



Ch. 3 "Child Physical Abuse"

I. Dr. Johnson

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Topic Establishment

I. [A Dad beats a 16 year old boy](#)

Dr. Johnson

Lecture Information...

As we go through this information today, please keep in mind a number of facts. Children experiencing physical abuse may not know a) what they are experiencing is abuse, or b) what they did to cause the adult to hurt them.

In fact, many children who experience abuse may think that in some way it is their fault, that they did something wrong, that they need to work harder to please the adult s they do not get angry.

The law is clear on one point, i.e., children are the victims, not the cause of the abuse.

I. Definitions & Indicators...

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..."Until 1960...child maltreatment was considered to be a...rare phenomenon that occurred in some people's imagination or in "sick" lower-class families."

...we now know that this perspective is GROSSLY incorrect.

What is Child Physical Abuse?

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...1960s...definition of child physical abuse focused upon "...acts of violence that caused some form or observable harm."

...1988...definition expanded to include an "endangerment standard"... = now defined to include "...the **intentional** use of physical of physical force against a child that results in or has the potential to result in physical injury."

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...leading cause of death among physically abuse children...injury to the head, e.g., shaken baby syndrome

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...legal definitions of child physical abuse...difficulty...objective..."...balance children's rights with parental rights, and how to apply the legal system to such a complex set of human behaviors."

...lack of a uniform definition...each state defines...variations in relation to "...the specificity of the acts included as physically abusive...most states generally allow parents to use reasonable corporal punishment with their children."

What does child physical abuse "look like" in relation to the...[parents vs. the child's behavior?](#)

[ChildHelp - Speak Up Be Safe Child Abuse Prevention Curriculum - Signs & Symptoms of Child Abuse & Neglect](#)

Back to where we began, i.e., the onset of laws to protect children from abuse, [the Case of Mary Ellen Wilson...](#) = as we go through all of the data and facts concerning child physical abuse, please keep Mary Ellen Wilson's story in your mind.

A. Incidence Data & Sources...

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How Common is Child Physical Abuse?

...official estimates...[NIS-4](#), i.e., **known** to child protective agencies, reported to police, sheriffs' departments, schools, day care centers, hospitals, and other mental health and service agencies/organizations = 18% determined to be due to child physical abuse = 29% decline in incidence in the last 12 years.

...this data is consistent with that provided within the [Child Maltreatment 2010: Summary of Key Findings](#) where 17.6% of the children were found to have experienced physical abuse.

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...challenges to the incidence data = lack of "definitional consensus" + reliance upon cases known to/verified by the authorities + inconsistent results in comparison to self-report studies

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...support for incidence data = broad data sources + consistent standards/fund allocations + small sample size for self-report studies + consistent decline in violent crimes in U.S.

A note re. ["incidence" vs. "prevalence" data](#)

...the preceding represents "incidence data," i.e., the occurrence of 'x' in a given period of time.

...this is in contrast to "prevalence" data which is "...a measure of the total number of cases of [x] in a population, rather than the rate of occurrence of new cases."

= NIS-4 data tells us how many cases of 'x' occurred in 'y' years. A very different, and potentially larger number would be found if we looked at the total number of children in 'x' setting, e.g., K-12 school, that experienced 'y.' This point will be illustrated later in relation to children with disabilities experience of child abuse.

1. Characteristics of Victims & Perpetrators...

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...previously it was thought that the risk for physical abuse declined as children grew older...the opposite is in fact the case...this change thought to be due to the fact that more attention is now given to the physical abuse experiences of adolescents

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...incidence of physical abuse...essentially the same for boys and girls...higher in economically and socially distressed/disadvantaged families...higher for "black and Hispanics compared to white children"...higher for children with disabilities (more info. re. this population below)

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Adults Who Physically Abuse Children

...relatively young and inexperienced

...NIS4 data:

- a. biological parents = 72% (mothers more often than fathers)
- b. nonbiological parents = 19% (males more often than females)
- c. other individuals (babysitters, non parent family members, individuals known to family, etc.) = 9%

[A brief look at who, where, and why child physical abuse occurs + how to prevent it from occurring...](#)

a.

II. Risk & Causative Factors...

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Social Ecological Factors

...living with one vs. two parents = isolation + grater likelihood of poverty + less social support/network

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...parents with diminished interactions, unrealistic expectations of and negative perspective regarding their children

[Summary Information concerning risk factors + information concerning risks experienced by children with disabilities](#)

...[The Risk and Prevention of Maltreatment of Children with Disabilities](#) = "Sullivan and Knutson (2000) examined data on all children enrolled in public schools and early intervention programs in Omaha, NE, and found that children with disabilities were 3.4 times more likely to be maltreated than children without disabilities."

A. Impact...

Consequences Associated with Child Physical Abuse

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...can result in physical, behavioral and emotional impairments

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..."bruises in uncommon sites (e.g., buttocks, back, abdomen, and thighs)."

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...head injuries...most dangerous type of child physical abuse..."the most common cause of death in abused children."

...parents bringing children to hospital ER...claiming the child was hurt in an accident...lack of creditability and consistency in the parent's explanations of the cause of the injury...most childhood accidents "typically result in minor injuries (e.g., bruises or cuts.)"

..."Other common physical injuries associated with CPA [child physical abuse] include chest and abdominal injuries, burns, and fractures."

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Cognitive Problems

...poor school achievement and social behavior frequently resulting in special education services
...difficulty to determine the actual cause of the cognitive problems, i.e., injury, environment, combination

Behavioral Problem

...physical aggression...antisocial behaviors

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...post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

[A victim of child physical abuse speaks out...](#)

1. Intervention & Prevention...

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Risk & Protective Factors Associated with Abuse Effects

...child's understanding/perspective of the abuse they are experiencing

...the age of the experience, i.e., the earlier the worse the impact

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...child's personality, intellect, self-esteem and "presence of a supportive parent figure."

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Intervention Strategies for Child Physical Abuse

...educating parents to enhance their understanding and use of nurturing, age appropriate, parenting styles

...developing parent's "anger control techniques"

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Treatment for Children with Physical Abuse Histories

...few children receive treatment

...if available, treatment includes group and individual discussion and/or play therapy

Family Interventions

...in-home services...2009...received by 760,000 children and their families

...focus upon "training parents in child development and parenting skills, as well as in stress reduction techniques and anger management."

[National Exchange Club Foundation](#): Child Abuse Prevention Program - [CAP Centers](#)

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Community Intervention Strategies

...developing parents social networks/support systems
...assisting in securing basic needs
...relative lack of such services in comparison to the need

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Preventing Physical Abuse of Children

...need to focus on prevention vs. simply recognition, reporting, investigation, and response

..."Home visitation programs have been identified by some as one of the most promising avenues for the prevention of child abuse and neglect."

..."...provide education and skills training through parent education programs and parent support groups."

..."focus upon educating parents about child development, improving parenting skills, modifying attitudes associated with harsh parenting, reducing negative emotions such as anger and stress, and providing settings where parents can share their concerns and work on problem solving with one another."

[Working with Families: The Five Protective Factors](#) = these factors are both logical and "doable," if "at risk" families can be identified and served.

An example of how these factors can be used with parents within a home visitation program is demonstrated by the work of [Bromwich...](#)

Preventing child abuse is not "rocket science," although it is just as important...

Required Activities

I. to be completed before 8:00 a.m. on 7/16...

Readings:

1. read chapter five of the course text.

Final Paper Project:

1. *Communicator/Organizer: gather info from assigned Bright Spot for sections "A-C," share resulting information with the team's researcher and writer, assist the team's researcher and writer with their tasks and develop team's communication "Log"

2. Researcher: begin identification and review of informational resources concerning section "C."

3. Writer: Assist team's researcher and began drafting the Team report #1.

*You will be assigned a "Bright Spot" by Dr. Johnson. The assignment will be placed on your Team's wiki page. All communications with Dr. Johnson concerning this project will be carried out on the Team's wiki page via the "discussion" tab.

Note: Team report #1 due by 8:00 a.m. (EST) on 7/18. [See Final Paper Project for details](#)

Suggested Activities

- I. Search YouTube for videos where the victims of child physical abuse use share the impact of the abuse upon their lives. Post the resulting information, insights, and questions on this chapters discussion board.**
- A. Share information from this chapter with a friend. Then post the resulting information, insights, and questions on this chapters discussion board.**