

The purpose of *Journal Highlights* is to inform readers of current research on various aspects of child maltreatment. 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 or three sentence review to Rochelle F. Hanson, Ph.D., National Crime Victims Research & Treatment Center, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, SC 29425 (FAX 803 792-2945)

## SEXUAL and/or PHYSICAL ABUSE

### Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy Found Superior to Nondirective Supportive Therapy for Sexually Abused Preschoolers

Treatment outcome in sexually abused preschool children was evaluated in 43 sexually abused preschool children and their parents 6 and 12 months after completion of either Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Sexually Abused Preschoolers (CBT-SAP) or nondirective supportive therapy (NST). Parents completed questionnaires to measure a variety of symptoms in their children. Analyses indicated that there were significant group by time interactions on several outcome measures from the beginning of the study to the end of the 12-month followup period, with the CBT-SAP group exhibiting significantly more improvement over time than the NST group. Clinical findings also indicate the effectiveness of CBT-SAP over NST in reducing sexually inappropriate behavior. Findings support the superior efficacy of CBT-SAP over NST in maintaining symptom reduction in the year after treatment completion. The importance of using cognitive-behavioral interventions for sexually inappropriate behaviors and including nonoffending parents in the treatment of sexually abused preschool children is discussed.

Cohen, J.A., & Mannarino, A.P. (1997). A treatment study for sexually abused preschool children: Outcome during a one-year follow-up. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* Vol 36(9) 1228-1235.

### Relationship Found Between Preschool Abuse History and Adolescent Assaultive Behavior

A 16-year study followed 457 maltreated and nonmaltreated preschool children to identify their involvement in assaultive behavior as adolescents. Subjects were first identified in 1976-77 (at ages 18 months to 6 yrs old) during preschool assessment that examined coping styles and family functioning in abusing and nonabusing families. Assessment of the subjects in late adolescence (1990-92) focused on deviant behavior, including violence. Results indicate that severity of physical discipline, negative quality of the mother's interaction with the child, and the experience of sexual abuse were related to adolescent assaultive behavior.

Herrenkohl, R.C., Egolf, B.P., & Herrenkohl, E.C. (1997). Preschool antecedents of adolescent assaultive behavior: A longitudinal study. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* Vol 67(3) 422-432.

### Effects of Childhood Abuse Linger Among Adult Women

Results from a study of 1,931 women aged 18+ yrs who attended one of four community-based, primary care practices showed a 22% prevalence rate for childhood physical or sexual abuse. History of childhood abuse was reported more commonly among the youngest subjects, possibly indicating an increasing prevalence, an increasing recognition or redefinition of what constitutes abuse, or a reporting bias in the younger women. Regardless of age, women who reported childhood abuse were less likely to be married. Subjects reporting childhood but not adult abuse also had levels of physical symptoms and psychological problems that were as severe as subjects experiencing current adult abuse. Symptom and complaint levels were highest for subjects reporting both current and past abuse.

McCauley, J., Kern, D.E., Kolodner, K., Dill, L., et al. (1997). Clinical characteristics of women with a history of childhood abuse: Unhealed wounds. *JAMA: Journal of the American Medical Association* Vol 277(17) 1362-1368.

### New Test Being Developed to Measure Sexual Fantasy

This study examined the preliminary psychometric characteristics of the sexual fantasy questionnaire (SFQ), an instrument designed to measure paraphilic and nonparaphilic fantasies. Aspects of reliability were assessed in a sample of convicted male child molesters (27 inmates and 15 outpatients) and a convenience comparison group of 87 male undergraduates. Results indicate adequate test-retest reliability, acceptable percentage agreement on repeated items, and adequate internal consistency. The convergent validity of the SFQ was supported by the finding that child molesters reported significantly more deviant fantasies involving children than comparison subjects.

O'Donohue, W., Letourneau, E.J., & Dowling, H. (1997). Development and preliminary validation of a paraphilic sexual fantasy questionnaire. *Sexual Abuse: Journal of Research & Treatment* Vol 9(3) 167-178.

## OTHER AREAS IN CHILD MALTREATMENT

### An Historical Analysis of Child Advocacy Efforts

This article examines the concept of advocacy in child welfare, beginning with definitions of social advocacy and case advocacy. A historical account of advocacy efforts on behalf of abused and neglected children in the US is presented, followed by an analysis of current advocacy efforts, highlighting the potential of court-appointed special advocates. The article concludes with implications and ideas for social workers to assist in case advocacy efforts for children who are part of the child welfare system.

Litzelfelner, P., & Petr, C.G. (1997). Case advocacy in child welfare. *Social Work*. Vol 42(4) 392-402.

### Court-Based Mediation Effectively Resolves Child Maltreatment Cases

This article presents the results of an evaluation of 5 California counties (Los Angeles, Santa Clara, Tulare, Contra Costa and Sacramento) utilizing court-based mediation services to process child maltreatment cases filed with the court. The programs employed a variety of different service delivery approaches and targeted cases at a variety of different stages of case processing. Data were generated from the following primary sources: records maintained by mediators expressly for evaluation purposes, file data drawn from juvenile court records, surveys of parents and other lay participants, and interviews with representatives of the primary professional groups participating in mediation and the juvenile court judiciary. The results indicate

continued on next page

that mediation is an effective method of resolving cases and may offer a number of benefits over adjudication, including more detailed treatment plans and fewer court hearings.

Thoennes, N. (1997). An evaluation of child protection mediation in five California courts. *Family & Conciliation Courts Review* Vol 35(2) 184-195.

## The Effect of Childhood Violence on Marital Violence: A Longitudinal Study

This longitudinal study used path analyses to determine whether violence observed and/or experienced in childhood and adolescence had an impact on marital violence as an adult. Male and female subjects, aged 11-15 years, were interviewed each year for four years, and thereafter at 3-yr intervals for 9 yrs. Results support social learning as an important perspective in marital violence; however, males and females are impacted differently. Prior experiences with violence have a more dramatic impact in the lives of females than males, both during adolescence and adulthood, while males appear to be more affected by circumstances occurring concurrently with the marital violence.

Mihalic, S. W., & Elliott, D. (1997). A social learning theory model of marital violence. *Journal of Family Violence*, 12, 21-47.

## The Link Between Child Abuse and Date Abuse

Data were collected from female undergraduates on history of abuse (verbal, physical, and sexual) in childhood and dating relationships and psychological adjustment problems. Factors influencing whether people remain in or leave abusive relationships were examined, along with possible mediators of the relationships between child abuse, date abuse, and psychological problems. Verbal, physical, and sexual child abuse were all associated with an increased risk of later date abuse or psychological problems. Abuse by a date was also associated with psychological problems. Data suggest that low self-esteem and general anger problems may serve as mediators for later date abuse or emotional problems.

Sappington, A. A., Pharr, R., Tunstall, A., & Rickert, E. (1997). Relationships among child abuse, date abuse, and psychological problems. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 53, 319-329.

## APSAC Annual Awards Nomination Deadline May 1st

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