

Relationship between exposure to domestic violence and bullying/violence

Cantrell, P., MacIntyre, D., Sharkey, K., & Thompson, V. (1995). Violence in the marital dyad as a predictor of violence in the peer relationships of older adolescents/young adults. *Violence & Victims*, 10(1), 35-41.

- “The results found in this study provide support for the hypothesis that a history of parental violence/abuse is predictive of violence/abuse in peer relationships of older adolescent and young adult children. Father-to-mother violence/abuse predicted violence/abuse in all combinations of peer relationships for both men and women. Mother-to-father violence/abuse demonstrated a less consistent pattern, with violent behaviors being predictive, but not the more severe abuse behaviors” (p. 39).

Cummings, J., Pepler, D., & Moore, T. (1999). Behavior problems in children exposed to wife abuse: Gender differences. *Journal of Family Violence*, 14(2), 133-156.

- Found that “wife-abuse exposed boys were not rated as having significantly elevated rates of externalizing problems” (p. 152). But researchers also say that “a longitudinal research design might reveal a trend toward increasing externalizing problems as these boys reach adulthood” (p. 152).
- “Contrary to gender stereotypes, shelter girls were rated by their mothers as having significantly elevated rates of externalizing disorders” (p. 153).
- Authors suggest that results of their study should be interpreted cautiously for a variety of reasons (p. 153).

Dodds, M. (1996). The impact of exposure to interparental violence on child behavior problems. *Dissertation Abstracts International, Section B: the Sciences and Engineering*, 56(10-B).

- Abstract: “This study examined the effects of exposure to interparental violence on children's behavioral problems. Longitudinal data on 178 children were used to assess the impact of family violence using interview and life events data collected from ages 12 months through 3rd grade. Frequency and severity of family violence was rated at eleven data points. Children who had been physically abused were previously identified in this sample and allowed for control of the effects of physical abuse. Severity of children's behavioral problems was assessed using the Child Behavior Checklist--Teacher Report Form, which was completed by three separate classroom teachers at three different data points. Children's internalizing, externalizing and total behavior problem scores were analyzed separately and together for males and females. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted and included the following variables: children's IQ scores, family's socioeconomic status, child's history of physical abuse and neglect, personal life events scores, interparental violence ratings, 0-64 months, and interparental violence ratings, grades 1-3. Separate analyses were conducted for the total sample of 178 children and the smaller sample of 86 children who had been exposed to interparental violence. Results suggest that the exposure to

interparental violence contributes to the prediction of children's problems beyond the prediction offered by the child's history of abuse. Exposure was a stronger predictor of behavioral problems for males than females. No evidence of a delayed effect was found” (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2002 APA, all rights reserved)

Fantuzzo, J., & Mohr, W. (1999). Prevalence and effects of child exposure to domestic violence. *Future of Children*, 9(3), 21-32.

- “The 1989 and 1996 literature reviews indicated that children exposed to domestic violence demonstrated more externalizing and more internalizing behaviors than did children from nonviolent homes. Specifically, the studies that examined differences across groups in these behaviors revealed that children exposed to domestic violence tended to be more aggressive and to exhibit behavior problems in their schools and communities ranging from temper tantrums to fights” (p. 27).

Hotaling, G., Straus, M., & Lincoln, A. (1989). Intra family violence and crime and violence outside the family. In L. Ohlin & M. Tonry (Eds.), *Family violence. Crime and Justice: A review of research*. Vol. 11. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 315-375.

- More related to the link between violent victimization and violence perpetration. Does not address the effects of witnessing violence.
- Abstract: “Research on violent behavior over the past 15 years has generally assumed that violence between family members is fundamentally different from violence ‘in the streets.’ Criminologists and family violence researchers have been reluctant to conceptualize family violence as a form of criminal violence, and there has been little theoretical or empirical work on commonalities in violence across family and nonfamily settings. An analysis of 3 data sets from general populations (two national household surveys and a student survey) shows a link between physical assaults in the family and assaults and other crime outside of the family. Evidence was found for both victimization effects and offender effects. Both adult and child *victims* of violence are more likely to perpetrate assaults and other aggression outside the family than are nonvictims. Violence *offenders* in the family are also more likely to assault nonfamily members. These victim and offender effects do not disappear when controlling for socioeconomic status, gender, or severity of family violence. The findings support the social learning thesis that training in violence is generalizable across settings and across targets” (p. 315).

Johnson-Reid, M. (1998). Youth violence and exposure to violence in childhood: An ecological review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 3(2), 159-179.

- “This review adopts an ecological framework to examine the relationship between youth violence and the experience of child maltreatment, domestic violence, and community violence. In doing so, it builds upon and updates prior reviews of family violence and places these findings in a broad social learning context rather than intergenerational perspective. By summarizing research by subtopics and

discussing the current status of knowledge regarding youth violence and childhood exposure to violence, it is hoped that this paper will assist in the development of future interdisciplinary research” (p. 159).

- “...Studies seem appear to support a connection between childhood witnesses of domestic violence and later adolescent adjustment problems. Studies previously reviewed from the 1970s and early 1980s reported that 23 to 79% of violent youths and violent offenders had come from homes in which spousal abuse occurred (Widom, 1989). More recent research has posted to a relationship between childhood exposure to violence and children’s violent behavior with other children in the home and at school (Hotaling, Straus, & Lincoln, 1989; Suh & Abel, 1990). Finally, some of the literature suggests that witnessing spousal abuse may affect children through the development of a belief that violence is an appropriate means of settling conflict (Jaffee, Hurley, & Wolfe, 1990).

Kruttschnitt, C., & Dornfeld, M. (1993). Exposure to family violence: A partial explanation for initial and subsequent levels of delinquency? *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*, 3(2), 61-75.

- “Exposure to family violence appears to be related to participation (offenders versus non-offenders), and the frequency and severity of delinquency. Only those youths who reported having initiated offending (n=80) were included in this analysis. Because a greater percentage of these offenders come from violent families (56%) than from non-violent families (44%), domestic violence may be seen as a useful, but not necessarily strong, predictor of participation. Youths exposed to family violence also report engaging in three times as much delinquency, and more serious delinquency, than do the no-exposure sample. However, the exposure group contains an over-representation of nonwhites and welfare recipients, which places them at a higher risk for delinquency than the no-exposure group (Hindelang, 1981; Elliott & Huizinga, 1983)” (p. 67).
- “The exposed youths report initiating delinquency at a mean age of 7 years, 1 year earlier than the no-exposure group” (p. 67).
- “Youths with more violent family histories are significantly more likely to initiate delinquency at an earlier age than those with less violent family backgrounds; those who begin delinquency early engage in more offending than those who start later” (p. 67).

Mabanglo, M. (2002). Trauma and the effects of violence exposure and abuse on children: A review of the literature. *Smith College Studies in Social Work*, 72(2), 231-251.

- “Several researchers have completed extensive literature reviews that link domestic violence exposure to the development of symptomatology (Edleson, 1999; Fantuzzo & Linquist, 1989; Kashani, Daniel, Dandoy, & Holcomb, 1992; Peled & Davis, 1995)...The earliest studies conclude that, overall, when compared to children raised in non-violent families, children of battered women exhibit higher rates of internalizing and externalizing behavior problems, as well as higher rates of non-compliance, aggression, anxiety, depression, and attention

- difficulties in school (Jaffe et al., 1990; Wolfe, Jaffe, Wilson, & Zak, 1985)” (p. 237).
- “More recent research has improved on earlier studies by acknowledging and including other variables that might mediate the impacts of exposure to domestic violence” (p. 237). These include factors like maternal mental health, mother’s stress and depression, types of violence against mother, positive and negative social support, etc. Some of these have an effect, others don’t, but violence/bullying in children is not specifically mentioned as an outcome in this review.

McCloskey, L., & Lichter, E. (2003). The contribution of marital violence to adolescent aggression across different relationships. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 18*(4), 290-412.

- “Different forms of aggression were measured in 296 young men and women participating in a longitudinal study dating from their childhood that included families with marital violence. Participants were between 6-12 yrs at the first interview. The youth reported on their perpetration of physical aggression with same-sex peers, dating partners, and parents. Measures were also collected on youth depression and empathy. Childhood exposure to marital violence predicted aggression toward peers for all youth. Marital violence was also related to child-to-parent aggression but only for youth older than 18 yrs. Youth from maritally violent homes were more likely to be depressed as adolescents. Elevated depression partially mediated the impact of marital violence on peer aggression and was associated with dating aggression among girls. Although marital violence in childhood was unrelated to empathy scores in adolescence, empathic youth were less likely to engage in dating aggression and peer aggression. Findings indicate that further emphasis should be placed on mental health problems and empathy building in youth exposed to marital violence” (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2003 APA, all rights reserved).

McFarlane, J., Groff, J., O’Brien, J., & Watson, K. (2003). Behaviors of children who are exposed and not exposed to intimate partner violence: An analysis of 330 Black, White, and Hispanic Children. *Pediatrics, 112*(3), e202-e207.

- “Children, ages 6 to 18 years, of abused mothers exhibit significantly more internalizing, externalizing, and total behavior problems than children for the same age and sex of nonabused mothers” (e202).
- “We found boys, 6 to 18 years old, of abused mothers to be at highest risk for behavioral problems, with 44% of boys and girls 12 to 18 years of age to be in the clinical referral range for external behaviors of aggression and delinquency” (p. e206).

Moore, T., Pepler, D., Mae, R. & Michele, K. (1989). Effects of family violence on children: New directions for research and intervention. In Pressman, B., Cameron, G., et al. (Eds.). *Intervening with assaulted women: Current theory, research, and practice. 75-91.*

- “Boys seem to be particularly at risk for externalizing behavior problems (such as aggressiveness, hyperactivity, and delinquency) compared to children who have not been exposed to family violence (Hughes & Barad, 1983; Jaffe, Wolfe, Wilson, & Zak, 1986b; Jouriles, Barling, & O’Leary, 1987). Further analyses of the boys’ behavior problems indicated that they were characterized by inappropriate social interactions such as aggressiveness toward peers, destructiveness, mood changes and disobedience (Jaffe, Wolfe, Wilson, & Zak, 1986b)” (p. 76).
- “Although it is well-documented that family violence begets subsequent violence, the actual means by which aggressive dispositions are acquired is not clear. Only recently has sustained research effect been directed at the development of comprehensive theoretical models, which attempt to spell out the links between cognitive and behavioral changes by using an information processing approach. Behavioral manifestations of disorders may be caused by faulty processing at any one or all of a variety of stages of information processing. Appropriate interentions would then require an assessment of which of these stages is problematic” (p. 81). Discusses a few potential models.
- “Taken together, the data from the Perry and SIPSI suggest that children from violent homes may be relatively inept at interpreting and coping with social conflict” (p. 82).

Moore, T., Pepler, D., Weinberg, B., Hammond, L., et al. (1990). Research on children from violent families. *Canada’s Mental Health*, 38(2-3), 19-23.

- “While family violence predisposes children to adopt aggressive modes of problem solving, violence does not inevitably beget violence. Not all forms of domestic violence are the same, nor are all children similarly affected. Various factors may ameliorate or aggravate the child’s response to a high-risk situation. In this article the authors describe some potential protective factors relating to the child’s own capacities and behaviours; the mother-child relationship; sibling relationships; and finally, the broader social context of peer interactions that may mediate the psychological impact of family violence on children from violent homes” (p. 19).

Moulden, R. (1996). Childhood exposure to family violence in spousally abusive and spousally non-abusive male federal offenders. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 56(11-A), 4563.

- Abstract: “Spousal abuse, one of the many forms of family violence, came into focus as a social problem as recently as 1971, and incidents of spousal abuse in Canada vary broadly. Studies of abusive males and data provided by spousally abusive males themselves remain relatively infrequent in the literature on spouse abuse. Furthermore, studies of family-of-origin violence within a male federal offender group are extremely rare. Exposure to violence in the abuser’s family-of-origin is not infrequently reported in the literature of spousal abuse, as is an intergenerational transmission of violence. Further, while exposure to violence includes both parent-child and parent-parent physical abuse, studies examining the incidence and effects of exposure to interparental abuse have only recently

become a recognized area in the research on spousal abuse. The purpose of this study of spousally abusive and spousally non-abusive male federal offenders was to examine data pertaining to childhood exposure to family violence. Specifically, the following aspects of family-of-origin violence were examined: percentage of spousally abusive males who have had prior relationships in which they were also physically abusive, proportion of males in each group who experienced parent-child physical abuse, proportion of males in each group who were exposed to parent-parent physical abuse, proportion of males in each group who witnessed (i.e., actually saw) interparental physical abuse, proportion of males in each group who experienced a double dose of violence (i.e., exposure to both parent-child physical abuse and parent-parent physical abuse), proportion of males who are (also) violent outside of the home, and the number of males whose siblings are physically abusive of others. While childhood exposure to family violence was frequently found in both the spousally abusive group and the spousally non-abusive group of males, exposure to family-of-origin violence did not discriminate between the two groups” (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2002 APA, all rights reserved)

Ritter, J., Stewart, M., Bernet, C., Coe, M., & Brown, S. (2002). Effects of childhood exposure to familial alcoholism and family violence on adolescent substance use, conduct problems, and self-esteem. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 15*(2), 113-122.

- “Exposure to familial alcoholism has been associated with many behavioral and emotional difficulties among offspring. However, few studies have examined environmental risks that often coexist with familial alcoholism, and which may influence the development of offspring psychosocial problems. This study examined potential additive and interactive effects of childhood exposure to family violence and childhood exposure to familial alcoholism on adolescent functioning. Three domains of adolescent functioning were examined in a high-risk community sample of 109 families (adolescents aged 12-18 yrs and their parents): lifetime levels of substance use, conduct disorder behaviors, and self-esteem. The selected families were followed in five waves of data collection over a 6-yr time period. Results indicated that both childhood exposure to familial alcoholism and childhood exposure to family violence were associated with psychosocial functioning of offspring during adolescence, although the relations differ according to domain of functioning and gender” (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2002 APA, all rights reserved).
- “Childhood exposure to family violence as well as exposure to alcohol-abusing family models were found to increase risk for deviant behaviors among female adolescents. Specifically, alcohol-abusing family models predicted female conduct-disorder behaviors, and the interaction of childhood exposure to family violence and alcohol-abusing family models further enhanced the prediction of such conduct-disorder behaviors. Of note, childhood exposure to family violence did not exacerbate conduct-disorder behaviors among female adolescents already exposed to familial alcohol abuse. However, exposure to family violence significantly impacted conduct-disorder behaviors among adolescent girls who were not exposed to familial alcohol abuse, and conversely, exposure to familial

- alcohol abuse significantly impacted conduct-disorder behaviors among adolescent girls who did not experience concurrent family violence” (p. 119).
- “In the present sample, neither exposure to familial alcohol abuse nor exposure to family violence was associated with conduct disorder type behaviors of boys...Because the majority of boys in our sample had some exposure to familial alcohol abuse and/or family violence, it may be that male youth in our sample exhibited higher base rates of externalizing problems in general” (p. 119).

Rossman, B. (2001). Longer term effects of children’s exposure to domestic violence. In Graham-Bermann, S. (Ed.). *Domestic violence in the lives of children: The future of research, intervention, and social policy*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 35-65.

- Don’t have chapter, but summary from introduction: “Considers a number of ways or processes through which a child’s development can be affected by domestic violence. The areas of learning, nurturing, and trauma processes are all considered as possible conduits of negative long-term effects. The author notes that as more studies track children exposed to interparental violence over time, the long-term course of violence exposure and possible consequences of violence exposure to the child should be documented in these interrelated domains” (PsychINFO Database Record © 2002 APA, all rights reserved).

Spaccarelli, S., Coatsworth, J., & Bowden, B. (1995). Exposure to serious family violence among incarcerated boys: Its association with violent offending and potential mediating variables. *Violence & Victims*, 10(3), 163-182.

- “213 delinquent males (aged 12-17 yrs) were compared on interview-based measures concerning exposure to interadult family violence and physical abuse, attitudes toward aggression, self-reported competence, and coping strategies. Using juvenile arrest data and self-reports on violent behaviors, subjects were divided into violent offenders (VOs), undetected violent offenders (UVOs), violent deniers, and controls. Results showed VOs and UVOs had higher rates of exposure to serious physical abuse and weapons violence between adults. A series of 2 * 2 ANOVAs further indicated that exposure to serious violence was associated with lower self-reported competence, attitudes more supportive of aggression, and more use of aggressive control as a form of coping. Logistic regression analyses suggested that these relationships are mediated by beliefs supporting aggression and by the tendency to cope through aggressive control-seeking” (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2002 APA, all rights reserved).
- “Delinquent youth who were exposed to serious family violence were less competent than nonexposed youth in peer relationships, self-control, and autonomy, and were more apt to cope with stress by consciously seeking to control or provoke others. In addition, those exposed to serious family violence were more likely to believe that aggression promotes self-esteem” (p. 174).

Waddell, J. Pepler, D., & Moore, T. (2001). Observations of sibling interactions in violent families. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 29(3), 241-258.

- “Shelter children had more internalizing problems than comparison children did. Mothers reported that siblings from violent homes used less verbal and physical aggression than the comparison group. Siblings in the shelter group were supportive. There were no significant differences in observed conflictual behavior” (p. 241).

Wolf, A. (2002). The effect of exposure to domestic violence on children: A longitudinal examination of children’s outcomes. *Dissertation Abstracts International, Section B: the Sciences and Engineering, 63(5-B)*.

- Abstract: “There is increasing evidence that exposure to domestic violence against their mothers has a negative effect on children's functioning including their levels of depression, self-concept, problematic behaviors, and somatic complaints. However, conclusions from the current literature are limited given that most findings have been based on cross-sectional research. Further, there is a limited knowledge base regarding how exposure to domestic violence affects children and equivocal finding regarding the degree to which the effect of abuse is different for boys and girls. In the current study, the problematic behaviors of children exposed to the psychological and physical abuse of their mothers were examined longitudinally. In addition, the presence of disruptions (e.g., household moves, changes in schools) in the lives of children was examined as a potential mediator of the relationship between exposure to abuse and children's outcomes. Finally, to account for differences regarding the effects of exposure on boys and girls, gender was examined as a moderator. Data used to examine these relationships were collected from interviews with eighty mothers and their children as part of a larger study examining the effects of emotional and physical abuse over time on women and their school-age children. The findings from this study demonstrated that exposure to domestic violence was positively related to children's levels of 'internalizing' or withdrawal behaviors and 'externalizing' or aggressive behaviors. This study also contributed to the current knowledge base regarding how and when children are affected by domestic violence. In particular, findings indicated that the relationship between exposure to domestic violence and some aspects of children's behaviors were moderated by child's gender and partially mediated by the number of disruptions in children's lives. The conclusions and implications for future research were explored” (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2003 APA, all rights reserved).

Wolfe, D., Crooks, C., Lee, V., McIntyre-Smith, A., & Jaffe, P. (2003). The effects of children’s exposure to domestic violence: A meta-analysis and critique. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 6(3), 171-187*.

- “Forty of these (41) studies indicated that children’s exposure to domestic violence was related to emotional and behavioral problems” (p. 171). The article does not go into much more depth on this topic, though.

Yates, T., Dodds, M., Sroufe, L., & Egeland, B. (2003). Exposure to partner violence and child behavior problems: A prospective study controlling for child physical

abuse and neglect, child cognitive ability, socioeconomic status, and life stress.
Development and Psychopathology, 15, 199-218.

- “This study used prospective, longitudinal data (N=155) and multiple informants to examine the relation between maternal reports of partner violence in the home and teacher- and youth-report ratings of concurrent and prospective child behavior problems. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to control for the effects of child physical abuse, child physical neglect, socioeconomic status, child cognitive ability, and life stress. The contribution of partner violence to child behavior problems was confirmed for boys (n=81) externalizing problems and girls’ (n=74) internalizing problems. Child developmental status at the time of exposure further influenced these relations. For boys, behavior problems in middle childhood were most strongly related to contemporaneous partner violence, whereas behavior problems among both boys and girls at age 16 were most strongly related to partner violence exposure during the preschool years” (p. 199).