

6-2020

EDUCATORS' BARRIERS TO REPORTING CHILD MALTREATMENT

Miriam Figueroa

California State University - San Bernardino

Marialsela Maldonado

California State University - San Bernardino

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd>



Part of the [Social Work Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Figueroa, Miriam and Maldonado, Marialsela, "EDUCATORS' BARRIERS TO REPORTING CHILD MALTREATMENT" (2020). *Electronic Theses, Projects, and Dissertations*. 991.
<https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd/991>

This Project is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Graduate Studies at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses, Projects, and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.

EDUCATORS' BARRIERS TO REPORTING
CHILD MALTREATMENT

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Social Work

by
Miriam Figueroa
Marialsela Maldonado

June 2020

EDUCATORS' BARRIERS TO REPORTING
CHILD MALTREATMENT

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

by
Miriam Figueroa
Marialsela Maldonado

June 2020

Approved by:

Dr. Janet Chang, Faculty Supervisor, Social Work
Dr. Armando Barragán, M.S.W. Research Coordinator

© 2020 Miriam Figueroa and Marialsela Maldonado

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify educators' perceptions of barriers to reporting child maltreatment. This study used a survey design with self-administered questionnaires. Sixty five teachers from a large southern California school district participated in the study. Quantitative and demographic data was collected using LinkedIn and Facebook to recruit study participants. The questionnaires gathered information about their knowledge, training, experience, and professional responsibility regarding reporting suspected maltreatment.

This study found that most educators received training in reporting requirements and were able to spot signs of maltreatment. However, the study also revealed that some participants had a low comfort level and feelings of inadequacy with respect to reporting child abuse and neglect incidents to child welfare services. The findings of this study suggest that school districts and administrators implement a periodic review of reporting expectations, provision of refresher trainings, and use of screening and decision-making tools in order to effectively decrease barriers to reporting. The study also recommends an enhanced collaboration between experienced educators and those with less tenure to help mitigate the underreporting and fulfill their legal mandates. Furthermore, it is hoped that increased training in the area of mandated reporting as well as firm expectations that reports are made will produce greater outcomes for child welfare and build trust between educators and child welfare agencies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my family and friends for supporting me all through my MSW journey. Your love and encouragement is what kept me going and I could not have made it this far without you all. Thank you to all the faculty and staff at California State University, San Bernardino, School of Social Work for your commitment and guidance. Each of you has inspired and motivated me, and contributed to my success. Thank you to my research partner, Marialsela and to all the participants of this study who took time to share their perspectives with us.

Miriam Figueroa

My sincere appreciation goes to Dr. Chang for all your support. Thank you for taking your time to read our work, and your valuable feedback. I would like to thank all of my professors at California State University, San Bernardino School of Social Work, especially professor, Alicia Harris for her guidance, advice and for motivating me to achieve my goal on completing my education. Thank you to all the teachers who took the time to help my partner and I answer our survey to help us in our research project. Without your help, we would not had made this possible. Thank you to my research partner, Miriam, my colleagues Valarie, and Angelica for your unconditional support. When I needed the guidance and motivation, you never left me alone, as you always assisted me with everything that I needed help with. Lastly, thank you to my family and friends for your unconditional support, and for trusting me when I had doubted myself.

Marialsela Maldonado

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this project to those who have experienced child abuse and neglect, and to all professionals who strive to protect the vulnerable.

Miriam Figueroa

I would like to dedicate this work to God Almighty without whom I would not have survived my journey. Thank you, Lord, for not leaving me alone or giving up on me. I would like to dedicate this to all of the children who deserve to grow up in a healthier environment. I would also like to dedicate this to my father, who is in heaven. Also, to my family, especially to my husband, Raul who has been a constant support source and for his abundant love and encouragement during this challenging time that I went through my MSW program. Your motivation and encouragement have given me the strength to continue my journey. To my children, Yesenia, Richie, Adrian, Luz, Feliciano, Adam, Elias, baby girl, my mother, Concepcion and my godson, Alberto who has encouraged me and also inspired me during every step of the way to pursue my dream, so that I accomplish my goal. Love you all!

Marialsela Maldonado

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
Problem Formulation.....	1
Purpose of the Study	2
Significance of the Project for Social Work Practice	3
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	6
Introduction	6
Mandated Reporting Needs	6
Studies Focusing on Mandated Reporting.....	12
Theories Guiding Conceptualization	12
Summary	14
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS	15
Introduction	15
Study Design	15
Sampling.....	16
Data Collection and Instruments.....	17
Procedures	18
Protection of Human Subjects	19
Data Analysis.....	19
Summary	20

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS.....	21
Introduction	21
Results.....	21
Summary	28
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION	30
Introduction	30
Discussion	30
Limitations.....	32
Recommendations for Social Work Practice, Policy, and Research	33
Conclusion	34
APPENDIX A: SURVEY DESIGN QUESTIONNAIRE	36
APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT	40
APPENDIX C: INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL	42
REFERENCES	44
ASSIGNED REPOSIBILITIES.....	47

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Demographics of the Participants.....	22
Table 2. Training.....	24
Table 3. Knowledge.....	26

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Problem Formulation

In the United States, mandated reporting laws and policies regarding child abuse and maltreatment differ from state to state, and by profession. In the State of California, a mandated reporter is defined as an individual having regular contact with vulnerable children or adults, and through his or her profession or practice, is legally required to report any observed or suspected physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, exploitation, and neglect (California Department of Education, 2017). Professionals such as school employees, emergency personnel, religious organization leaders, law enforcement officials, social services employees, and many others are legally bound by law to report all known or suspected maltreatment (United States, Department of Human Health and Services, 2017). These mandated reporters made approximately 63.4 percent of child abuse calls to a child welfare agency's reporting hotline nationwide in 2015 (USDHHS, 2017). Research has demonstrated instances in which mandated reporters have not reported child abuse, which has led to significant barriers for agencies and social workers who provide interventions and link clients in need of services to resource systems (Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance, 2018). Lack of knowledge, minimal experience, and lack of training have contributed to the non-reporting of maltreatment by professionals (PFSA, 2018).

A professional who has received training and is knowledgeable in their field is more likely to report abuse, thereby decreasing the risks and harm to a child than those who fail to report. This has ramifications for policy as it touches on the importance of reporting maltreatment of a child as quickly as possible (CDE, 2017). Professionals that have been non-compliant in fulfilling their legal mandate risk impacting children's well-being. Additionally, almost every state imposes a penalty, usually a fine or incarceration, on professionals that failed to address suspicious maltreatment. For example, a school district in San Bernardino County was accused of delays in reporting allegations of sexual misconduct by a female teacher (Winton, 2016). The teacher and the male student were in a year long relationship which produced a child. The family sued, alleging the district ignored warning signs of sexual abuse. The district paid the former student six million dollars (Winton, 2016). The abuse was not reported to authorities or a child welfare agency adequately, compromising the child's health and safety. The untimely reporting in this situation may have occurred as a result of mandated reporters not being aware of the situation at the time, lacking in awareness of abuse indicators, misunderstanding laws appropriate to reporting practices, having little experience or training, or fearing negative impacts resulting from the report.

Purpose of the Study

The goal of the research was to ascertain the reasons why mandated reporters, specifically educators, fail to report maltreatment of children to a

Children and Family Services (CFS) or law enforcement agency in San Bernardino County. Reporting maltreatment of a child is the legal obligation of a mandated reporter. Failure to report maltreatment has the potential to put vulnerable children at risk of further harm by the alleged perpetrator or perpetrators, and prevents social workers from providing services and interventions to mitigate risk. In order to address this problem, research needed to be conducted to identify the specific gaps in knowledge or actions that have prevented these professionals from reporting abuse and neglect in a timely manner, or not at all. Once educators understand the impact their failure to report maltreatment could have on children and families, and once they gain knowledge and receive proper training in mandated reporting practices, they will be more likely to place a report to CFS or law enforcement, thereby decreasing the risks and harm to a child.

The research analysis used for this study is a quantitative design. The study applied a self-administered survey questionnaire design. The study outline was chosen as the research focus was on gathering information from a single cluster of participants at the same time, and due to the research's restricted time limit.

Significance of the Project for Social Work Practice

This study was necessary to understand and prevent instances in which mandated reporters failed to report maltreatment, creating significant barriers for

agencies including health and social services who provide interventions, and services to clients in need (PFSA, 2018). Additionally, there are implications for policies and regulations as the study emphasizes the importance for professionals to report child maltreatment in a timely manner, congruent with state laws.

The findings of this study have major implications for mandated reporters and social work practice on a micro and macro level. At a micro level, these findings identified gaps in the professional's knowledge of their mandated reporting roles and responsibilities, and for what social workers should be advocating to ensure children's needs are met to reduce risks of harm to them. These findings benefit agencies on a macro level, as they identify deficiencies in training and organizational expectations for mandated reporters, and whether social workers are upholding the National Association of Social Work (NASW) ethical standards. Although there are established policies, the true extent of failing to report abuse is immensely underestimated. If all professionals in a mandated reporter capacity understand their reporting obligations, as well as the consequences of non-reporting abuse, and if proper training is delivered, they are more likely to comply with their legal mandates.

Phase I (exploring, assessing, and planning) of the generalist intervention process was informed by this research. There is little to no information found on this problem, and the findings of this study provide reason as to why professionals fail to report maltreatment. This is relevant as social workers will be

able to deliver necessary services to children and families and ensure their well-being in child welfare practice. The research question this study answered is:
What are the barriers to professionals reporting child maltreatment?

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter examines the literature relevant to the subject of mandated reporting needs and failure to report child maltreatment. The subsections include the mandated reporting needs, and studies focusing on mandated reporting. The final subsection addresses the Ecosystems Theory, also known as the Person-in-Environment Theory, which has guided past research and is relevant to this study.

Mandated Reporting Needs

Many professionals work in direct contact with children on a daily basis. Mandated reporters made 63.4 percent of child abuse calls to a child protection agency's reporting hotline nationwide in 2015 (USDHHS, 2017). In the United States, a referral of child maltreatment is reported every ten seconds, and over four children perish daily due to maltreatment (70 percent were under age four). Children under age one had the highest ratio of victimization at 29.1 per 1,000 (USDHHS, 2017). Thirty percent of maltreated children will later abuse their own children, and 25 percent will possibly experience teen pregnancy (USDHHS, 2017). The estimated annual nationwide cost of child maltreatment in the U.S. in 2012 was over \$80 billion (USDHHS, 2017). Consequently, this has led to federal and state laws requiring professionals to report to a child welfare agency or

authorities any observed or suspicious child maltreatment. Many factors impact the underreporting of child maltreatment by professionals.

Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect

Research has shown that professionals such as teachers are in the best position to determine child maltreatment, as they constantly interact with children on a daily basis (Kesner & Robinson, 2002). The Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect determined that schools report more incidents of child abuse and neglect than any other agency, yet 84 percent of cases go unreported (Kesner & Robinson, 2002). This indicates that an estimate of about three percent of teachers reported knowing of their school's policies for reporting maltreatment (Alvarez, Kenny, Dohohue & Carpin, 2004). Some factors contributing to the underreporting, by teachers, of abuse and neglect include poor training and feelings of inadequacy in recognizing and handling maltreatment cases. Another factor that contributes to underreporting is that mandated reporters fail to report child maltreatment because they believe that reports do more harm than good and that they can handle the situation better than social services (Delaronde, King, Bendel & Reece, 2000). Teachers can affect the lives of children by reporting child maltreatment timely as they are often the first point of contact with the child. This could minimize the abuse happening to the child. Teachers might underreport due to feeling that by reporting, it may harm the relationship between the teacher and the child or family (Goebble, Nichols, Walsh, & Devrioes, 2008). Studies found that educators may know their

obligation to report, but not understand the proper procedure for reporting (Kesner & Robinson, 2002). Additionally, it was found that teachers reported their suspicions directly to their administrator instead of a CPS agency (Kesner & Robinson, 2002). Recognizing what constitutes abuse and being aware of the different types of abuse signs and indicators is the first step in overcoming these deficits.

Maltreatment Types

There are different types of child maltreatment: neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse. The most prevalent type of maltreatment is neglect. Neglect can consist of failure to provide food, shelter, water, clothes, leaving child unsupervised or exposing child to unsafe/unsanitary environments (Childhelp, 2017). Another form of maltreatment is emotional abuse which consists of isolating, corrupting, terrorizing, shaming, humiliating, rejecting or ignoring the child (Childhelp, 2017). Examples of physical abuse that children encounter include bruises, burns, broken bones, brain damage, cuts, scratches, and internal injuries (Childhelp, 2017). Sexual Abuse can consist of fondling, oral sex, penetration, child prostitution or pornography, and inappropriate sexual talk with a child (Childhelp, 2017).

Effects of Maltreatment on a Child

Maltreatment has significant and lasting effects on children. Findings have revealed that neglect and abuse contribute to risk factors associated with the minor's age and developmental stage when maltreatment occurred, the type of

abuse (emotional abuse, sexual abuse, etc.), the incidence, persistence and cruelty of abuse, and the relationship between victim and perpetrator (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2013). Children who have been maltreated may not be able to show their emotions as they tend to have a hard time understanding and expressing how they feel. The behaviors that they may exhibit include social delay as well as a lack of empathy (Young, & Widom, 2014). The immediate effects of maltreatment may be relatively minor or temporary in some cases, but may have long-term consequences such as psychological, physical health, behavioral, and societal (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2013). According to Henry, Fulco, and Merrick (2018), maltreatment of a child can hinder active development during childhood and early adulthood and places a victim in danger of financial struggles in subsequent years.

Confidentiality, Immunity, and Laws

When a referral for child maltreatment has been initiated, mandated reporters are obligated to provide their name which is kept confidential (CDE, 2017). Professionals have immunity from state and civil liability (CDE, 2017). The concern for confidential information being provided to the family being investigated for the maltreatment, may be another reason why mandated reporters fail to initiate a referral.

Reporting child abuse and neglect has created problems for some professionals, such as mental health service providers. Professional ethics, privacy concerns, and responsibility for their client's well-being is seen as

conflicting with legal mandates (Crenshaw, Bartell, & Lichtenberg, 1994). This has resulted in mental health professionals struggling to reconcile this dilemma, causing confusion and frustration. Procedures for reporting child abuse while maintaining confidentiality is of great concern for professionals. Uncertain of their protection, mandated reporters find themselves pondering whether to risk personal security to address suspicious cases of abuse and neglect (Feng, Chen, Fetzer, Feng & Lin, 2012). There is literature proposing revisions to mandatory reporting laws by mental health providers (Crenshaw, Bartell, & Lichtenberg, 1994). Research indicates there is misunderstanding of laws pertinent to child abuse reporting practices by professionals (Crenshaw, Bartell, & Lichtenberg, 1994). A study conducted in states with universal mandated reporting indicated that respondents were unaware of state laws. Furthermore, respondents believed that a report could be made anonymously and their identity would be kept confidential. Fifty percent of respondents were unaware they could be charged with a misdemeanor for failing to report maltreatment (Walsh & Jones, 2016). Mandated reporting laws have existed for decades, however, professionals question whether or not reporting child maltreatment achieves better outcomes for the child, or further places the child at risks of abuse (Isaacs, Britton, Kilham, Bag, & Marks, 2018). According to Isaacs et al. (2018), they reported on two cases with children that had maternal infections (Tuberculosis and Human Immunodeficiency Virus) where the mothers neglected to follow up with medical appointments raising concerns for possible significant harm to the

children. Some professionals argued that reporting meant the mothers should be reported to a child welfare agency. Other professionals argued that reporting was not necessary if the mothers followed through with the appointments, and argued a report could compromise confidentiality or outcome of the situation. Mandated reporters argue for an alternative approach on the timing of reporting and collaboration with child welfare agencies (Isaacs et al., 2018).

Need for Training or Support

In every state in America, certain mandated reporters have a legal responsibility to report child maltreatment. Research has indicated that these professionals are unaware of indicators to look for or may not know how to report in some instances (Kenny, 2007). A means for improving reporting of maltreatment is to provide appropriate professionals such as teachers, police, medical staff, and social workers, with training and support. Studies have shown that training mandated reporters in child maltreatment was effective in increasing knowledge and information about signs and indicators and reporting procedures and policies (Kenny, 2007). As of January 2015, Assembly Bill 1432 was passed requiring all school employees receive training on how to identify and report child abuse and neglect (CDE, 2017).

Studies Focusing on Mandated Reporting

There is limited research that is targeted directly on reasons why professionals fail to report child abuse and neglect. Therefore, to gain an understanding, this study focused on professionals, who through their profession or practice, are most often in constant contact with vulnerable minors and are legally obligated to report abuse and maltreatment.

The study was needed as research has demonstrated instances in which mandated reporters fail to report abuse and maltreatment, creating significant barriers for agencies, including health and social services, who provide interventions, and services to clients in need (PFSA, 2018). Additionally, there are implications for policies and regulations as the study emphasized the importance for professionals to report abuse and neglect in a timely manner, congruent with state laws. Almost every state imposes a penalty, usually a fine, incarceration or both, on professionals who decline to comply with set requirements.

Theories Guiding Conceptualization

The framework used to analyze the ideas in this research was the Ecosystems Theory.

The Ecosystems Theory, also known as Person-in-Environment Theory, is a model that specializes in human behavior, in which everything is seen as relevant and the knowledge of development is determined by context, culture and history (Darlin, 2007). One main point of the Ecosystems Theory is to improve

how individuals interact with each other in their environment and daily lives. The Ecosystems Theory is illustrated by using three socially organized systems which provide a framework for understanding human development. The systems are micro, mezzo, and macro system. The first and most important level is micro system, in which children form the closest relationship to the person with whom they are having the most direct contact. Micro system includes individuals with biological, psychological and social economic interactions. The more support and affection a child gets, the better the child will develop. For example, if the child sees that parents have a good relationship with each other, a more positive outcome will be shown between child and parents. The mezzo system is an intermediate size system. In this system, group support networks and extended families are included. In the mezzo system, if the child has conflicts or encounters negative relationships within the family or their surroundings, this will interfere with the child's development with respect to interpersonal relationships in small groups. Macro system focuses on large systems including communities and organizations such as government, education, justice, economic and religion. These institutions may affect a child in a negative or positive way (Friedman & Neuman, 2000).

The Ecosystems Theory helps to frame the problem to a variety of settings because of the constant interactions that individuals have with different groups of people and the community in their daily lives. No system or individual acts alone, because they are always depending on and being influenced by other systems.

Every system is part of another system, therefore, it is hard to view one system without taking into account the other, and how changes impact all levels of a child's development. All systems interact with each other dynamically and constantly (Thyer, Dulmus, & Sowers, 2012).

Summary

The study explored why professionals fail to report suspicions of maltreatment of children despite legal mandates in the educational system. Mandatory reporting laws require professionals, having regular contact with children through their profession or practice, to report any suspected or observed child maltreatment. Nonetheless, there are many educators and other professionals who do not fulfill their legal obligation of reporting, or do not understand the process of reporting or adhere to the policies and practices set by their agency in regards to reporting maltreatment. There are factors and barriers contributing to the under-reporting of child maltreatment which have been identified in the literature. Being informed and knowledgeable about what constitutes abuse and neglect, and receiving proper training can help professionals in an educational setting understand their legal obligations with respect to reporting maltreatment. This study adds the teacher's perspective to the literature, and seeks improvement of procedures and policies pertaining to reporting mandates.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Introduction

This study sought to explain the barriers educators encounter in reporting child maltreatment, and identified mechanisms to overcome the barriers and contribute to generalized knowledge of mandated reporting. This chapter includes the specifics of how this study was executed. The sections discussed are study design, sampling, data collection and instruments, procedures, protection of human subjects, and data analysis.

Study Design

The purpose of this study was to identify and describe barriers to reporting child maltreatment among the educators' population in San Bernardino County, and to examine approaches for addressing them. This study was an exploratory research project, due to the limited data that targets the problem from the viewpoint of educators. Since the educators' perceptions may unveil traits of the problem not described in other data, this was a quantitative study, and utilized surveys with open-ended questions as the tool for gathering data from the participants.

An important factor in adopting an exploratory, quantitative approach with surveys is that no initial hypothesis is required, and it is more detailed and knowledge based. Since the educators' perspectives have not often been

included in past data, this allowed the participants to determine new barriers, as well as contribute new information, and an understanding of the impediments which have been identified by other researchers in previous studies. The surveys granted participants an avenue to reveal emerging themes and patterns in their responses, and build on their knowledge by providing detailed descriptions of mandated reporting roles and responsibilities.

Limitations of using surveys are that by nature, you might receive broad responses from participants, or you might get a different pool than originally intended which may offer different perceptions, they are time consuming, and are less certain. Additionally, it should be considered that quantitative data should not be used in determining causality. The conclusions of this research were not designed to describe any unusual relationships amongst the patterns that were displayed and the nature of reporting.

Sampling

This study employed a snowball sampling of participants serving children in an educational setting in the San Bernardino County areas. A total of 64 subjects participated in the survey design questionnaire. Data was collected between May and October 2019 from participants of school districts in San Bernardino County. No link or identification of individuals' name or school was collected. Agency approval was not necessary as surveys were conducted through a personal network to solicit participants.

Data Collection and Instruments

Quantitative data was collected using personal networking websites such as LinkedIn and Facebook to recruit participants for the study that took place during the period of May to October, 2019. This study was a descriptive study, and the independent variable was type of profession (e.g., teachers), and was measured as self-identification. The dependent variable was mandated reporting knowledge and training on child maltreatment and was measured using a five point Likert Scale and the level of measurement was interval. Participants were provided with a survey design questionnaire introducing the specifics and description of the study and its goal. Demographic data was collected as part the survey design (see Appendix A). This data consisted of age, gender, ethnicity identification, level of education achieved, and length of time in the teaching profession.

The researcher conducted the survey using procedures as outlined in the survey instructions in Appendix A. The survey design is a tool developed exclusively for this research, with the goal of obtaining the experiences and unique skills of educators with regard to reporting child maltreatment as required by law. Educators and social workers are the best targets from which to gather information to derive results, since they are likely to have observed suspected child abuse or neglect. By using a descriptive study, the gathered data was used to find the number or percentages of professionals who do not report suspicious child maltreatment, as well as the reason it is not reported.

The survey design breaks down barriers to reporting child maltreatment into two domains. The domains are individual training and knowledge of educators. Each section of the survey contains a list of questions that fall under the two domains. Participants were asked to rate their experiences with any reporting barriers, and to explain other barriers that may be included in that domain. New patterns that were discovered were cited under training or knowledge domains.

Procedures

Participants were recruited via networking websites such as LinkedIn and Facebook. Potential participants were instructed on the purpose and goals of the study, as well as the importance of their participation. An online survey questionnaire was created to provide the questions that the participants answered. The informed consent form was attached to the survey questionnaire. Participants signed the informed consent forms online by clicking on “I agree,” before proceeding to answer the survey questionnaire. Access to the survey questionnaire was provided via email to teachers who live within southern California.

Data collection took place through the different networking websites. The survey questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice questions to be answered by the participants. The participants had from May to October 2019 to complete the survey. A confidentiality agreement was attached to the survey questionnaire explaining the importance of confidentiality as well as letting the participants

know that their information would not be shared with other parties. The participation of answering the survey questionnaire was voluntary, and no incentives for its completion were offered. Participants that completed the survey were thanked for their cooperation via the different networking websites.

Protection of Human Subjects

Disclosure of the participants' identity was kept completely confidential from other participants. Survey questionnaire answers were kept confidential from other participants. The researcher secured surveys in a locked briefcase to keep the information as secure as possible. The participants were not required to write their names on the survey. One of the requirements from the researchers was to obtain the participants' consent by giving them the informed consent form (see Appendix B) via the different networking websites, prior to the survey. All the documentation and survey questionnaires that were completed by the participants were kept secure in a briefcase for a total of six months. After that time frame, the information was shredded to prevent sensitive details from being divulged.

Data Analysis

This study was conducted using a survey design to find out if professional mandated reporters, who observed or suspect child abuse and maltreatment, are not reporting as required by law. To best determine how to organize the data, the procedure that the researcher used is quantitative data analysis to identify the

level of scale of measurement as nominal, ordinal, interval or ratio. Descriptive study data was gathered to find the percentage of teachers who do not report suspected child abuse and maltreatment, as well as the reason it is not reported.

The independent variable was type of profession (e.g., teachers), and the dependent variable was mandated reporting knowledge and training on child abuse and maltreatment.

Summary

This study gathered information from teacher participants via a survey design to inquire about their knowledge, level of training, experience, and professional responsibility with respect to reporting suspected maltreatment as well as why child maltreatment is not reported accordingly. A quantitative statistical method was used to evaluate the data of this research.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the data that were collected through a survey questionnaire. This section provides a data analysis of the participants' demographics, and perspectives on training and knowledge relevant to the subject of mandated reporting needs and/or failure to report child maltreatment.

Results

There were a total of 64 participants in the study. Nearly 83% were female, 16% were male, and 2% declined to state gender. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 years to 66 years with an average age of 45 years (SD = 4.5). Nearly 3% reported they were between the ages of 18 to 24 years, 23% were between the ages of 25 and 35 years, 22% were between the ages of 35 and 45, 33% were between the ages of 46 and 55, 17% were between the ages of 56 and 65, and 2% were 66 years or above. Over 39% of the participants were Anglo American, 37% were Latino/Hispanic, 8% were African American, 5% were Asian/Pacific Islander, and 11% were of other ethnicities. Over 70% completed graduate or professional school, 22% graduated from college, 5% completed some college, and 3% completed high school. Nearly 35% of educators have 16 or more years of teaching experience, 27% have 2 to 5 years

of experience, 14% have 11 to 15 years of experience, 12% have 6 to 10 years of experience, and 11% have one or fewer years of experience (See Table 1).

Table 1. Demographics of the Participants

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	53	82.8
Male	10	15.6
Declines to state or other	1	1.6
Age		
24 or under	2	3.1
25 – 35	15	23.4
35 – 45	14	21.9
46 – 55	21	32.8
56 – 65	11	17.2
66 or above	1	1.6
Ethnicity		
African American	5	7.9
Anglo American	25	39.7
Asian/Pacific Islander	3	4.8
Latino/Hispanic	23	36.5
Other	7	11.1
Education		
High school graduate	2	3.1
Some college	3	4.7
College graduate	14	21.9
Graduate or professional school	45	70.3
Years of Teaching		
1 or less	7	11.1
2 – 5	17	27.0
6 – 10	8	12.7
11 – 15	9	14.3
16 or more	22	34.9

In regards to the statement, "My school provided training on mandated reporting of child abuse and neglect," 92% "agree" or "strongly agree" with it, while the remaining 6% "disagree" or "strongly disagree" with it, and 2% were "undecided." For the statement, "I am aware of required timeframes for making a suspected child abuse report," 81% of the participants "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement, while 6% "disagree" or "strongly disagree," with it, and 13% were "undecided." Nearly 53% of participants "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement, "I received training in regards to reporting child maltreatment through college," while 38% "disagree" or "strongly disagree" with it, and 9% were "undecided." Approximately 85% "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement, "I received training on reporting child abuse and neglect as a professional," while 9% "disagree" or "strongly disagree," with it, and 6% were "undecided." Approximately one-third of the participants (33%) "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement, "I believe my pre-service training adequately prepared me to deal with reporting cases of child abuse and neglect," while 49% "disagree" or "strongly disagree" with it, and 18% were "undecided." Nearly 87% of the participants "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement, "I am able to recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect," while 13% were "undecided." For the statement, "I have never received training on reporting child abuse and neglect," 5% of the participants "agree" with the statement, while 95% "disagree" or "strongly disagree" with it (See Table 2).

Table 2. Training

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
I have received mandated reporting training.		
Strongly disagree	2	3.1
Disagree	2	3.1
Undecided	1	1.6
Agree	25	39.1
Strongly Agree	34	53.1
I am aware of required timeframe for making a suspected child abuse report.		
Strongly disagree	1	1.6
Disagree	3	4.7
Undecided	8	12.5
Agree	25	39.1
Strongly Agree	27	42.2
I received training on reporting child maltreatment through college.		
Strongly disagree	8	12.5
Disagree	16	25.0
Undecided	6	9.4
Agree	28	43.8
Strongly Agree	6	9.4
I received training on reporting child abuse and neglect as a professional.		
Strongly disagree	2	3.1
Disagree	4	6.3
Undecided	4	6.3
Agree	26	40.6
Strongly Agree	28	43.8
I believe my pre-service training prepared me adequately to deal with reporting cases of child abuse and neglect.		
Strongly disagree	6	9.4
Disagree	25	39.1
Undecided	12	18.8
Agree	16	25.0
Strongly Agree	5	7.8

I am able to recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect.		
Strongly disagree	0	0.0
Disagree	0	0.0
Undecided	8	12.5
Agree	43	68.3
Strongly Agree	12	19.0
I have never received training on reporting child abuse and training.		
Strongly disagree	35	54.7
Disagree	26	40.6
Undecided	0	0.0
Agree	3	4.7
Strongly Agree	0	0.0

In regards to the statement, "I am aware of the school procedures regarding child abuse reporting," 79% "agree" or "strongly agree" with it, while 5% "disagree" or "strongly disagree" with it, and 16% were "undecided." Nearly 84% "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement, "I know how to spot indicators of possible child maltreatment," and 16% were "undecided." For the statement, "It is my obligation to report abuse even if I am aware someone else has reported it," approximately 65% "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement, while 18% "disagree" or "strongly disagree," and 17% were "undecided." Ninety-eight percent "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement, "I feel an obligation to report child abuse and neglect," and 2% "strongly disagree" with this statement.

Participants were asked which of the following professions were excused from reporting child maltreatment: doctor, priest, counselor, and teacher. Nearly

92% believe that priests are exempt from reporting child maltreatment, while 8% believe counselors are exempt from reporting obligations. Participants were asked of how often they believe child abuse and neglect is reported on average somewhere in the United States. Nearly 50% of participants reported, on average, a child abuse and neglect report is made every 10 to 30 seconds, while 32% reported a report is made every 20 to 30 minutes, and 18% reported a report is made hourly. Participants were asked at what age child abuse or neglect begins. Twenty-five percent reported child abuse and neglect begins before a child is born, 13% reported it begins when child is a toddler, 5% reported it begins when a child is age 6-10 years, and 57% reported it begins at any age (See Table 3).

Table 3. Knowledge

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
I am aware of the school procedures for child abuse reporting.		
Strongly disagree	1	1.6
Disagree	2	3.2
Undecided	10	15.9
Agree	29	46.0
Strongly Agree	21	33.3
I know how to spot indicators of possible child maltreatment.		
Strongly disagree	0	0.0
Disagree	0	0.0
Undecided	10	15.9
Agree	36	57.1
Strongly Agree	17	27.0

It is my obligation to report abuse even if I'm aware someone else has reported it.

Strongly disagree	3	4.8
Disagree	8	12.7
Undecided	11	17.5
Agree	23	36.5
Strongly Agree	18	28.6

I feel an obligation to report child abuse and neglect.

Strongly disagree	1	1.6
Disagree	0	0.0
Undecided	0	0.0
Agree	30	47.6
Strongly Agree	32	50.8

Which of the following may be excused from reporting child maltreatment?

Doctor	0	0.0
Priest	11	91.7
Counselor	1	8.3
Teacher	0	0.0
None of the above	0	0.0

On average, child abuse and neglect is reported somewhere in the U.S. every:

10 seconds	17	27.4
30 seconds	14	22.6
20 minutes	13	21.0
30 minutes	7	11.3
Hour	11	17.7

Child neglect or abuse begins at what age?

Before the child is born	16	25.4
When child is a toddler	8	12.7
When a child is 6 – 10 years old	3	4.8
At any age	36	57.1

What are some issues that impact your ability to report: (click all that apply)

Lack of knowledge	16	100.0
Lack of time	15	100.0
Lack of training	11	100.0
Fear of repercussion or retribution	11	100.0
Feeling as though child protective services does not offer help to maltreated children	15	100.0
Not interested	64	100.0
Feeling as though this is not my job	64	100.0

Uncertain if abuse is reportable	16	100.0
This was the right decision	7	100.0
Believing that reporting abuse may bring negative consequences for the child or family	23	100.0
Not wanting to get caught up in legal proceedings	7	100.0
Other	11	100.0

Participants were asked which of the following factors affected their ability to report child abuse and neglect. Nearly 25% reported lack of knowledge as a factor to non-reporting, 23% reported lack of time, 17% reported lack of training, 17% reported fear of repercussion or retribution as a factor, and 23% reported they felt as though child protective services does not offer help to maltreated children. Twenty-five percent reported they were unaware if abuse was reportable, while 11% of participants believed reporting abuse and neglect was the right decision. Thirty-six percent believed that reporting abuse brought negative consequences for the child or family, while 11% percent reported not wanting to get caught up in legal proceedings. Nearly 64% reported not being interested or feeling as though it was not their obligation, while 18% reported “other” as a factor to their ability to report child abuse and neglect (See table 3).

Summary

The chapter provided results of the data collected through a survey design questionnaire pertaining to the participants’ views on training and knowledge relevant to the subject of mandated reporting needs of child abuse and neglect.

The chapter included details on their perspectives with the information that was gathered and analyzed.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion based on findings of the study, and highlights limitations of the study. Furthermore, it provides recommendations for Social Work Practice, Policy, and Research pertaining to mandated reporting within a school environment. A concise conclusion of the study will be presented at the end of this chapter.

Discussion

The study revealed that 92% of participants received training on child abuse and neglect given by their employers. However, only 33% of the participants agreed that pre-service training adequately prepared them to deal with reporting child abuse and neglect. Having exposure to information on child maltreatment during trainings would, ideally, indicate a higher comfort level in reporting, yet, these findings question the effectiveness of child abuse and neglect training. These findings are consistent with Delaronde et al.'s study finding (2000) that underreporting is due to poor training and feelings of inadequacy in recognizing and handling maltreatment cases.

With respect to knowledge, roughly 79% of the participants stated they were aware of school procedures for reporting child abuse. While this is a noteworthy percentage, it suggests a gap in reporting awareness that needs to

be addressed. Nearly all the participants (98%) acknowledged an obligation to report child abuse and neglect. This is a significant finding; since prior research by Walsh & Jones (2016) indicates 50% of respondents were unaware they could be charged with a misdemeanor for failing to report maltreatment. More than 84% agreed that they could spot indicators or recognized the signs of child maltreatment and neglect. This is encouraging since previous research by Kenny (2007) has indicated that professionals are unaware of indicators to look for.

Findings of the study suggest the participants' perception of incompetence and lack of trust in child protective services. Such factors could contribute to under reporting of child maltreatment cases. Twenty three percent of the participants believed that child protective services did not offer to help to maltreated children. Furthermore, 36% of participants believed that reporting abuse brought negative consequences for the child or family. The result of these negative perceptions of child protective services may discourage educators from reporting, since they may be concerned that further harm may come to the child as a result, or that child protective services might not investigate the matter anyway. These findings are congruent with those of Delaronde et al.'s study (2008) which indicated that the perception existed that reporting to child protective services did more harm than good and that the mandated reporter could handle the situation better than social services. An important consideration is that 37% of the participants in the study have five or fewer years teaching

experience, which could account for some of the negative perceptions regarding the effectiveness of making a report to child protective services.

This study also found that another key contributor to educators' non-reporting stemmed from hesitation to involve themselves in legal proceedings. The study revealed that almost 11% of participants believed that by reporting, they would be involved in the investigation. This is supported by a study conducted by Feng et al. (2012), which found that mandated reporters pondered whether to risk personal security to address suspicious cases of child maltreatment.

Limitations

Limitations of this current study include the small sample size, lack of diversity of participants, and method of data collection used. A total of 64 participants completed the survey questionnaire. Due to time constraints, only a limited number of participants were able to voluntarily complete the survey. Additionally, all the participants were from one educational setting in San Bernardino County. The small sample size and participant location limit the ability to generalize the findings since the sample did not include participants from diverse locations outside of San Bernardino County. Another limitation is that participants were comprised of teachers only, not allowing other participants from different professions to participate. Allowing other professionals from other districts outside of San Bernardino County could have yielded more generalized results. Moreover, the method which was used to collect the data, the

snowballing sampling method, lends itself to not allow participants that are not teachers to complete the survey; there was no mechanism in place to screen them out. This can skew data and offset the relevant findings.

Recommendations for Social Work Practice, Policy, and Research

The findings of this study suggest the need for schools to clearly review and provide clear expectations for reporting responsibilities. Periodic review of school policies and expectations will ensure they remain relevant, with the expectation that mandated reporting requirements are fulfilled. In addition, since roughly one third of the participants stated that their pre-service training did not adequately prepare them to report maltreatment, it is essential that they immediately receive training as part of the hiring process and to receive refresher training yearly thereafter. School districts would benefit from utilizing child welfare agencies as a resource for training on the mandated reporting process.

Future research could be comprised of a study that further examines the reasons educators choose to report versus not to report suspected abuse or neglect to a child welfare agency. The study could explore screening or other guidance tools, similar to the Structured Decision Making (SDM) tool, used by child welfare agencies, to assist educators with identifying abuse and determining whether a report should be made. In addition, it would be beneficial to conduct a study comprised of focus groups of educators to discuss experiences with reporting suspected abuse and neglect. A combination of experienced educators along with less experienced educators, sharing their

perspectives, could improve their awareness and comfort level in reporting incidents, as they gain insight into the process; from identifying indicators, to making the report to a child welfare agency, and what the outcome was once the child welfare agency became involved. A study like this would be beneficial to highlight the effectiveness of child protective services and in turn increase mandated reporters' confidence that making a report was worth their time. This would provide an opportunity for collaboration between school agencies and child welfare services, who can assist with focus group facilitation and screening/guidance tool development. Perhaps the outcome of that study would be that agencies adopt the focus group model which would be beneficial to educators, and increase the rate of fulfilling their legal responsibilities as a mandated reporter.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to identify educators' barriers to reporting child maltreatment. Although the study indicates that educators received training in mandated reporting requirements, and they are able to spot signs of abuse, the study revealed some teachers had a low comfort level and feelings of inadequacy with respect to reporting to child protective services. Periodic review of reporting expectations, in combination with refresher training and the use of screening and decision-making tools, as well as enhanced collaboration between experienced educators and those with less tenure, may help mitigate the underreporting. It is the hope of the authors that increased training in the area of

mandated reporting as well as firm expectations that reports are made, will produce greater outcomes for intervention services, and build trust between educators and child welfare agencies.

APPENDIX A
SURVEY DESIGN QUESTIONNAIRE

Survey Questions

DEMOGRAPHICS: Please place an X next to the appropriate response

What is your current age?	24 or Under <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 35 years <input type="checkbox"/> 36 - 45 years <input type="checkbox"/> 46 - 55 years <input type="checkbox"/> 56 - 65 years <input type="checkbox"/> 66 or Above <input type="checkbox"/>
What is your gender?	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Declines to state or other <input type="checkbox"/>
What is your ethnicity?	African American <input type="checkbox"/> Anglo American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Latino/Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Level of Education	Less than high school <input type="checkbox"/> High school graduate <input type="checkbox"/> Some college <input type="checkbox"/> College graduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate or professional school <input type="checkbox"/>
How long have you been teaching?	1 year or less <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 6 - 10 years <input type="checkbox"/> 11 - 15 years <input type="checkbox"/> 16 years or more <input type="checkbox"/>

Mandated Reporting (Likert Scale)

I would like to ask a few questions about your training and/or knowledge regarding reporting of child maltreatment. Would you say you strongly agree, agree, not sure/undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree with each statement?

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Undecided
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

TRAINING:

I have received mandated reporting training.	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Undecided	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
I am aware of required timeframes for making a suspected child abuse report.	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Undecided	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
I received training on reporting child maltreatment through college.	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Undecided	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
I received training on reporting child abuse and neglect as a professional.	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Undecided	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
I believe my pre-service training prepared me adequately to deal with reporting cases of child abuse and neglect.	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Undecided	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
I am able to recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect.	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Undecided	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
I have never received training on reporting child abuse and neglect.	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Undecided	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree

KNOWLEDGE:

I am aware of the school procedures for child abuse reporting.	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Undecided	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
I know how to spot indicators of possible child maltreatment.	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Undecided	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
It is my obligation to report abuse even if I am aware someone else has reported it.	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Undecided	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
I feel an obligation to report child abuse and neglect.	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Undecided	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
Which of the following may be excused from reporting child maltreatment?	5 Doctor	4 Priest	3 Counselor	2 Teacher	1 None of the above

On average, child abuse and neglect is reported somewhere in the U.S. every:	5 10 Seconds	4 30 Seconds	3 20 Minutes	2 30 Minutes	1 Hour
Child neglect or abuse begins at what age?	5 Before a child is born	4 When child is a toddler	3 When a child is 6-10 years old	2 When a child is 11-18 years old	1 At any age
What are some issues that impact your ability to report: (circle all that apply)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of knowledge 2. Lack of time 3. Lack of training 4. Fear of repercussion or retribution 5. Feeling as though child protective services does not offer help to maltreated children 6. Not interested 7. Feeling as though this is not my obligation 8. Uncertain if abuse is reportable 9. This was the right decision 10. Believing that reporting abuse may bring negative consequences for the child or family 11. Not wanting to get caught up in legal proceedings 12. Other _____ 				

Created by: Miriam Figueroa and Marialsela Maldonado

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are asked to participate is designed to examine educators' attitudes and knowledge with respect to reporting child maltreatment in San Bernardino County. The study is being conducted by Miriam Figueroa and Marielsela Maldonado, graduate students, under the supervision of Dr. Janet Chang, Professor in the School of Social Work at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB). The study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board Social Work Sub-committee at CSUSB.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the study is to examine the attitudes and knowledge with respect to reporting child maltreatment among educators' in San Bernardino County.

DESCRIPTION: The study will employ a survey design with a self-administered questionnaire. Participants will be asked questions pertaining to their experiences and responsibilities as a mandated reporter in their profession or practice, and some demographics.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation in the study is totally voluntary. You can refuse to participate in the study or discontinue your participation at any time without any consequences.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Your responses will remain confidential and data will be reported in group form only.

DURATION: It will take 5 to 10 minutes to complete the survey.

RISKS: Although not anticipated, there may be some discomfort in answering some of the questions. You are not required to answer and can skip the question or end your participation.

BENEFITS: There will not be any direct benefits to the participants.

CONTACT: If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Chang at (909) 537-5184.

RESULTS: Results of the study can be obtained from the Pfau Library ScholarWorks database (<http://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/>) at California State University, San Bernardino after July 2020.

This is to certify that I read the above and I am 18 years or older.

Place an X mark here _____

_____ Date

California State University, San Bernardino
Social Work Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee
APPROVED 4/12/21 VOID AFTER 4/23/22
IRB# SW 1947 CHAIR Janet Chang

APPENDIX C
INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee

Researcher(s) Miriam Figueroa & Marialsela Maldonado
Proposal Title Educators' Barriers to Reporting Child Maltreatment

SW1942

Your proposal has been reviewed by the School of Social Work Sub-Committee of the Institutional Review Board. The decisions and advice of those faculty are given below.

Proposal is:

- approved
 to be resubmitted with revisions listed below
 to be forwarded to the campus IRB for review

Revisions that must be made before proposal can be approved:

- faculty signature missing
 missing informed consent debriefing statement
 revisions needed in informed consent debriefing
 data collection instruments missing
 agency approval letter missing
 CITI missing
 revisions in design needed (specified below)


Committee Chair Signature

4/24/2019
Date

Distribution: White-Coordinator; Yellow-Supervisor; Pink-Student

REFERENCES

- Alvarez, K.M., Kenny, M.C., Donohue, B., & Carpin, K.M. (2004). Why are professionals failing to initiate mandated reports of child maltreatment, and are there any empirically based training programs to assist professionals in the reporting process? *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 9*(5), 563-578.
- California Department of Education. (2017). *Child abuse identification and reporting guidelines*. Retrieved from <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/ap/childabusereportingguide.asp>
- Childhelp. (2017). *The issue of child abuse*. Retrieved from <https://www.childhelp.org/child-abuse>
- Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2013). *Long-term consequences of child abuse and neglect*. Retrieved from https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/long_term_consequences.pdf
- Crenshaw, W., Bartell, P., & Lichtenberg, J. (1994). Proposed revisions to mandatory reporting laws: An exploratory survey of child protective service agencies. *Child Welfare, 73*(1), 15-27.
- Darlin, N. (2007). *Ecological system theory: The person in the center of the circle*. doi: 10.1080/15427600701663023
- Delaronde, S., King, G., Bendel, R., & Reece, R. (2000). Opinions among mandated reporters toward child maltreatment reporting policies. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 24*(7), 901-910.

- Feng, J., Chen, Y., Fetzer, S., Feng, M., & Lin, C. (2012). Ethical and legal challenges of mandated child abuse reporters. *Children and Youth Service Review, 34*(1), 276-280.
- Friedman, B., & Neuman, K. (2000). *Systems theories*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Bruce_Friedman3/publication/266615989_Systems_Theory/links/543575fd0cf2643ab9866838/Systems-Theory.pdf
- Henry, K. L., Fulco, C. J., & Merrick, M. T. (2018). The harmful effects of child maltreatment on economic outcomes in adulthood. *American Journal of Public Health, 108*(9), 1134-1141.
- Kenny, M. C. (2007) *Web-based training in child maltreatment for future mandated reporters*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed>
- Kesner, J. E., & Robinson, M. (2002). Teachers as mandated reporters of child maltreatment: Comparison with legal, medical, and social services reporters. *Children & Schools, 24*(4), 222-231.
- Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance. (2017). *Research on child abuse and neglect*. Retrieved from <https://www.pa-fsa.org/Mandated-Reporters/Resources-for-Mandated-Reporters/Researcher-on-Child-Abuse-Neglect>
- Thyer, B. A., Dulmus, C. N., & Sowers, K. M. (2012). *Human behavior in the social environment. Theories for social work practice*. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/csusb/reader.action?docID=980956>

U.S. Department Of Health And Human Services, Administration For Children

And Families. (2017). *Child maltreatment 2015*. Retrieved from

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/child-maltreatment-2015>

Winton, R. (2016). Student who fathered teacher's baby receives \$6-million

abuse settlement from Redlands schools. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved

from [http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-redlands-settlement-sex-](http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-redlands-settlement-sex-abuse-20160819-snap-story.html)

[abuse-20160819-snap-story.html](http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-redlands-settlement-sex-abuse-20160819-snap-story.html)

Young, J. C., & Widom, C.S. (2014). Long-term effects of child abuse and

neglect on emotion processing in adulthood. *Child abuse and neglect*,

38(8), 1369-1381.

ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES

This was a two-person project where authors collaborated throughout.

Miriam Figueroa and Marialsela Maldonado collaborated on the following sections:

- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion

Both Miriam Figueroa and Marialsela Maldonado contributed to the formatting, editing, and revisions process throughout the preparation of this paper for submission.