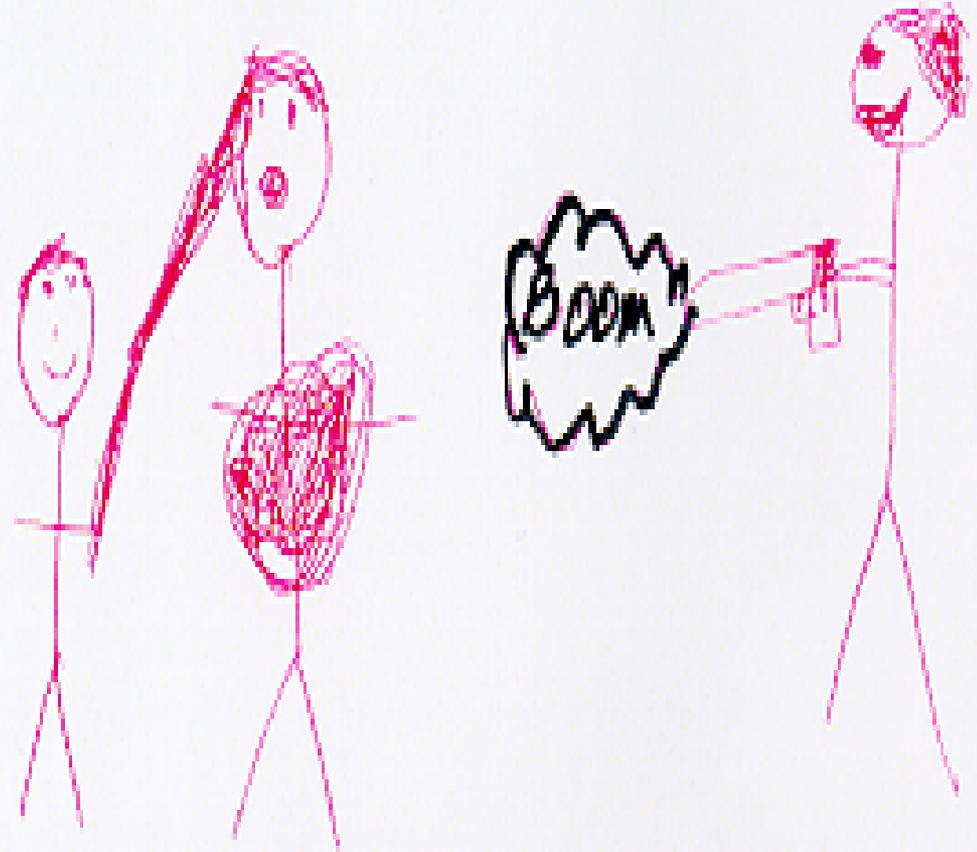
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AM!

THINGS MAY
NOT GET DONE.
NO ONE WILL
LISTEN.

anger - the unwanted desire
to beat the living crap
out of some jerk who
Really Deserves it



“Effects” of Exposure

- Over 100 studies available
- About 1/3 separated abused from witnesses
- Generally show:
 - Behavioral and emotional problems
 - Cognitive functioning problems
 - Longer-term problems

<http://www.mincava.umn.edu>



Prenatal exposure and reproductive health

- Consequences of exposure for fetus, child or mother:
 - **low birth weight** (Campbell, Torres, & Ryan, 1999; Rosen, Seng & Tolman, 2008; Sharps, 2007)
 - **premature labor** (El Kady et al., 2005; Cokkinides et al., 1999; Fernandez & Krueger, 1999)
 - **miscarriage** (Morland et al., 2008; Rachana et al., 2002; Jacoby et al., 1999)
 - **fetal trauma** (Connolly et al., 1997; Berrios & Grady, 1991) and **fetal death** (Boy & Salibus, 2004)
 - **delayed prenatal care** (Dietz et al., 1997; Goodwin et al., 2000) and **substance abuse** (Bailey, 2007; Kendall-Tackett, 2007)
 - increased risk of **postpartum depression** (Tiwari et al., 2008; Espinosa & Osborne, 2002)
 - **decreased breastfeeding** (Lau & Chan, 2007; Silverman et al., 2006)
- Rapid repeat pregnancy related to experience of IPV:
 - 3 times more likely to have rapid repeat pregnancy within 12 months
 - 4 times more likely within 18 months (Jacoby et al., 1999)



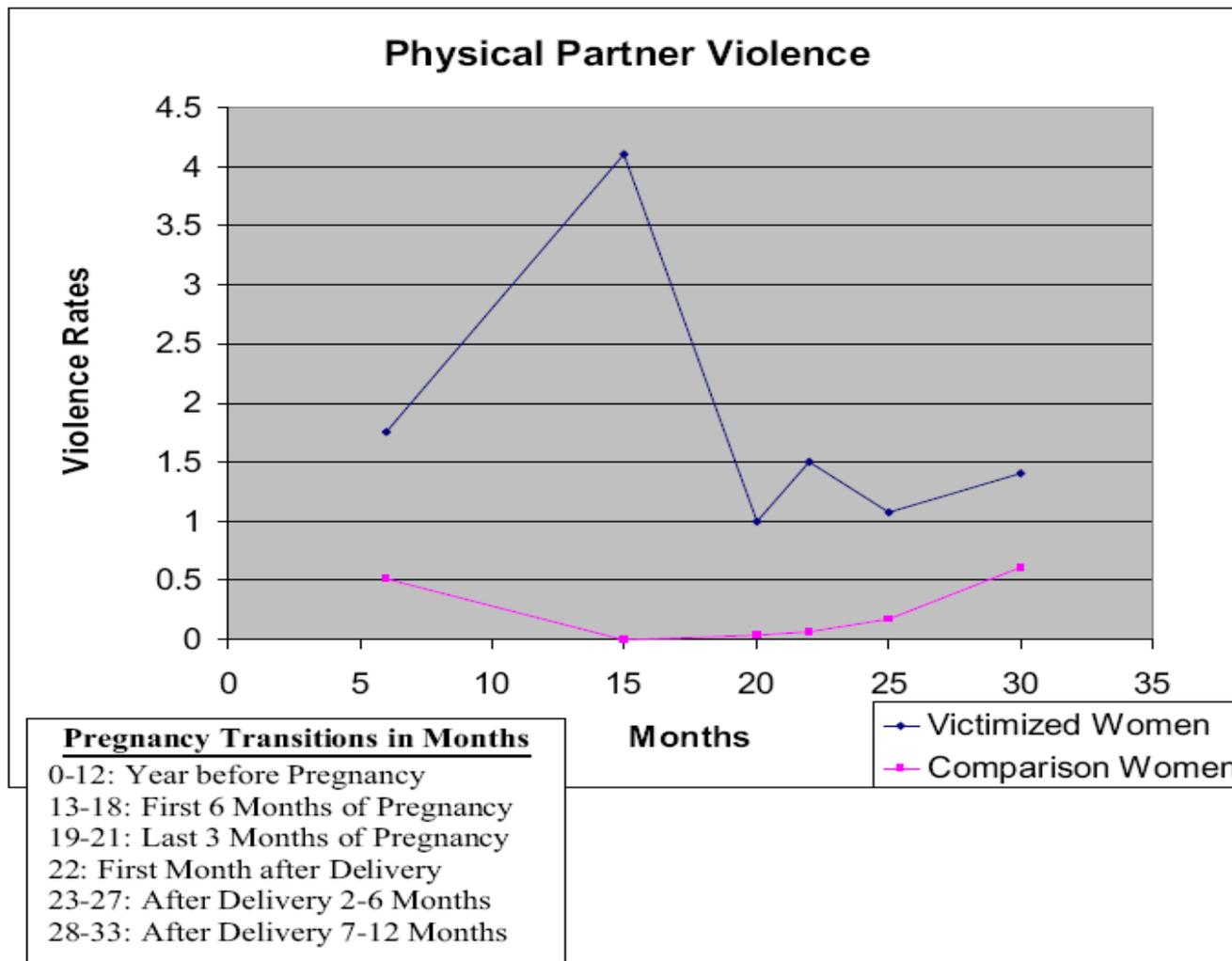


Figure 1. Physical violence predicted means for victimized and comparison women.

Macy et al. (2007). Partner violence among women before, during, and after pregnancy: Multiple opportunities for intervention. *Women's Health Issues, 17*(5), 290-299.

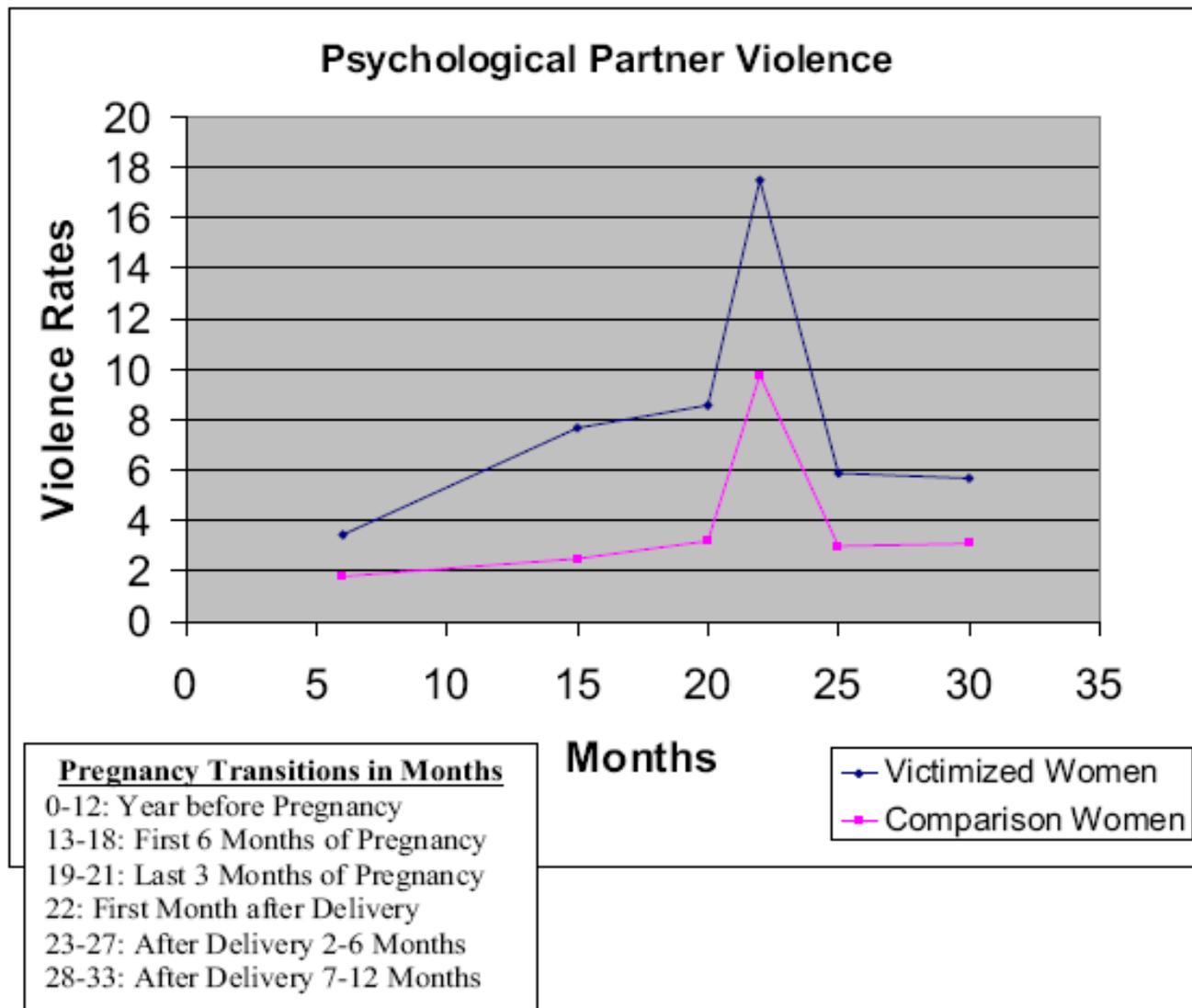


Figure 2. Psychological violence predicted means for victimized and comparison women.

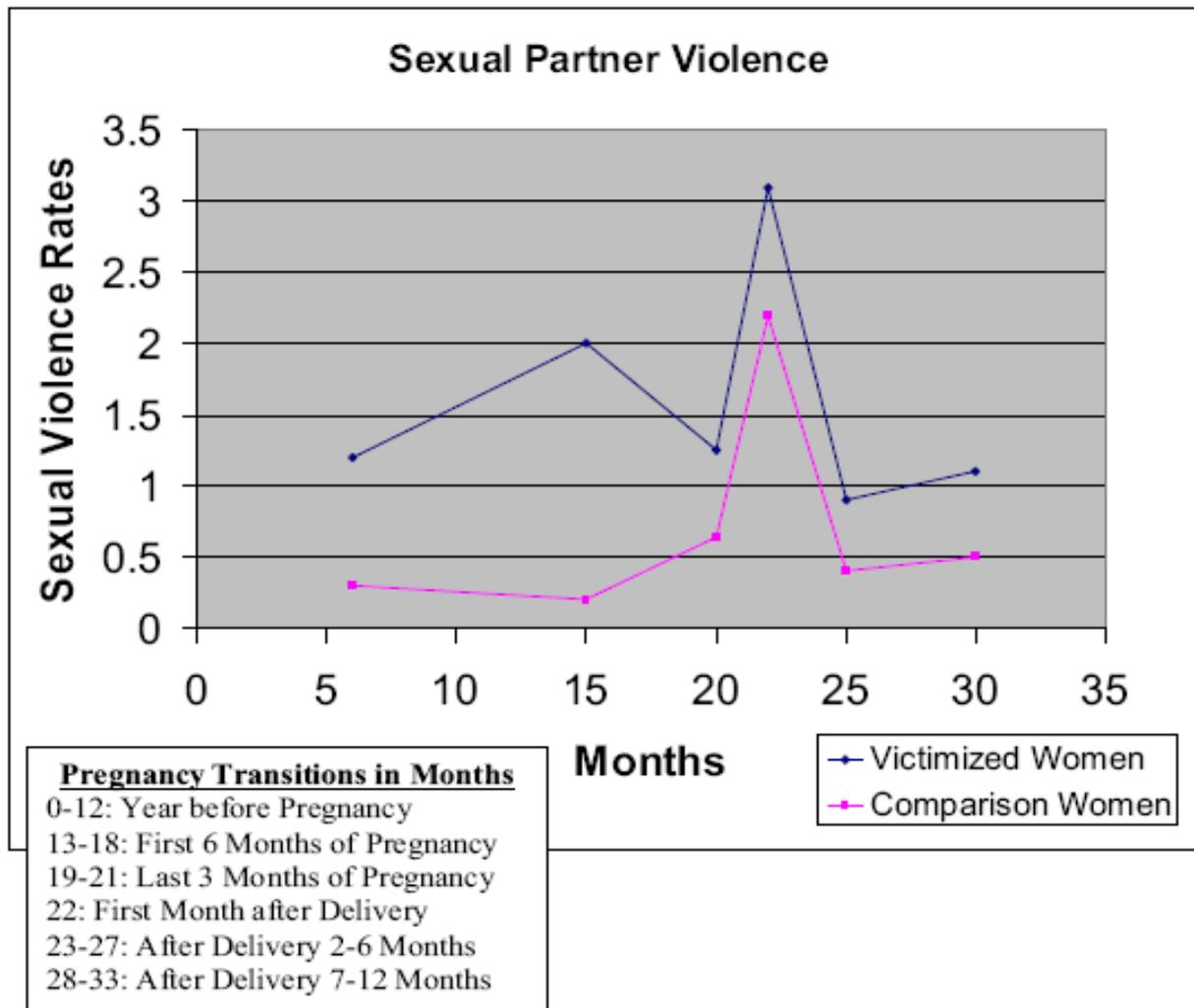


Figure 3. Sexual violence predicted means for victimized and comparison women.

Longitudinal studies

- Yates et al. (2003): 155 children over 25 years
 - Preschool exposure linked to externalized problems for boys and internalized problems for girls in adolescence and teen years
- Ehrensaft et al. (2003): 543 children, prospective over 20 years
 - Exposure to DV in childhood was a key predictor of both perpetrating and receiving as adult.
- Whitehead et al. (2003) ACE study: 8,629 adults, retrospective
 - Exposure doubled likelihood of perpetration and victimization as adult
- Paradis et al. (2009): 346 children, prospective over 25 years
 - Family arguments and violence exposure during childhood correlated to poorer health, mental health and occupational achievement at age 30.



Overlap of CAN & DV

- Most studies found 30% to 60% overlap, 41% was median (Edleson, 1999; Appel & Holden, 1998)
- High rates of overlap found in:
 - Child fatality reviews (41% - 43%)
 - Abused child studies
 - Battered mother studies
- First national survey: (Hamby et al., 2010)
 - More than 1/3 (33.9%) of exposed had also been maltreated in the past year vs. 8.6% of non-exposed
- For lifetime data, more than half (56.8%) of CEDV youth had also been maltreated



DV and Young Children

Five city police study:

- Children under five more likely in homes w/DV (48% vs. 31%) and more likely to be exposed multiple times

(Fantuzzo et al., 1997)

The importance of:

- Secure attachments
- Learning self-regulation
- Learning social and peer relations

(Gewirtz & Edleson, 2007)



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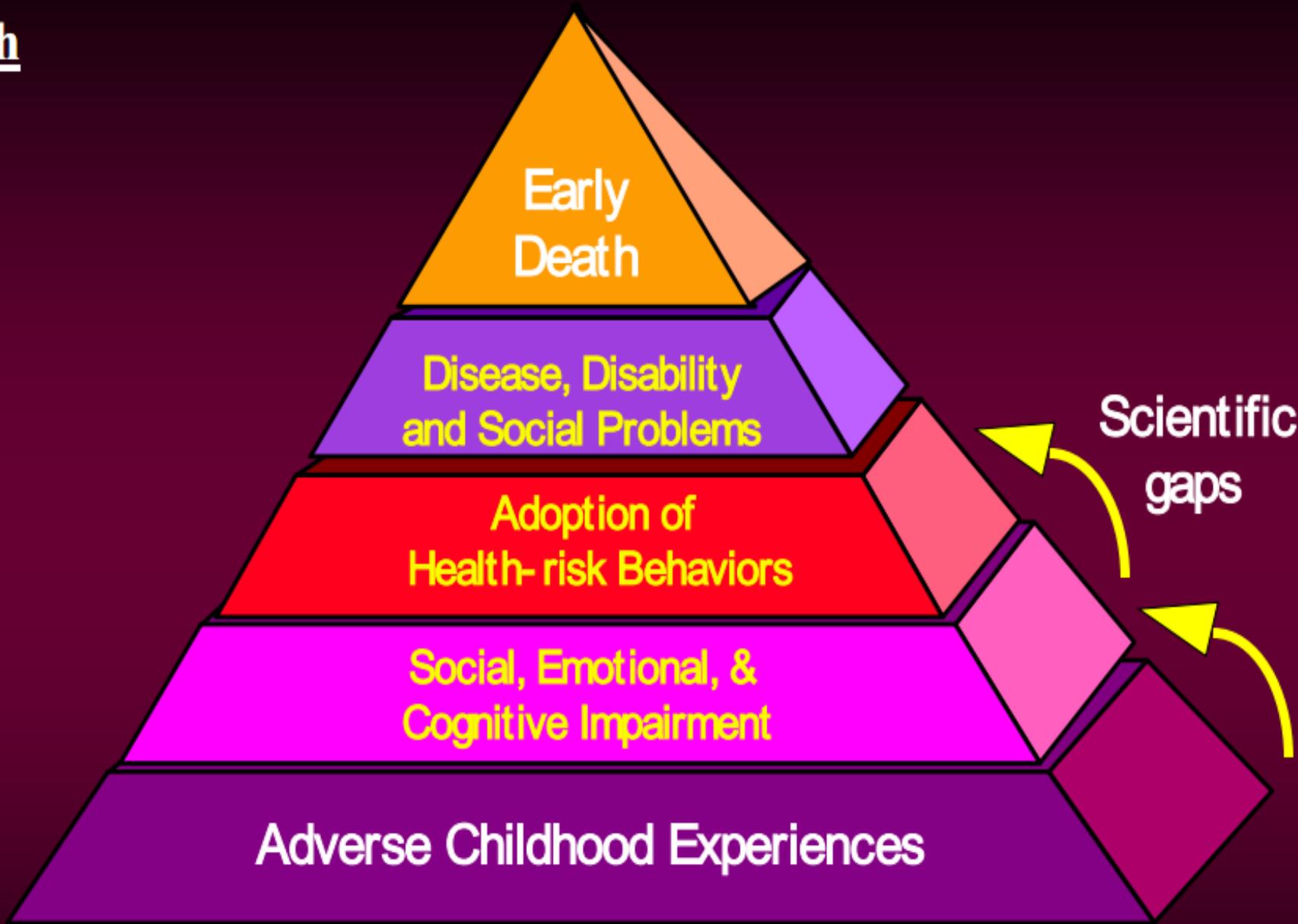
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New study

- Kiessel, Piescher and Edleson (2011)
 - Focused on academic outcomes, attendance and disability categories
 - “Exposed-only” children showed worse outcomes on academics than “Exposed and abused” and “abused-only” children over five years
 - Exposed-only may not have received necessary services



Death



Conception

[cdc.gov/ace](https://www.cdc.gov/ace)

10 ACEs up to 18 years

- Child abuse
 - Emotional
 - Physical
 - Sexual
- Child neglect
 - Emotional
 - Physical
- Growing up with:
 - Domestic violence
 - Substance abuse
 - Mental illness
 - Parental discord
 - Crime

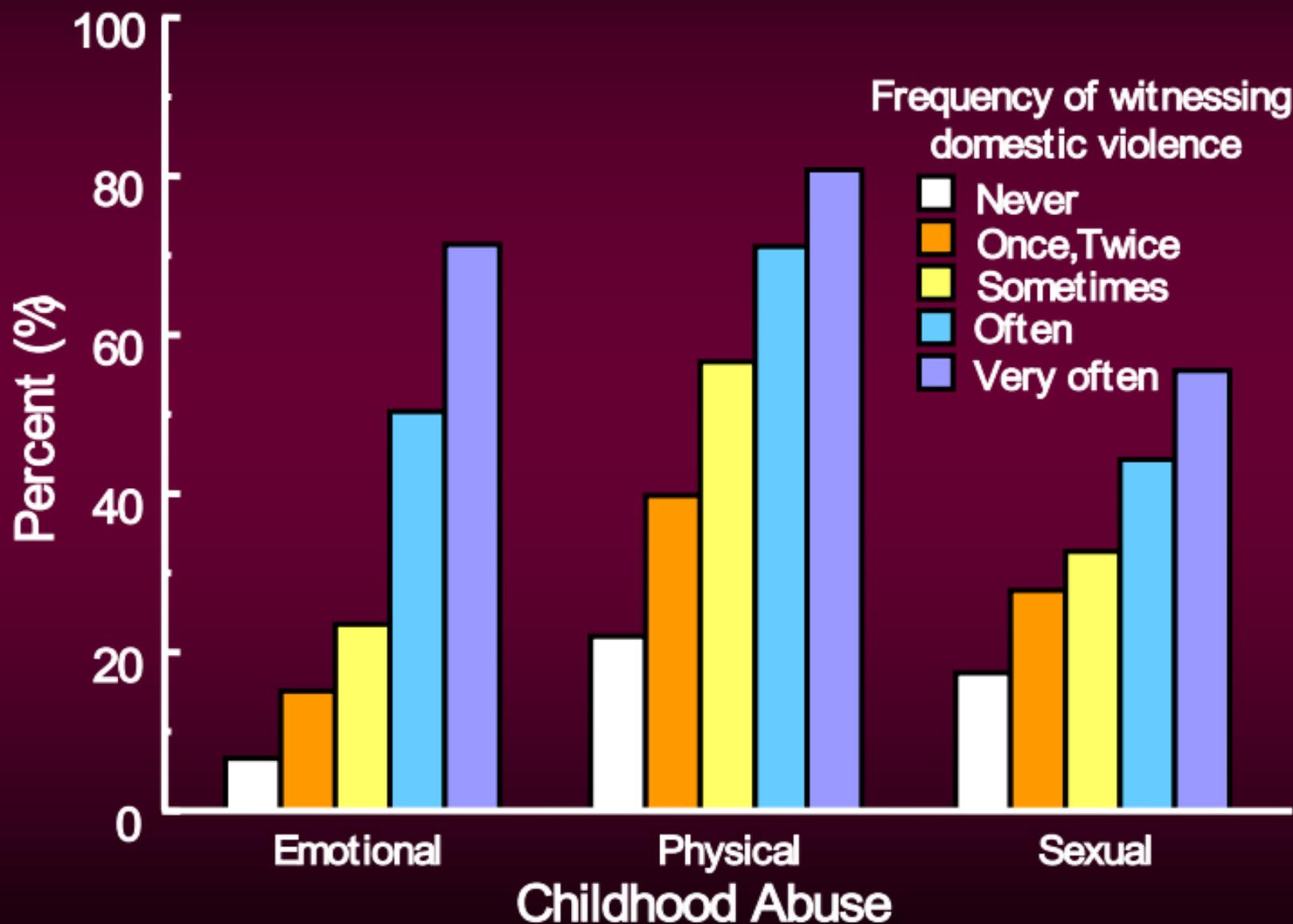
(Anda, 2011; n=17,241)



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Prevalence of Childhood Abuse by Frequency of Witnessing Domestic Violence



Poly-occurrences

ACEs tend to come in groups

	Additional ACEs (%)				
	1	2	3	4	<u>≥</u> 5

If you had.

A battered mother	95	82	64	48	52
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(Anda, 2011)



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A woman with dark hair, wearing a white shirt, is shown from the side, looking towards a large, blue shadow of a person on a wall. The shadow is cast against a light background. The woman's expression is contemplative.

Changing Legislation



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New Child Exposure Laws

Criminal



Custody



Dependency

Weithorn, 2001



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Child Exposure as Neglect

- **Exposure as child maltreatment**
- **Minnesota**
 - July 1999: child neglect includes child witnesses
 - Result:
 - 50% increase in reports statewide
 - \$30+ million impact on CPS statewide
 - April 2000: repealed changes
 - Result: (1) Children identified but not served and then (2) Known but not identified
 - A third way?

Edleson, Gassman-Pines & Hill (2006)



Nicholson decisions

- Mothers substantiated for “engaging in domestic violence”
- Judge ruled it unconstitutional to remove mothers for their own victimization
- Judge and NY Court of Appeals held that must show “**harm**” to child

(see Lansner, 2008)





Interpreting Research



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Between vs. within group

- On *average* children exposed show more problems than those not so exposed
- Within the exposed group, many children show **no** greater problems than comparison children



Variation in families

- Frequency, severity and chronicity of the violence
- Child's exposure to the violence
- Child's own internal capacity
- Protective and risk factors in a child's environment



Studies of CEDV

- Hughes & Luke (1998; N=58)
 - Over half children were “doing well” (n=15) or “hanging in there” (n=21), others showed significant problems
- Grych et al. (2000; N=228 in shelters)
 - 71 no problems, 41 mild distress, 47 externalized problems, 70 multi-problem





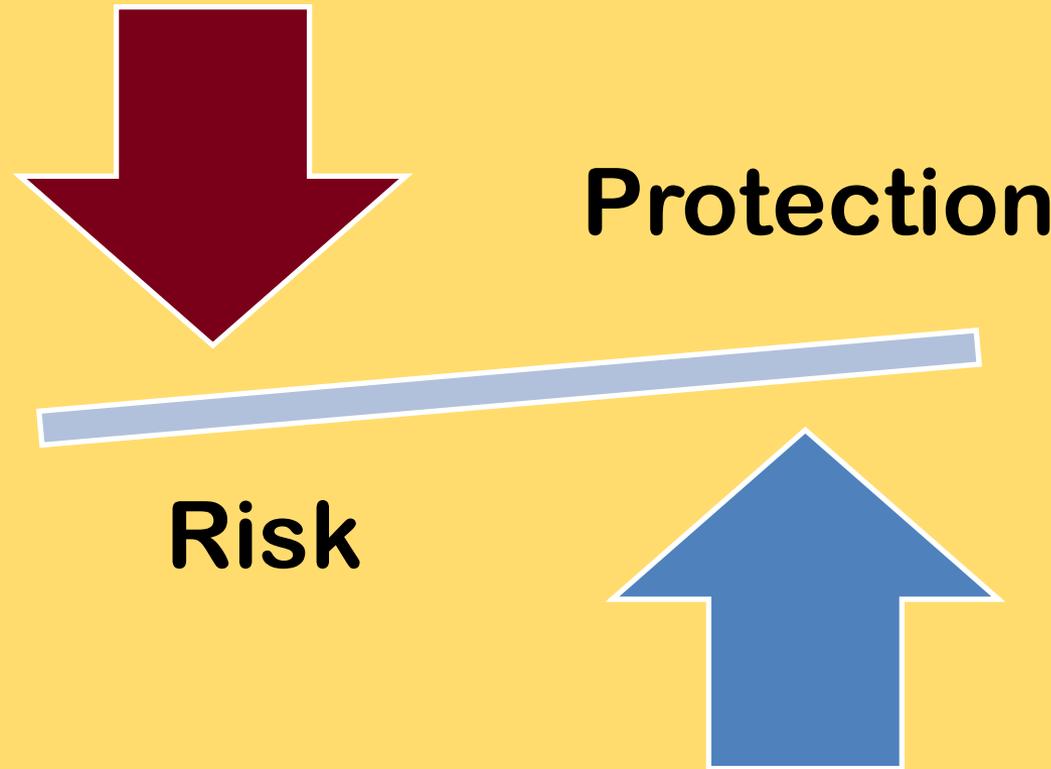
Ordinary Magic

- Children exposed to trauma on a regular basis
- Resilience child was seen as extraordinary
- Study of resilience show it is *ordinary* rather than extraordinary!

(Masten, 2001)



Risk and protection



(Masten
& Sesma, 1999;
ACE studies)



Children's needs and our responses



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Many U.S. children are exposed to DV during their lifetimes

Impacts of CEDV vary by child: some severely, some not so severely

Safety, stability and well-being

Require a range of care for a range of impacts

CPS should only intake a portion, need community services for others



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Collective Impact

Kania & Kramer, 2011; Edmondson, 2011



Key Lessons



Shared
Community
Vision

Make it a Movement



Evidence Based
Decision Making

“Don’t let perfect be the enemy of good.”



Collaborative
Action

Clarity is Critical



Investment &
Sustainability

Backbone or Go Home

Honor our Voices

- <http://www.honourourvoices.org/>
- Free online learning module
- Services from a child's perspective
- Additional resources:
 - Guide for Practice
 - Audio stories
 - Many useful links

AVON
Foundation
for Women



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Honor our Voices

Children's perspectives of Domestic Violence

Instructions

Themes

Extras

Welcome, Jeff

not Jeff ?

Engage children in the safety planning and family decision-making.

Batterers often use threats against the children as a method to maintain control over women. For this reason and many others, David's mother, Mary, was most concerned about the safety of her children. Safety planning is a crucial step in ensuring the safety of women and their children. Mary engaged David and the family in the safety planning process by explaining to them what the dangers were as well as planning with him the necessary response to keep himself safe.

Children as young as three are able to understand and contribute to the safety planning process (15). From the MINCAVA National Roundtable, participant's noted that mothers and children are engaged in safety planning

When we lived in our grandma's house, Liz, my other sister, was angry with grandma sometimes. She didn't like living in our grandma's house. Maybe she felt bored because she did not have any friends here.



Liz at Grandma's

? Liz's Thoughts about Grandma's

◀ Previous Next ▶

8 / 16

presented by:
MINCAVA

Center for Advanced Studies
in Child Welfare

AVON
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for Women



Birth
to 5 yrs



6-12 yrs



12-18 yrs



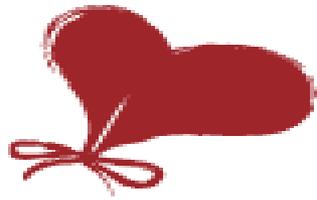
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Honor our Voices

- Foster bonding among family members
- Create welcoming environment that supports everyday routines
- Explore relationships with parents
- Develop safety plans with child participation
- Understand the unique needs of teens
- Endorse community partnerships
- Evaluate needs of children and families throughout the lifespan
- Cultivate informal supports





Makers of Memories

- <http://www.makersofmemories.org/>
- New online response to help informal networks: family, friends and first responders:
 - Educate
 - Build skills
 - Motivate



What Works

- Evidence-base is limited
 - Child-parent psychotherapy (Lieberman, McAlister-Groves dyadic trauma therapy)
 - Home visits to mother-child pairs (Jouriles & MacDonald's Project SUPPORT)
 - Small groups with mother participation (Graham-Bermann's Kids Club)
 - School-based prevention – 4th R (Wolfe, Jaffe et al.; <http://youthrelationships.org/>)



Dyadic Programs

- Mother-child, sometimes Father-child
- Much like individual trauma work but with mother involved:
 - Open discussion of the violence: Sometimes reenactment role plays/w toys
 - Understanding and coping with violence: Skills training, cognitive restructuring
 - Reduce symptoms: e.g. somatic complaints, depression, aggressive behavior
 - Support safe and stable environment for child

(Groves, 1999)



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Importance of Mothers

- Several studies of child treatment point to improved outcomes when mothers are part of the intervention. (Graham-Bermann)



MINCAVA

Minnesota Center Against Violence & Abuse

MINCAVA Electronic Clearinghouse

<http://www.mincava.umn.edu> (search “child exposure”)

VAW Online Resources

<http://www.vaw.umn.edu/>

VAWnet Library

<http://www.vawnet.org>

Greenbook site

<http://www.thegreenbook.info>

Centre for Children & Families in the Justice System

<http://www.lfcc.on.ca/>

Futures Without Violence (formerly FVPF)

<http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/>



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