

Childhood Exposure to Intimate Partner Violence



**AMANDA SMITH AND MAYA
RAGAVAN**

Objectives



- 1) Discuss the definition and prevalence of intimate partner violence
- 2) Discuss the effects of witnessing violence on children
- 3) Understand how to assess for intimate partner violence in the clinic setting
- 4) Determine how to proceed if a family is suffering from IPV

Intimate Partner Violence

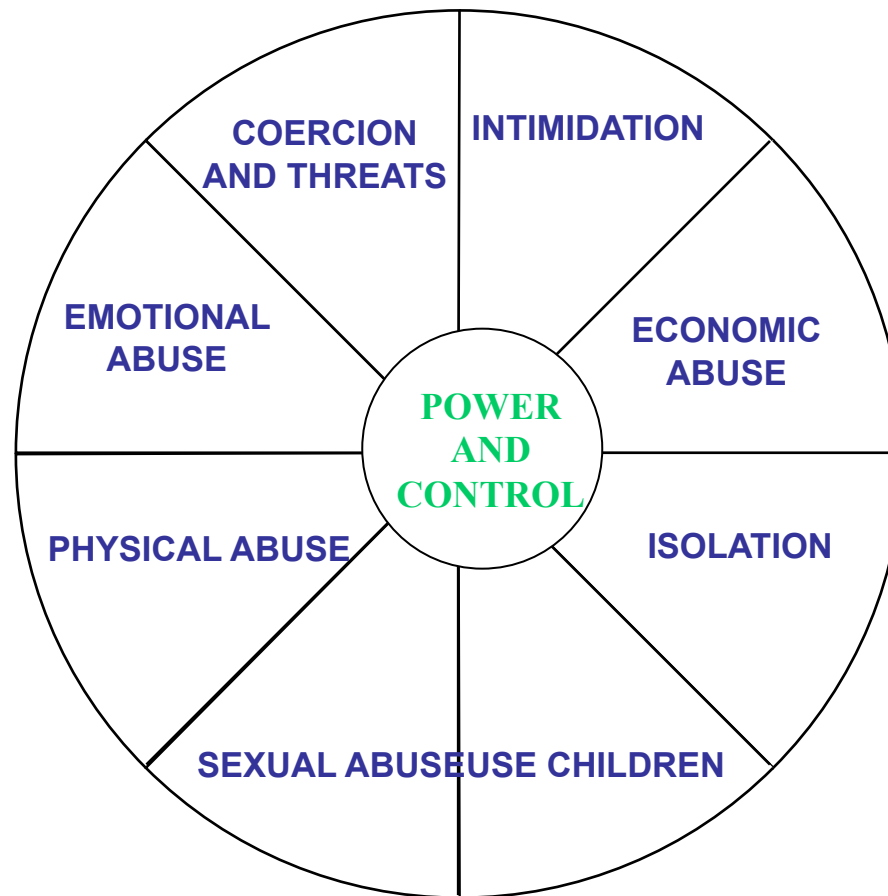


CDC definition

Pattern of coercive behaviors that may include **battering and injury, psychological abuse, sexual assault, progressive social isolation, deprivation, and intimidation.**

Can also include financial or immigration abuse

Power and Control Wheel



Taken from the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence

Intimate Partner Violence: Statistics



A medical and public health epidemic affecting nearly **1 out of 3 women** worldwide (according to the World Health Organization's multi-country study)

In the United States



- 1/4 women victims of severe physical abuse
- 1/7 men victims of severe physical abuse
- 1/5 female high school students report being physically or sexually abused by a dating partner.
- 1/3 adolescent girls is a victim of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner

Domestic Violence and Pregnancy



- Up to 1 in 12 pregnant women are abused
- Pregnant women experiencing abuse 40-60% more likely to experience health problems
- Children born to abused mothers: 17% more likely to be underweight, 30% more likely to require NICU care
- Homicide is the second leading cause of traumatic death for pregnant and recently pregnant women in the US

Children Witnessing Violence at Home: Statistics



10 million children in the US witness domestic violence (another study states **15.5 million with 7.5 million witnessing severe violence**)

One large-scale study showed that **25.3%** of children surveyed had witnessed violence in their homes, schools, and communities in the past year. No **gender differences**.

Witnessing violence



- Seeing violent acts
- Hearing about violence acts
- Seeing injuries
- Having to move to shelters or witnessing police intervention

Co-occurrence of Child Abuse and Domestic Violence



- Literature shows that there is co-occurrence between child abuse and domestic violence
- Osofsky (1999): children exposed to domestic violence are 15 times more likely to be physically abused and neglected
- Kellog & Menard (2003): 77% of sexual abuse offenders also perpetrator of inter-parental abuse

Childhood Exposure to Domestic Violence: A cycle



- Intergenerational violence
- 3.8 times more likely to become perpetrators or victims of IPV in the future (2)
- More likely to have abusive dating partnerships as teens (Levendosky 2002; Wekerle & Wolfe 1999)

Childhood Exposure to Violence: Mental Health



- Internalizing: Anxiety, depression, withdrawal, somatic complaints
- Externalizing: attention problems, aggressive behavior, rule-breaking actions

One meta-analysis showed that preschool children who witness interparental violence **are at similar risk for internalizing problems** as children who are direct victims of abuse

Childhood Exposure to Violence: Mental Health



- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Levendosky et al. (2002): 62 preschool children exposed to violence. Had nightmares, hypervigilance, separation anxiety, avoidance.

Childhood Exposure to Violence: Physical Health



- Graham-Bermann & Seng (2005): 160 preschool children. 4 times more likely to have asthma, allergy, GI problems
- Blair-Merritt et al (2008): 209 families, 62 affected by IPV. Mothers affected by IPV significantly less likely to report a regular site for well-child care or primary pediatric provider. Less likely to have a medical home.

Childhood Exposure to Violence: Physical Health



- Blair-Merritt et al. (2006): Meta-analysis. Exposure to IPV during childhood: increases risk of engaging in health-adverse behaviors later in life as well as underimmunization.
- Martin (2002): Extreme fear that children feel by witnessing violence can be associated with headaches, stomachaches, insomnia, nightmares, sleepwalking, enuresis.

Childhood Exposure to Violence: Developmental Delay



- Gilbert et al. (2013): 16,595 participants younger than 72 months. Failure along 1 developmental milestone out of four domains and within the domains of language, social, and motor.

Childhood Exposure to Violence: Adulthood



- Adverse Childhood Experiences study
- Another study (3023 subjects)-> associated with mental health conditions such as depression, alcohol dependence, family stressors, suicide attempts (Roustit).

Childhood Exposure to Violence: Cultural Factors



- Several added challenges to immigrant women
- Intergenerational violence (in-law abuse)->more research needed

Therefore...



It is clear that witnessing violence at home has detrimental physical, mental, psychological, and developmental affects on children and adolescents

Screening for IPV in pediatric populations



- Universal screening: a controversial topic
- Self-administered versus verbally administered
- Broad screening question: *How are things at home? How are things with your partner? Do you feel safe at home?*
- Physical abuse screening question: *Has your partner ever kicked, hit, slapped, or otherwise physically hurt you?*
- Several validated screening tools exist-WAST, ISA

If IPV is present at Home



- Important to assess safety:
 - Do you feel safe at home?
 - Where is your partner now?
- Should create a safety plan with the family
 - Collecting a variety of items in preparation of leaving: money, passport, car keys, birth certificates, clothes, medications
 - Asking a trusted neighbor
 - Have a code with family and friends that communicates that intimate partner violence is occurring
 - Remove and disarm weapons

Safety Plan Templates



- <http://promising.futureswithoutviolence.org/files/2012/08/Family-Safety-Plan-Template2.pdf>
- <http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/PublicCommunications/Create%20a%20Teen%20Safety%20Plan.pdf>

Resources for Families



- Resources for families:
<http://nctsn.org/content/resources>
- Can refer to local resources including:
 - Maitri
 - Next Door Solutions
 - YWCA Silicon Valley
 - Between Friends
 - National DV Hotline
 - Family Advocacy Program

Laws in California



- One of the only states where health care providers are mandatory reporters of physical IPV
- One of 22 states where the abuser faces child maltreatment charges if a child witnesses abuse
- **HOWEVER:** concern that is the survivor of abuse who suffers because of these laws

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