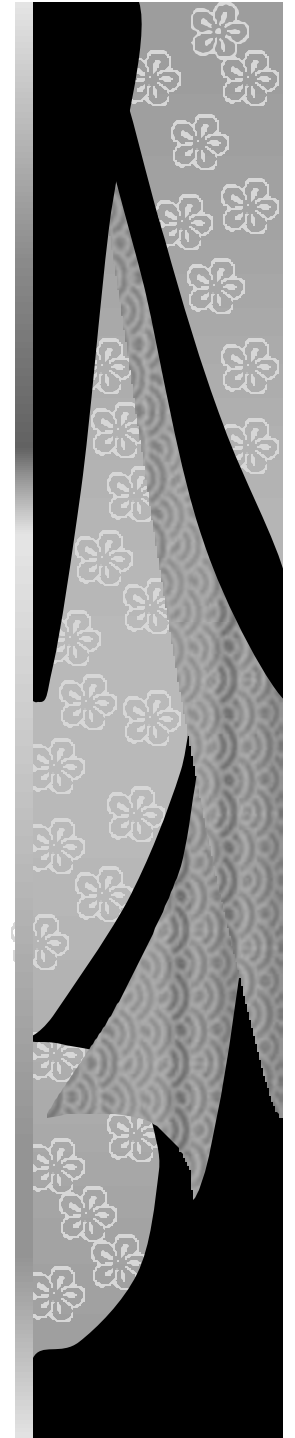


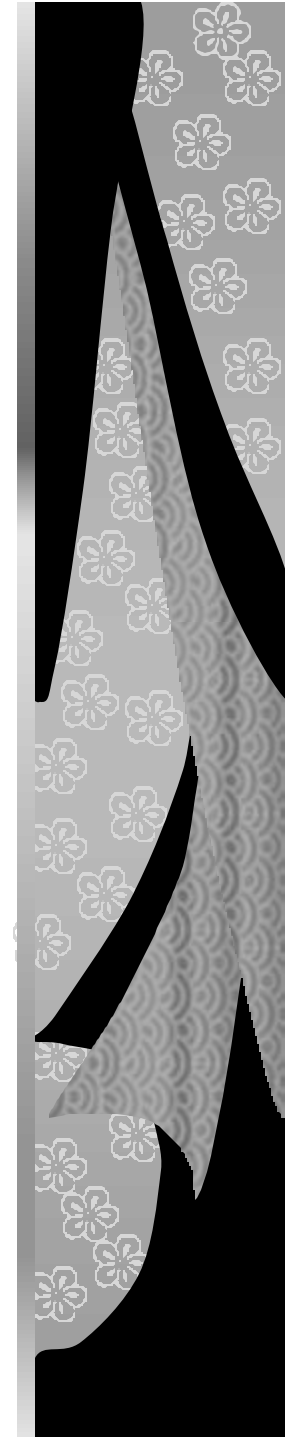
# Chicago Safe Start (CSS) Evaluation Findings

Direct Services to Children  
Exposed to Violence and their  
Caregivers



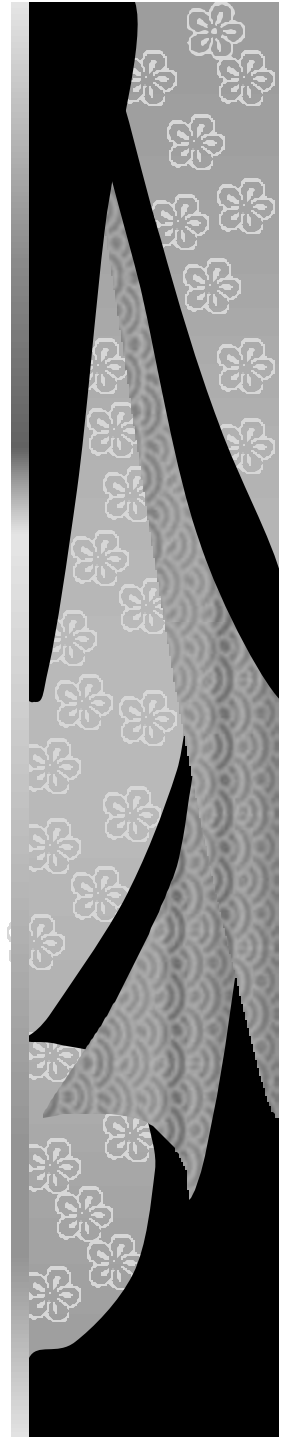
# Intervention Overview

- CSS collaborated with a state-level violence prevention agency to expand evaluation of direct services beyond the three CSS-specific providers.
- Beginning in July 2004, 9 agencies provided direct services to children exposed to violence and their caregivers. Service provision is ongoing.



# Service Provision Overview – Process Outcomes

- Services have thus far been provided to 196 caregivers and 140 children.
- Caregivers attended an average of 8 sessions; children attended an average of 4 sessions.
- Most services were provided in agency offices, although some were provided in homes, schools, and other community locations.



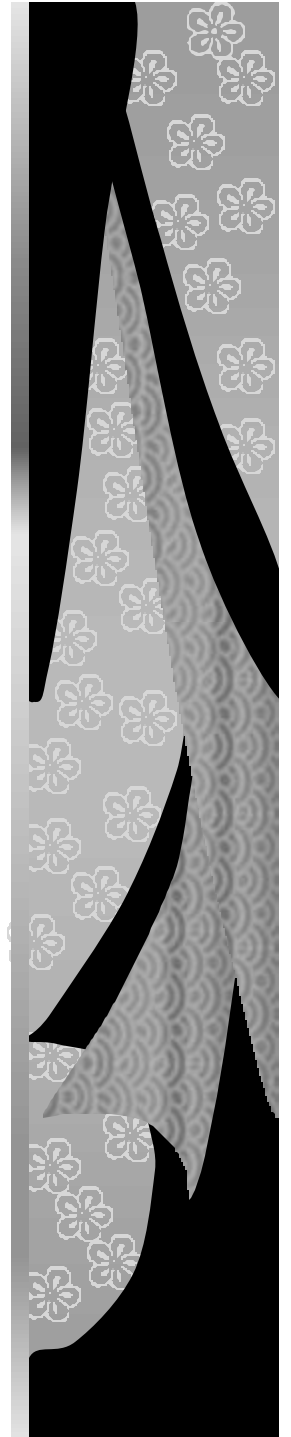
# Service Provision Overview – Intervention Outcome Measures

## ■ Service Providers

- Provider Information Form (e.g., therapist education, licensure and experience)

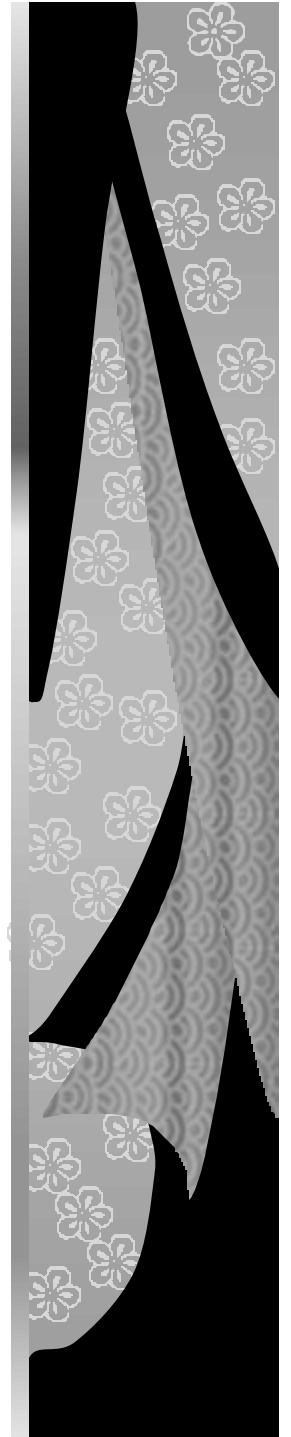
## ■ Caregivers and Children

- Symptoms of Childhood Exposure to Violence Pre-Intervention Screening Checklist
- Completion of Services Forms
  - Location of service provision
  - Description of service type (e.g., case management, individual therapy, education)
  - Description of service content (e.g., identifying feelings, safety planning, child development)
  - Therapist ratings of outcomes



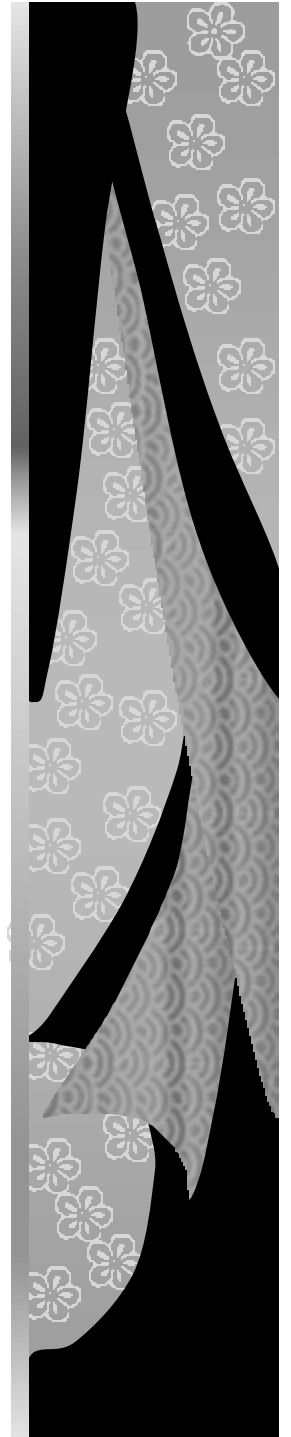
# Characteristics of Children

- Average age = 33 months
- 50% female; 50% male
- 100% African American
- 62% exposed to domestic violence
- 46% exposed to community violence
- 76% experienced repeated exposure



# Most Common Pre-Treatment Symptoms of Exposure

- 41% very protective of family members
- 38% highly aggressive, anxious or distractible
- 28% cries often-very emotional, mood swings



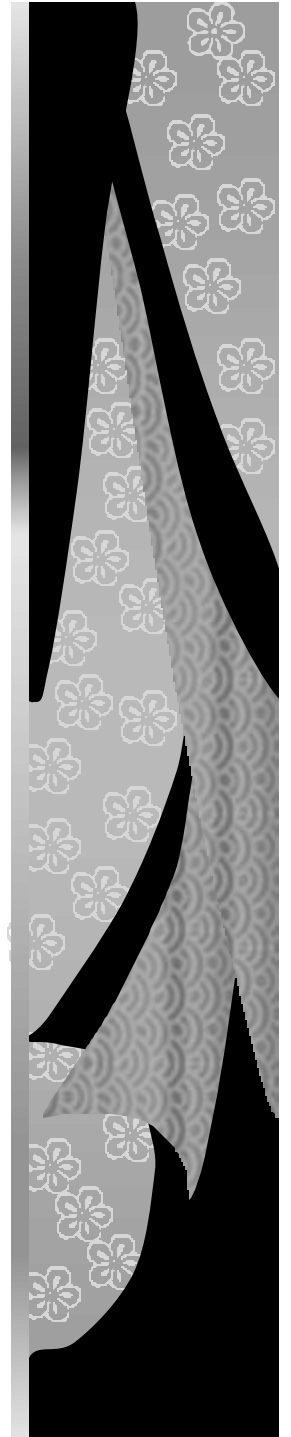
# Type of Services Provided

## ■ Caregiver

- Family support services
- Parenting education
- Individual therapy

## ■ Child

- Family therapy
- Information and referral
- Group therapy



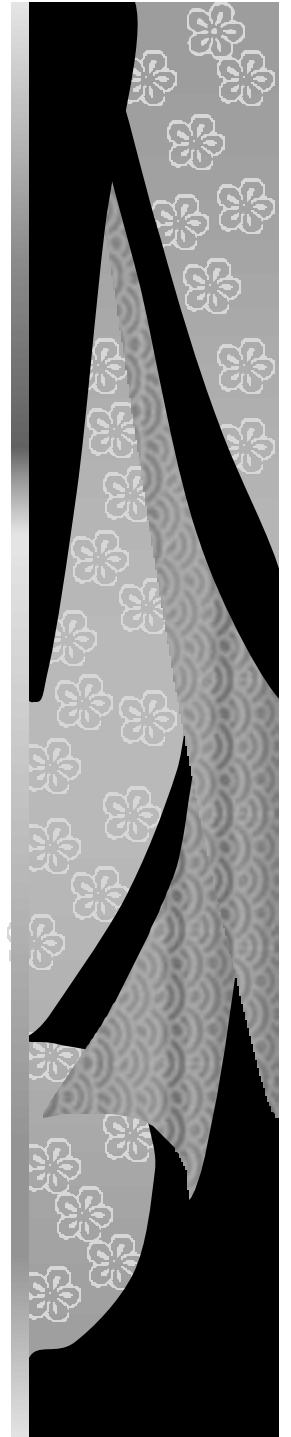
# Content of Services Provided

## ■ Caregiver

- Effects of exposure to violence on children
- Community and domestic violence
- Appropriate discipline
- Child development

## ■ Child

- Identifying/expressing feelings
- Parent-child communication skills
- Anger management skills
- Symptoms reduction





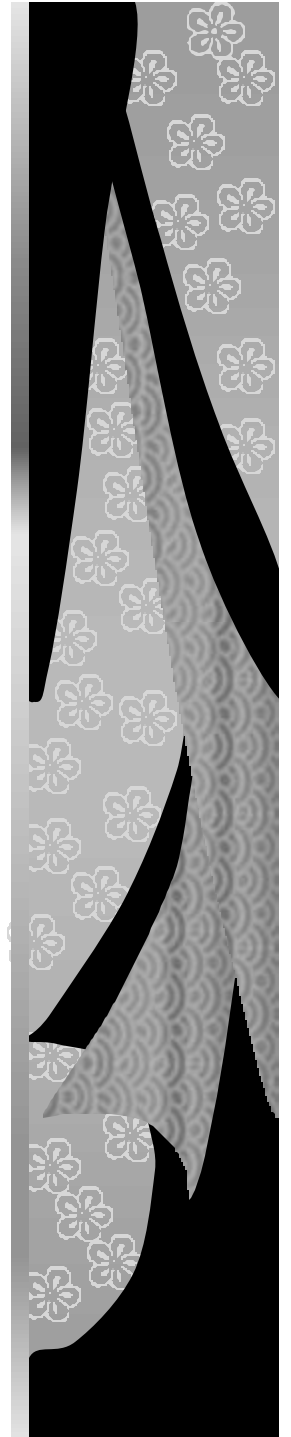
# Caregiver Outcomes

- Overall, caregivers showed small but significant improvements
- Most improved:
  - Knowledge of children's exposure to violence
  - Overall family functioning
  - Understanding of child's developmentally appropriate behavior
  - Ability to take care of their own mental health needs following exposure to violence
  - Parenting skills
- Least improved:
  - Environmental stability
  - Supportive relationships



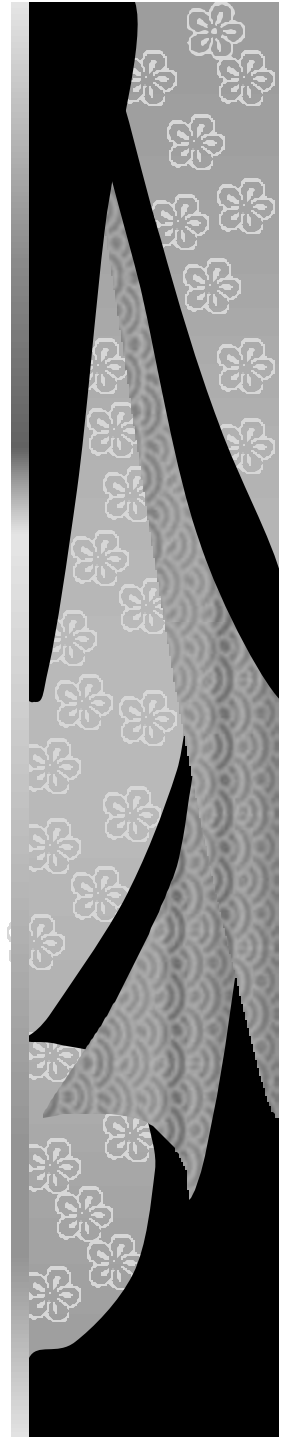
# Child Outcomes

- Overall, children showed small but significant improvements
- Most improved:
  - Ability to identify feelings
  - Overall symptoms
  - Pro-social skills
  - Anger/aggression
- Least Improved:
  - PTSD symptoms
- Exposure to violence after treatment began
  - 66% - no new exposure
  - 24% - at least one incident of new exposure
  - 10% - additional exposure unknown (generally due to premature termination from treatment)



# Predicting Positive Outcomes

- For both caregivers and children, number of sessions is positively correlated with positive outcomes.
- Future analyses will examine associations among outcomes and:
  - Service type
  - Service content
  - Therapist characteristics (e.g., years of experience)



# Implications for Research and Practice

- Collaborative design of outcome measures is critical to ensure consistent usage by diverse service providers.
- Caregivers and children need multiple sessions to realize the benefits of direct services.
- Individualized direct services appear beneficial in reducing exposure, improving family functioning, and reducing behavioral problems among exposed children.
- Future research should determine the most effective mix of service length, type and content.

For more information or a copy of this presentation, contact Paul Schewe at [schewepa@uic.edu](mailto:schewepa@uic.edu).

