

Spokane Safe Start

Spokane County Children's Mental Health Family Violence Screening Pilot

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Purpose of the Study

- **Establish rates of intimate partner violence exposure in families receiving publicly-funded mental health services**
 - **Testing utility of brief screening instrument by providers**
- **Asked caregivers of children under age 13 to volunteer to report on their exposure to intimate partner violence**

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Methodology

- The WHO/CDC definition that includes emotional, physical, and sexual abuse
- Participants included newly enrolled children under age 13 assigned to volunteer therapists from four mental health agencies in Spokane
- Caregivers invited to participate in the survey after all standard treatment assessments were completed
- With 152 participants from pool of 517 eligible families, 20% participation rate of all eligible participants
 - Confidence interval of +/-6.5% at the 95 percent confidence level
 - If asked, caregivers cooperation rate was 80%
 - Most common reason for non-participation was that the family did not continue treatment long enough to be invited into the study

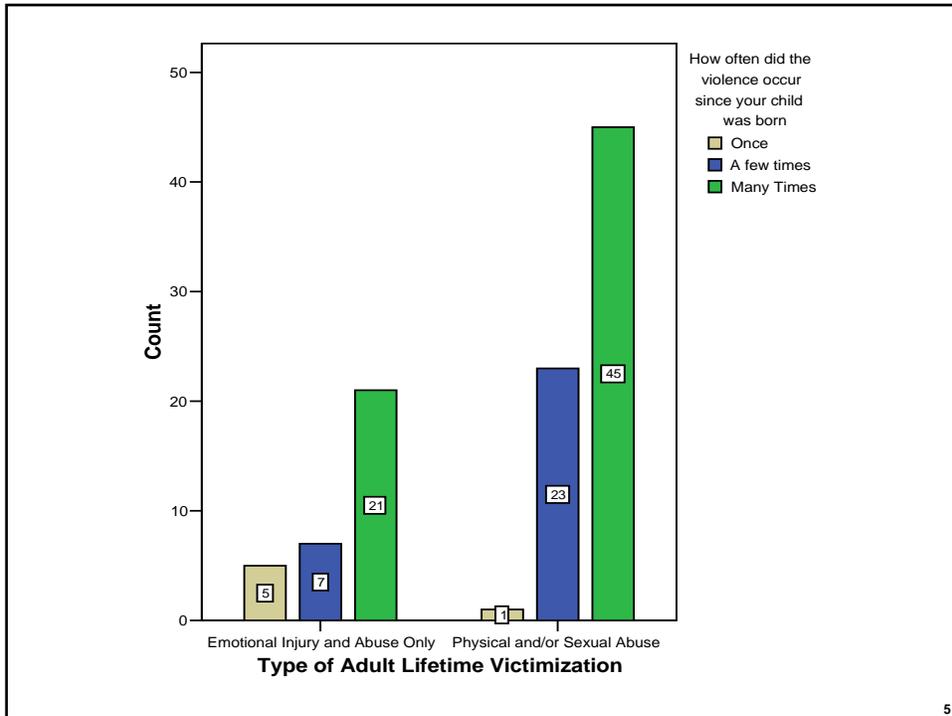
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Results – Victimization Since Birth of Child

Two-thirds (67%) of caregivers report they have been an IPV victim since their child was born

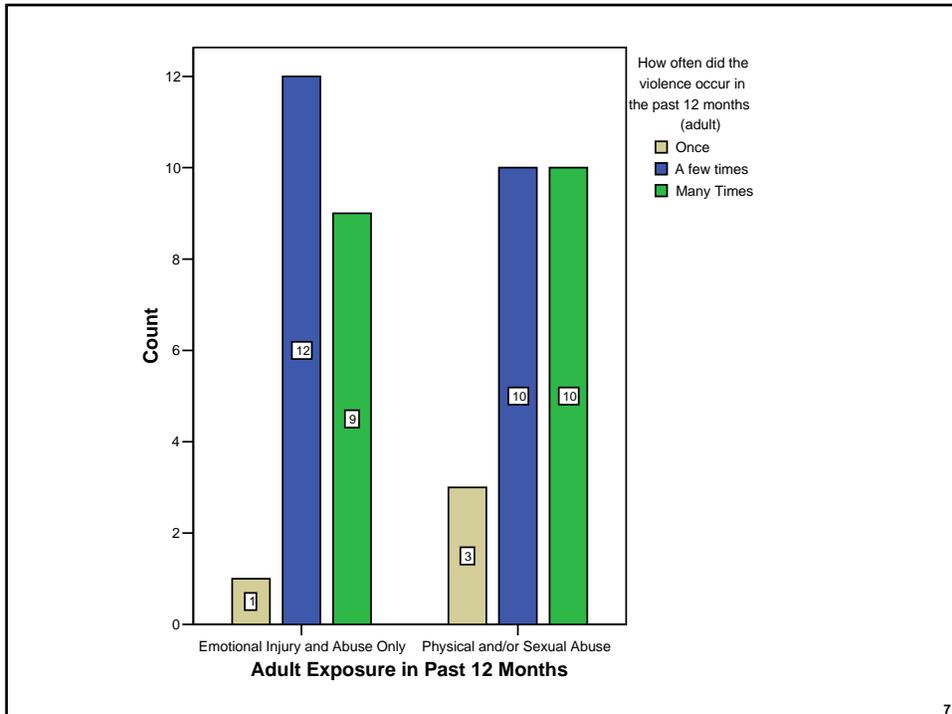
Adult	Responding	%	Frequency	Once	A	Many
Victimization	Yes N=		of Victimization		Few Times	Times
DV Victim Since Child Was Born	102	67%	Count	6	30	66
			Percent Among Victims	6%	29%	65%
DV Victim Past 12 Months	45	30%	Count	4	22	19
Total	152		Percent Among Victims	9%	49%	42%

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Adult Victimization Past 12 months

- **Caregivers' report of victimization in the past 12 months demonstrates a comparable pattern of frequency and severity**
 - 13% (20 of 152) of the caregivers reported they were repeatedly assaulted in the past 12 months
 - 14% (21 of 152) of caregivers reported they were repeatedly exposed to emotional abuse and threats of physical violence
 - 12% of caregivers reported that they were exposed to other types of violence in the past 12 months
 - community violence, being a robbery or non-IPV violent crime victim, and violence by children directed at the caregiver



Children's Exposure

- In 70% of the 152 study families, caregivers reported their children had been in the a home where DV occurred
- In 64% of the study's 152 families, the child enrolled for mental health services was a witness to the domestic violence IPV
- In families reporting adult exposure to domestic violence IPV victimization since their children were born, 92% of caregivers reported their children lived in homes where the violence occurred and 85% reported their children were witnesses to the domestic violence

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Children's Lifetime Exposure

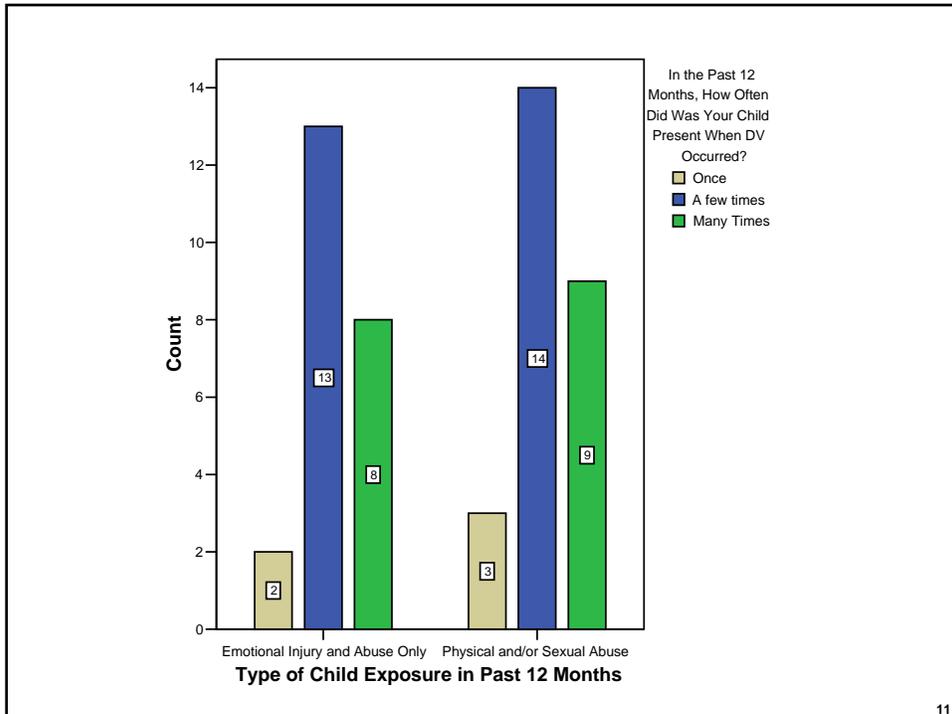
- **60% of children exposed to violence (40% of all 152 children in the study) were repeatedly exposed to physical and/or sexual assault since birth**
- **33% of violence exposed children (22% of the total sample of 152 children) were repeatedly exposed to emotional abuse and threats in the absence of reported assault on the caregiver**
- **Only 7% of children (of those exposed to violence) exposed) were exposed once by caregiver report**

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Children's Exposure – 12 months

- **Among violence exposed children, 47% were repeatedly exposed to physical and/or sexual assault**
 - **15% of the 152 children in the study**
- **An additional 14% of the total sample of 152 children were exposed to repeated emotional abuse and threats in the past 12 months**
- **Combined 29% of children receiving mental health services were exposed to repeated instances of domestic violence in the past 12 months**
- **21% of the total study sample of children were exposed to other forms of violence including witnessing community violence (shootings, non-IPV assaults), sexual abuse, bullying, and physical assaults by peers and non-related caregivers**

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Conclusions

- **Pervasive IPV victimization and witnessing in children receiving publicly funded mental health services**
- **Few therapists are trained in assessment or treatment of IPV as part of the needs of children and families**
- **Findings demonstrate the need for universal screening of family violence, systematic assessment, adoptions of models for case conceptualization, and training in treatment methods**

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