

—Edited by
Thomas F. Curran

The purpose of Journal Highlights is to inform readers of current research on various aspects of child maltreatment. Selected articles from journals representing APSAC's multidisciplinary membership are presented in annotated bibliography form. APSAC members are invited to contribute to Journal Highlights by sending a copy of current articles (preferably published within the past six months), along with a two to three sentence review, to Thomas F. Curran, M.S.W., J.D., Child Advocacy Unit, Defender Association of Philadelphia, 121 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107-1913

PHYSICAL ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Caliso, J.A., and Milner, J.S. (1994). Childhood physical abuse, childhood social support, and adult child abuse potential. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 9* (1), 27-44.

By using the Childhood Social Network Questionnaire and the Child Abuse Potential Inventory, this study examined the role of social supports in the discrimination of physical child abusers and non-abusers. Contrary to expectations, none of the social support factors identified distinguished physical child abusers with a history of childhood physical abuse from the group of non-abusers with histories of childhood physical abuse. One finding consistent with previous research was that non-abusing adults with and without a history of childhood abuse were found to be less rigid in their child expectations and happier in their interpersonal relationships than were the abusers.

Coody, D., Brown, M., Montgomery, D., Flynn, A., and Yetman, R. (1994). Shaken Baby Syndrome: Identification and prevention for nurse practitioners. *Journal of Pediatric Health Care, 8*, 50-56.

Health care professionals experienced in identifying child abuse and those with little or no experience will find this article a very useful description of the clinical findings of Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS). Following a brief case study, a clear and concise overview of the identification and diagnostic evaluation for SBS is presented.

McCurdy, K. and Daro, D. (1994). Child maltreatment: A national survey of reports fatalities. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 9* (1), 75-94.

Pertinent findings from the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse's most recent nationwide survey on the number and characteristics of child abuse reports, the number of abuse fatalities, and scope of the child welfare system are presented in this article. The results indicate that rates of reported and substantiated cases of child maltreatment, as well as abuse and neglect-related confirmed deaths, have steadily increased over the past eight years.

Nelson, K.E., Saunders, E.J., and Landsman, M.J. (1993). Chronic child neglect in perspective. *Social Work, 38* (6), 661-671.

Various dynamics of child neglect identified in previous research are examined in this longitudinal cohort study of three groups of families referred to a county child welfare agency due to child neglect allegations. The results, which were reached by interactional factor analysis, provided strong additional evidence of the role extreme poverty plays in the etiology of child neglect. This important study also raises some social policy and intervention issues which are inextricably linked to the prevention and effective treatment of neglect.

Reece, R.M. (1993). Fatal child abuse and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome: A critical diagnostic decision. *Pediatrics, 91* (2), 423-429.

This brief article provides an excellent overview of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), including its clinical presentation, epidemiology, and characteristics which distinguish it from child abuse. The section on the importance and role of the autopsy in SIDS cases is especially useful.

Wolf, D.A. (1993). Prevention of child neglect: Emerging issues. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 20* (1), 90-111.

The article presents an excellent overview of some identified maltreatment risk factors, particularly those pertaining to neglect. Suggestions of ways to conceptualize prevention goals from these identified risk factors are discussed, along with recent intervention programs which appear promising.

Zaidi, L.Y. and Foy, D.W. (1994). Childhood abuse experiences and combat-related PTSD. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 7* (1), 33-42.

By using a standardized measure of childhood abuse, this descriptive study provides preliminary data on the prevalence and severity of physical discipline experienced during childhood by combat veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and examines the association between childhood abuse and the severity of current PTSD symptomatology. Data compiled reflected a statistically significant correlation between childhood punishment history and the severity of PTSD symptomatology. This is a fascinating study, with important potential implications for the diagnosis and treatment of PTSD in combat veterans.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

deYoung, M. (1994). Immediate maternal reactions to the disclosure or discovery of incest. *Journal of Family Violence, 9* (1), 21-33.

This study explored the immediate reactions of mothers to the disclosure or discovery of paternal

continued on next page

Journal Highlights

—Edited by
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continued from page 31

incest Unlike some other studies of this issue, in this study the women, themselves, were the sources of the data. Contrary to previous reports, the findings revealed much less collusion, less disbelief of the incest allegation, more shock and outrage upon its disclosure or discovery, and more protective actions post-discovery by the mothers.

Everson, M. and Boat, B. (1994). Putting the anatomical doll controversy in perspective: An examination of the major uses and criticisms of the dolls in child sexual abuse evaluations. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 18 (2), 113-129.

Based upon an extensive review of guidelines and protocols developed for the use of anatomical dolls in sexual abuse evaluations, the authors identified seven functional uses of the dolls. These functional uses are then examined in light of the major criticisms that have been raised about using the dolls in child sexual abuse evaluations or investigations. Four such criticisms are explored in detail. The authors provide convincing support for each of their conclusions, including that blanket condemnations of use of the dolls in sexual abuse evaluations are unjustified. In addition, the most common criticism of the dolls, that they are suggestive and overly stimulating to young children, is exposed and refuted by the available research

Kendall-Tackett, K.A., Meyer Williams, L., and Finkelhor, D. (1993). Impact of sexual abuse on children: A review and synthesis of recent empirical studies. *Psychological Bulletin*, 113 (1), 164-180.

Forty-five research studies conducted on the impact or effect of sexual abuse on children are examined in this meticulously detailed literature review. Overall, sexually abused children had more symptoms than non-abused children. No single symptom, however, characterized a majority of the sexually abused children. After an excellent theoretical discussion of traumatization, this review failed to establish any specific syndrome in children who have been sexually abused or any single traumatizing process.

McLeer, S., Callaghan, M., Henry, D., and Wallen, J. (1994). Psychiatric disorders in sexually abused children. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 33 (3), 313-319.

This study compared the prevalence of Axis I DSM-III-R psychiatric disorders in a sample of clinically referred children who had been sexually abused and a sample of non-sexually abused children referred for psychiatric outpatient evaluation. Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder was the most frequent diagnosis in both groups, but the sexually abused group had a significantly higher prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) than did the comparison group (42.3% to 8.7%). Earlier findings that sexually abused children are at heightened risk for the development of PTSD were confirmed, and a significant comorbidity among the children with PTSD was found

Runyan, D., Hunter, W., Everson, M., Whitcomb, D., and DeVos, E. (1994). The intervention stressors inventory: A measure of the stress of intervention for sexually abused children. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 18 (4), 319-329.

This article described the development and initial validation of the Intervention Stressors Inventory (ISI), a new scale which attempts to measure the intrusiveness and stress which criminal justice and social service interventions cause sexually abused children. Although early results suggest the ISI has place as a research tool, both the instrument and its usefulness will surely be the subject of some controversy within the child protection field.

OTHER ISSUES IN CHILD MALTREATMENT

Bulkley, J.A. and Horwitz, M.J. (1994). Adults sexually abused as children: Legal actions and issues. *Behavioral Science and the Law*, 12 (1), 65-87.

Delayed memories, the long-term effects of child sexual abuse, current trends in bringing civil lawsuits, and the criminal prosecution of sexual abuse cases are discussed in this highly informative article. An excellent analysis of civil and criminal statutes of limitations in sexual abuse cases is provided, along with various arguments for and against extending these legislatively established periods within which legal actions may be brought. Although its substance and language will likely appeal primarily to attorneys, this article presents a thorough and refreshingly balanced examination of some highly controversial issues involving child sexual abuse and the legal system.

Finkelhor, D. and Leatherman-Dziuba, J. (1994). Victimization of children. *American Psychologist*, 49 (3), 173-183.

This article presents a comprehensive examination of the victimization of children. Drawing from various data sources for support, the authors examine why children are more prone to victimization than adults, and provides an interesting statistical analysis of child victimization, unique characteristics of child victims, and a typology of child victimizations which provide important observations for future research. The discussion of age and victimology is particularly thought-provoking. Anyone involved in child maltreatment, whether as researcher, clinician or investigator, will find this article helpful.

continued on next page

Journal Highlights

—Edited by
Thomas F. Curran
continued from page 32

Urquiza, A.J., Wirtz, S.J., Peterson, M.S., and Singer, V.A. (1994) Screening and evaluating abused and neglected children entering protective custody. *Child Welfare*, 73 (2), 155-171.

Phase One data from the Screening and Evaluation Project (SEP), a short-term longitudinal applied research project developed to screen and assess the magnitude and severity of mental health problems of children very shortly after being placed in out-of-home care, are discussed in detail. Initial findings indicate that, of the 167 children studied, a large percentage displayed high levels of risk and/or mental health problems upon their entry into the dependency system. The authors present convincing arguments for screening or evaluating all children who enter out-of-home care, and thus developing a system which therefore responds to their needs early.

The Journal Highlights editor wishes to thank David Finkelhor, PhD, Family Research Laboratory, University of New Hampshire, Josephine Bulkley, JD, ABA Center on Children and the Law, and Kay Lynch, MSW, Child Advocacy Unit, Defender Association of Philadelphia, for their kind assistance and contributions to this issue.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The University of Michigan Interdisciplinary project on Child Abuse and Neglect is conducting a study of the use of the polygraph in cases of suspected sexual abuse. We will examine the relationship of polygraph results to other indicia of the likelihood of sexual abuse, such as the child's statements, child behavioral indicators, medical findings, other victims or witnesses, and offender confession.

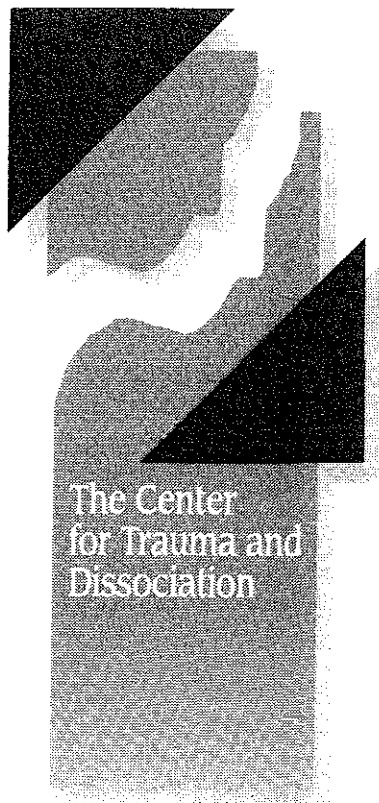
If you have been involved in cases where the polygraph was used in conjunction with other indicia and are willing to provide information for the study, or if you have questions about the study, please contact us, at the University of Michigan, IPCAN, 1015 E. Huron, Ann Arbor MI 48104-1689. Phone: 313-763-3785. FAX: 313-936-2514.

—Kathleen Coulborn Faller, PhD

NEWS/RESOURCES

According to the National Committee for the Rights of the Child (NCRC), Congress is gearing up to ratify the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, and may join a UNICEF-sponsored drive for universal ratification of the Convention by 1995. From NCRC, interested parties can learn how to

expedite the ratification process, and can receive (for \$5.00) an informative booklet that answers 30 questions about the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. Contact NCRC, 125 Cathedral St., Annapolis MD 21401. Phone: 401-268-1544.



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