Child Abuse

Pollak SD. Multilevel developmental approaches to understanding the effects of child maltreatment: Recent advances and future challenges. Dev Psychopathol. 2015 Nov;27(4 Pt 2):1387-97. PMID: 26535932

Detailed review of developmental processes in maltreated children and effects on health.


Of 154 children from a children’s hospital reported to CPS for neglect during a 6 year period, 91% had chronic illness, with the most common being type 1 diabetes, organ transplantation, and prematurity-related conditions. 2/3 of families had risk factors for child maltreatment, recent other family stressors, and practical barriers to care. “There is a need and opportunity for improved interventions.”


From a large national database, 12,610 children with disabilities who had first time unsubstantiated referrals for neglect were then followed for 4 years. Compared to children without disabilities, children with disabilities were more likely to be re-referred (45% vs. 36%), to experience substantiated maltreatment (16% vs. 10%), and to be placed into foster care (7% vs. 3%).


Review of key concepts and interventions in the diagnosis of caregiver-fabricated illness in a child, as well as history of disorder/nomenclature used.


From a discussion of the characteristics and mechanisms of forearm fractures in children <18 months, no particular type of fracture was specific for child abuse using data from two Chicago children’s hospitals. However, children assessed as being abused were younger (7 vs. 12 months), often had additional injuries, and often presented without an explanation or a changing history for the injury.


In a review of research, children aged 5-14 presenting with “poor academic performance, ADHD symptomatology or abnormal behaviours warrant assessment of neglect or emotional abuse as a potential underlying cause.”


“…children with maltreatment histories often experience impairments in both their academic performance (e.g., special education, grade retention, lower grades) and mental well-being (e.g., anxiety, low mood, aggression, social skills deficits, poor interpersonal relationships) …particularly pronounced among maltreated children in out-of-home care.”


Comprehensive picture of Canadian children killed by a parent 1961-2011 with various trends, including significant differences in filicides by mothers and fathers, growing number of cases involving stepfathers, and declines in accused who committed suicide.
Adult Manifestations of Child Abuse


For 1008 patients with major depression at 8 academic and 9 private clinics in five countries, compared to matched healthy controls, those with a history of childhood trauma, particularly emotional, sexual and physical abuse, and particularly between the ages of 4 and 7, were much less likely to respond (show change) or remit (have symptoms become less severe) to any of 3 anti-depressant medications.


For 311 Finns followed since childhood to age 40-46, and despite controlling for multiple adult risk factors, a favorable childhood psychosocial score (socioeconomic factors, emotional factors, parental health behaviors, stressful events, self-regulation of the child, and social adjustment of the child), was associated with significantly less mid-life coronary artery calcification.


Following a group of British individuals for 50 years, and controlling for multiple childhood and adult variables, adults who had been frequently bullied in childhood showed increased risk for inflammatory markers. Frequently bullied women had higher BMI and were at increased risk of being obese.


From a large national Canadian survey, for both men and women, childhood physical abuse was associated with up to 2x higher odds of an ADHD diagnosis, and 2.5 times for childhood sexual abuse. However, exposure to parental DV only elevated odds of ADHD in women (to 1.5).

Adolescents


Following 3281 adolescent females living in poverty over time, by the age of 17 pregnancy rates were 28.9% for those reporting childhood abuse or neglect and 16.8% for those without abuse or neglect. After controlling for multiple factors, abuse remained an important risk factor (66% higher).
Edwards KM, Gidycz CA.  
Stalking and psychosocial distress following the termination of an abusive dating relationship: a prospective analysis.  
Of 56 college women followed before and after leaving an abusive dating relationship, 51.8% reported some type of stalking victimization, which was associated with increased levels of PTSD symptoms.

Fisher BS, Coker AL, Garcia LS, et. al.  
Statewide estimates of stalking among high school students in Kentucky: demographic profile and sex differences.  
In a survey of 26 Kentucky high schools, stalking behavior (at least 3 times in the last 12 months) was reported as: 16.5% as stalked, 5.3% stalking and 2.8% both stalking victimization and perpetration. The majority reported being most afraid of a former boyfriend or girlfriend as the stalker.

Palo AD, Gilbert BO.  
The Relationship Between Perceptions of Response to Disclosure of Childhood Sexual Abuse and Later Outcomes.  
J Child Sex Abus. 2015;24(5):445-63. PMID: 26301435  
For 86 female undergraduates, “Those who reported child sexual abuse endorsed higher levels of psychological and physical symptoms than those who reported a nonsexual traumatic event. Child sexual abuse survivors who reported more hurtful responses to disclosure had higher levels of posttraumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and physical symptoms than nonsexual trauma survivors.”

Domestic Violence – Physical Health

Sumner JA, Kubzansky LD, Kabrhel C, et. al.  
Associations of Trauma Exposure and Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms With Venous Thromboembolism Over 22 Years in Women.  
J Am Heart Assoc. 2016 May 12;5(5). pii: e003197. PMID: 27172912  
Using data over 22 years from the Nurses’ Health Study II, and controlling for multiple variables, women with a history of trauma and high levels of PTSD were almost 2 times more likely to experience venous thromboembolism (blood clots).

Sexual Assault

Miller KE, Cranston CC, Davis JL, Newman E, Resnick H.  
Psychological Outcomes after a Sexual Assault Video Intervention: A Randomized Trial.  
J Forensic Nurs. 2015 Jul-Sep;11(3):129-36. PMID: 26291847  
In a randomized controlled trial with 164 female sexual assault survivors, those who viewed a brief video at the time of their forensic examination had significantly fewer anxiety symptoms at 2 weeks and 2 month follow-up. The video provided psychoeducation and modeling of coping strategies.

Eisenberg ME, Lust KA, Hannan PJ, Porta C.  
Campus Sexual Violence Resources and Emotional Health of College Women Who Have Experienced Sexual Assault.  
Violence Vict. 2016;31(2):274-84. PMID: 26822585  
From a survey of 495 female college students who had experienced sexual assault on 28 college campuses, participants attending colleges with more sexual violence resources had lower rates of subsequent mental health conditions.

Domestic Violence – Effects on Children

Savin MK, Paul DA.  
With the rise in opioid use [and known increased substance use in women experiencing IPV], discussion of professional medical and legal issues in the context of the “solid evidence that mothers and infants who remain together have improved outcomes.”

Madowitz J, Matheson BE, Liang J.  
The relationship between eating disorders and sexual trauma.  
Eat Weight Disord. 2015 Sep;20(3):281-93. PMID: 25976911  
In a review of research, “Although limited, recent evidence suggests that sexual trauma precedes and contributes to the development of ED [eating disorder]...through body dissatisfaction, shame, sexual dysfunction, and fear of future sexual trauma.”
LeMaire KL, Oswald DL, Russell BL. 
Labeling Sexual Victimization Experiences: The Role of Sexism, Rape Myth Acceptance, and Tolerance for Sexual Harassment. 
For 276 female college students, 25.7% reported at least one experience that met the definition of rape, but only 46.5% of those women labeled the experience “rape”. Those with more tolerant attitudes of sexual harassment, and greater rape myth acceptance were less likely to endorse “rape”.

Shorey RC, Brasfield H, Zapor HZ, Febres J, Stuart GL. 
The relation between alcohol use and psychological, physical, and sexual dating violence perpetration among male college students. 
Violence Against Women. 2015 Feb;21(2):151-64. PMID: 25540253 
Of 204 male college students, alcohol use was associated with psychological, physical and sexual abuse perpetration, with higher risk of perpetration for hazardous vs. non-hazardous drinkers.

Bravo AJ, Pearson MR, Stevens LE, Henson JM. 
Depressive Symptoms and Alcohol-Related Problems Among College Students: A Moderated-Mediated Model of Mindfulness and Drinking to Cope. 
From an online survey of college undergraduates, those with a higher level of trait mindfulness were less likely to use drinking-to-cope for depressive symptoms.

Human Trafficking

Choi KR. 
J Forensic Nurs. 2015 Apr-Jun;11(2):66-76. PMID: 25996431 
In a review of domestic minor sex trafficking, childhood maltreatment trauma and running away from home were the most important risk factors for trafficking victimization.

Tizard H. 
The trafficking of women and the role of the midwife. 
“This article explores the health problems associated with the trafficking of women and the clinical implications in the identification and treatment of these victims for the midwife in a public health capacity.”

Domoney J, Howard LM, Abas M, Broadbent M, Oram S. 
Mental health service responses to human trafficking: a qualitative study of professionals' experiences of providing care. 
BMC Psychiatry. 2015 Nov 17;15:289. PMID: 26576640 
In a review of 200,000 British electronic mental health records, 130 were identified as trafficked patients; 43% (41/95) of adults and 63% (22/35) of children were referred as trafficking victims by another service. “Key challenges faced by staff included social and legal instability, difficulties ascertaining history, patients’ lack of engagement, availability of services, and inter-agency working.”

Dahal P, Joshi SK, Swahnberg K. 
'We are looked down upon and rejected socially': a qualitative study on the experiences of trafficking survivors in Nepal. 
Glob Health Action. 2015 Nov 18;8:29267. PMID: 26584683 
“Non-existent support systems, detachment from familial ties, being outcast by society, and an uncertain livelihood make reintegration difficult for survivors” and increase the risk for (re)entrapment. [True in any culture.]

Song SJ, de Jong J. 
Child Soldiers: Children Associated with Fighting Forces. 
Worldwide, there are an estimated 300-500,000 children involved in armed conflicts. They are abducted and forced to fight or become sex slaves. This review explores their experiences, health issues, and present mental health interventions.

Elder/Dependent Adult Abuse

Pickering CE, Pieters HC, Mentes JC, Moon A, Phillips LR. 
Gender, Relationships, and Elder Abuse: Assessing Aggression in Mother-Daughter Dyads. 
J Forensic Nurs. 2015 Jul-Sep;11(3):160-6. PMID: 26115361 
Review of aggression in women and specifically in relation to mother/daughter dyads. Since women may use forms of aggression other than physical, elder abuse may not be found with traditional methods in this circumstance, and instead other means are needed to identify turbulent relationships before physical abuse ensues.
Cultural Issues

Serrata JV, Hernandez-Martinez M, Macias RL.
Self-Empowerment of Immigrant Latina Survivors of Domestic Violence: A Promotora Model of Community Leadership.
Hisp Health Care Int. 2016 Mar;14(1):37-46. PMID: 27257189
Description of an empowering peer community leadership program for Latina immigrant survivors of domestic violence for the promotora model, a public health model using peer information sharing as a tool for health promotion.

Malhotra K, Gonzalez-Guarda RM, Mitchell EM.
A Review of Teen Dating Violence Prevention Research: What About Hispanic Youth?
Trauma Violence Abuse. 2015 Oct;16(4):444-65. PMID: 25062778
"There is a growing need to develop and evaluate immediate and long-term effects of TDV prevention programs that address ethnic pride, acculturation and acculturative stress, familism, and gender norms within the context of Hispanic communities (e.g., machismo and marianismo)."

Ross A, Dion J, Cantinotti M, Collin-Vézina D, Paquette L.
Impact of residential schooling and of child abuse on substance use problem in Indigenous Peoples.
Addict Behav. 2015 Dec;51:184-92. PMID: 26280378
From a survey of 358 Canada’s Indigenous Peoples, 28.5% had been forced to attend residential schools, in which 34.1% experienced sexual abuse and 34.1% physical abuse. Residential school attendance was linked to adult alcohol problems, while child abuse was related to adult drug use. This study highlights the “importance of considering the consequences of historical traumas...”

Police and Court Systems

McAuliff BD, Lapin J, Michel S.
Support Person Presence and Child Victim Testimony.
“These preliminary findings suggest that seating a support person next to an alleged child victim in court may have the unintended effect of decreasing the child’s perceived credibility.”

Walsh WA, Lippert T, Edelson MG, Jones LM.
Length of Time to Resolve Criminal Charges of Child Sexual Abuse: A Three-County Case Study.
Reviewing court data from three Oregon counties, felony cases were resolved within 4 months 18-47% of the time for child sexual abuse cases, but 65-77% for all other felonies. Implications are discussed.

Perpetrators

Oliver BE, Holmes L.
Female Juvenile Sexual Offenders: Understanding Who They Are and Possible Steps That May Prevent Some Girls From Offending.
J Child Sex Abus. 2015;24(6):698-715. PMID: 26340075
“...this article describes common characteristics of juvenile female sex offenders, ways in which juvenile female sex offenders are similar to and different from juvenile male sex offenders, and the limitations that exist related to our knowledge about these offenders.”

Felizzi MV.
Family or Caregiver Instability, Parental Attachment, and the Relationship to Juvenile Sex Offending.
J Child Sex Abus. 2015;24(6):641-58. PMID: 26340072
For 502 adjudicated juvenile male sexual and nonsexual offenders, factors associated with increased risk of sexual offending included “multiple relocations or homelessness, children placed out of the home, slapping or punching in the home, and sexual abuse victimization. The quality of parental attachment had little impact on the respondents' offense status.”

Calkins C, Fargo J, Jeglic E, Terry K.
Blessed be the Children: A Case-Control Study of Sexual Abusers in the Catholic Church.
From a survey of 1121 US clergy, clergy sexual abusers were more likely to have had: limited pre-seminary dating histories, male dating and sexual partners, greater personal sexual abuse victimization histories, and more involvement with youth and adolescents in their ministries.

Bottoms BL, Goodman GS, Tolou-Shams M, et. al.
Religion-Related Child Maltreatment: A Profile of Cases Encountered by Legal and Social Service Agencies.
Review of the features of 249 cases of religion-related child maltreatment, and how these cases were reported and processed by the social service and criminal justice systems.
Providers

Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Continuum of Care Program--Increasing Mobility Options for Homeless Individuals and Families With Tenant-Based Rental Assistance. Interim rule.
Interim rule from HUD on the Continuum of Care Program (related to housing needs and services), relaxes certain geographic and other restrictions for participants fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking.

Oehme K, Stern N, Donnelly E, Melvin R.

Improving the Emergency Medical Services System’s Response to Domestic Violence.
Health Matrix Clevel. 2016;26:173-204. PMID: 27263252
From a law-medicine journal from Case Western Reserve, a joint medical-legal detailed analysis of the state of emergency medical services and domestic violence, including the impact of dv on patient health, the fragmented nature of the EMS oversight system, the lack of training in EMS personnel re: dv, and a “blueprint for reform”.

Concialdi M, Read S.

EMS World. 2016 May;45(5):52-5. PMID: 27337836
Brief review of child abuse for EMS responders.

Young-Wolff KC, Kotz K, McCaw B.

Transforming the Health Care Response to Intimate Partner Violence: Addressing "Wicked Problems".
JAMA. 2016 Jun 21;315(23):2517-8. PMID: 27327796
Succinct review of the systems-approach model from Kaiser addressing IPV.

Neill KS, Hammatt J.

Beyond urban places: responding to intimate partner violence in rural and remote areas.
J Forensic Nurs. 2015 Apr-Jun;11(2):93-100. PMID: 25996433
Review of the challenges individuals experiencing IPV face in rural areas, with suggestions for systems change.

Jordan KS, Steelman SH.

Child maltreatment: interventions to improve recognition and reporting.
General review of the scope of child maltreatment, contributing barriers to recognition and reporting, and suggested interventions for primary and secondary prevention.

Kenny MC, Abreu RL.

Training Mental Health Professionals in Child Sexual Abuse: Curricular Guidelines.
J Child Sex Abus. 2015;24(5):572-91. PMID: 26301441
Suggestions for critical components of child sexual abuse training for mental health providers, including disclosure patterns, detection, assessment, treatment, a clear understanding of the process of victimization, and reporting procedures.

Cavanaugh CE, Harper B, Classen CC, et. al.

Experiences of Mothers Who Are Child Sexual Abuse Survivors: A Qualitative Exploration.
J Child Sex Abus. 2015;24(5):506-25. PMID: 26301437
44 adult female survivors of childhood sexual abuse discuss the effect of the abuse on their lives and parenting. Authors stress “the need for interventions to assist this population in meeting the challenges they face as mothers.”

Dyer AS, Feldmann RE Jr, Borgmann E.

Body-Related Emotions in Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Following Childhood Sexual Abuse.
J Child Sex Abus. 2015;24(6):627-40. PMID: 26340071
Women with a history of childhood sexual abuse and PTSD had highly negative emotions about the pubic region and inner thighs. In daily life activities involving these areas, “the patient’s body may act as a trigger for traumatic memories.”

Tener D, Murphy SB.

Adult Disclosure of Child Sexual Abuse: A Literature Review.
Trauma Violence Abuse. 2015 Oct;16(4):391-400. PMID: 24903400
Review of research on adult disclosure of personal childhood sexual abuse, including “barriers and facilitators to disclosure and potential recipients of the disclosure, as well as the process of telling and its impact on survivors' well-being.”

Domhardt M, Münzer A, Fegert JM, Goldbeck L.

Trauma Violence Abuse. 2015 Oct;16(4):476-93. PMID: 25389279
From a review of research studies, “the percentage of CSA survivors who were found to have a normal level of functioning ranged from 10% to 53%. The protective factors that had the best empirical support were found to be education, interpersonal and emotional competence, control beliefs, active coping, optimism, social attachment, external attribution of blame, and most importantly, support from the family and the wider social environment.”
Prevention

WHO and CDC

Inspire: 7 Strategies to End Violence Against Children, 2016

Dishion TJ, Mun CJ, Drake EC, Tein JY, Shaw DS, Wilson M.
A transactional approach to preventing early childhood neglect: The Family Check-Up as a public health strategy.
Dev Psychopathol. 2015 Nov;27(4 Pt 2):1647-60. PMID: 26535950

Description of a “Family Check-Up” intervention for WIC families, with annual home visits at ages 2, 3, 4, and 5. Program increased positive engagement between caregivers and children by age 3, which was prognostic of less neglect at age 4. The families with the most adverse circumstances were highly responsive to the intervention.

Milner JS.
Child maltreatment in United States military families: The military Family Advocacy Program has given increased attention to the prevention of family violence.
Child Abuse Negl. 2015 Sep;47:102-13. PMID: 26159642

Review of child maltreatment in military families, and the methods developed by the military to assess, monitor, manage and prevent this issue.

Doty JL, Rudi JH, Pinna KL, Hanson SK, Gewirtz AH.
If You Build It, Will They Come? Patterns of Internet-Based and Face-To-Face Participation in a Parenting Program for Military Families.

Military family parents may be drawn to different delivery options of a parenting program (online vs. face-to-face) depending on education level, incentives, and military-related experience.

Buller AM, Hidrobo M, Peterman A, Heise L.
The way to a man’s heart is through his stomach?
BMC Public Health. 2016 Jun 8;16(1):488. PMID: 27278935

A study in Ecuador of nutrition education combined with cash and in-kind food transfers reduced IPV physical or sexual violence by 30%, due to decreasing stress and conflict, improving household well-being, and enhancing women’s decision making, self-confidence and freedom of movement.

Kaukinen CE, Powers RA.
The role of economic factors on women’s risk for intimate partner violence: a cross-national comparison of Canada and the United States.
Violence Against Women. 2015 Feb;21(2):229-48. PMID: 25540258

“Income serves to reduce the risk of both violence and coercive control for both Canadian and American women, whereas education serves as a clear protective factor for American women, but does not...for Canadian women.”

Abuse Rates

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<tr>
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<th>Canada</th>
<th>United States</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No High School</td>
<td>26.50%</td>
<td>17.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>10.90%</td>
<td>7.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>6.10%</td>
<td>13.50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>No High School</td>
<td>3.30%</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>5.60%</td>
<td>3.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>4.20%</td>
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<tr>
<th>Coercive Control</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>High School</td>
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<td>College</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Violence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>High School</td>
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<td>College</td>
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Researchers

In 2012 the definition of rape used by the national statistics Uniform Crime Reports was substantially changed. This article discusses the impact of this change, estimating that 40% of sexual assaults have been excluded by the prior definition.

From a survey of first-year college students, the prevalence of sexual trauma was better assessed using behaviorally specific questions rather than labels such as “rape” or “abuse”. Men in particular were less likely than women to label their experiences as abuse and may thus be under-identified in research.

The Acute Stress Checklist for Children was found to be a valuable screening instrument to assess acute stress levels of adolescents after potentially stressful events such as rape.

“...we offer several promising directions for the next generation of research on evaluating victimization programs. The goal of this study is to improve the strength of future program evaluations, replications, and other systematic reviews as researchers and practitioners continue to learn what works to reduce victimization.”

Other of Interest


From a national survey of 18,713 adults with no psychiatric history prior to 9/11, a history of high childhood maltreatment exacerbated subsequent externalizing (EXT - alcohol, nicotine, and cannabis) and internalizing (INT - depression, anxiety, PTSD) symptoms. Authors discuss the concept of abuse causing stress sensitization.

![Fig. 2](image.png) Interaction effects of Childhood Maltreatment and 9/11 Exposure on Externalizing (A) and Internalizing (B) Disorders in the NESAIC. Note: ** denote differences significant at p < 0.05.