

California State University, San Bernardino

CSUSB ScholarWorks

Theses Digitization Project

John M. Pfau Library

2002

Child abuse and domestic abuse: Factors in reunification

Jane Margaret Scarlett

Bryan Anderson Wing

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



Part of the [Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence Commons](#), and the [Social Work Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Scarlett, Jane Margaret and Wing, Bryan Anderson, "Child abuse and domestic abuse: Factors in reunification" (2002). *Theses Digitization Project*. 2133.

<https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project/2133>

This Project is brought to you for free and open access by the John M. Pfau Library at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses Digitization Project by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.

CHILD ABUSE AND DOMESTIC ABUSE:
FACTORS IN REUNIFICATION

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
Jane Margaret Scarlett
Bryan Anderson Wing


June 2002

CHILD ABUSE AND DOMESTIC ABUSE:
FACTORS IN REUNIFICATION


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


by
Jane Margaret Scarlett
Bryan Anderson Wing
June 2002

Approved by:


Dr. Ray E. Liles, Faculty Supervisor
Social Work

5/21/02
Date


Cathy Cimbal, L.C.S.W., Director
Department of Children's Services,
San Bernardino County


Dr. Rosemary McCaslin,
M.S.W. Research Coordinator

ABSTRACT

This study was designed to differentiate the significant demographic and familial factors found in families when reunification is successful versus when reunification fails in cases of child removal due to physical abuse and domestic violence. The purpose of this study was to identify which, if any of these factors, lead to successful reunification. Content analysis of adjudicated cases of child abuse in San Bernardino County was used to transform qualitative information into quantitative data.

Significant findings related to successful family reunification included: the greater the years in the relationship the more likely reunification would occur, successful family reunification was strongly associated with a greater number of children within the family, employment of the male parent was strongly associated with successful reunification, the completion of parenting class was also strongly associated with successful reunification, and the completion of family counseling was very strongly associated with successful family reunification.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to give special thanks to our research advisor Dr. Ray E. Liles for his assistance on the overall development and presentation of this research project. We would also like to express our appreciation to Dr. Rosemary McCaslin for her patience, support and guidance throughout this project. And finally, we would like to give special thanks to our colleague, Faye Johnson, M.S.W., for her assistance in the extensive task of data gathering for this research project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
Problem Statement	1
Problem Focus	6
Purpose of the Study	9
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	
Introduction	11
Review of Existing Literature	11
Guiding Theories	21
Summary	25
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS	
Introduction	26
Study Design	26
Sampling	29
Data Collection and Instruments	30
Data Collection Procedure	32
Protection of Human Subjects	33
Data Analysis	34
Summary	35
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS	
Introduction	36
Presentation of the Findings	36

Summary	42
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION	
Introduction	45
Discussion.....	45
Limitations	49
Recommendations for Social Work Practice, Policy and Research	50
Conclusions	51
APPENDIX A: DATA ABSTRACTION TOOL	53
APPENDIX B: AGENCY AUTHORIZATION LETTER	56
APPENDIX C: DEMOGRAPHICS	58
REFERENCES	71
ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES PAGE	74

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The contents of Chapter One presents an overview of the project. The problem statement and problem focus are discussed in this chapter. Finally, this chapter concludes with a presentation of the purpose of the study.

Problem Statement

Suddenly, out of nowhere, Katie Geller felt her arm twist behind her as her husband John swung her around striking her several times in the face with his clinched fist. She sank to the floor as blood poured from her nose and face. She felt instant pain, as if she had collided with a Mac truck. The baby's constant crying seemed to infuriate John more by the second. He grabbed the infant, shaking her violently, screamed at her to shut up, and threw her to the floor. Yelling obscenities, John walked out the front door leaving a trail of harm behind. Sadly, the Gellers' situation is a common one in many households today. In fact, Child's World (2000), a California child advocacy group, reports that "the most violent place in California is not on the streets, but in the home." Children are not only witnessing violence on the

television, but in their own living rooms, kitchens and bedrooms.

Child abuse is not a new phenomenon in our society. Professionals in the field of social work have likely been exposed to the famous story of "Mary Ellen," who in 1873, suffered torturous acts of abuse and neglect at the hands of her parents. In this first highly publicized case of child abuse, many adults at the time thought of children as property that they could treat as they saw fit, frequently exerting unchecked power over them. The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was formed the following year as a result of the Mary Ellen story coming to light (American Humane Association, 2000). Despite increased public awareness and sentiment related to the atrocity of child abuse, cruel acts of abuse and neglect are still perpetrated against young victims at alarming rates.

According to the Child Welfare League of America, a nationwide study found that in 1998, 2,898,849 reports of child abuse were received by child welfare agencies in the United States, and that of these reports, 878,877 children were found to be substantiated victims of abuse or neglect (CWLA report, 1998). Further, according to the California Department of Social Services, Children's Services

Division, in 1998, the State of California received over 400,000 reports of child abuse and neglect in which 157,683 children were found to be substantiated victims of abuse or neglect. As of January 2001, approximately 105,000 of California's children remained in "out-of-home" placements due to serious abuse or neglect by their parents or guardians.

Domestic violence is another form of abuse which continues to plague our society. This type of violence also has its roots the domination of others who are often less powerful. Although there were laws against inflicting bodily harm to others dating back to the 1600's, wives, who were often viewed as "chattel," were often abused by their husbands or masters. In the 1800's, alcohol use was often blamed for the abuse of women. However this abuse has been rationalized, historically women were trapped because they had virtually no voice and even fewer rights in their home and in society (Davis, 1991).

Those in helping professions, such as social work, suggest that the family should be a safe place in which we not only get our basic physical needs met, but the family is also the primary place where we grow, learn, love and receive nurturing. Unfortunately, social workers know

that the fictional, high functioning, Caucasian, middle class "Ozzie and Harriet" family of the 1950's may only exist in the television archives. Today, many American families are in crisis and as a result must deal with child welfare services, law enforcement agencies and the courts (juvenile and family courts).

A growing body of research demonstrates a definite link between adult domestic abuse and child abuse. In fact, most existing research suggests the connections between domestic violence and child abuse are pervasive. Recent national studies have found that 45% to 70% of women in domestic violence shelters report that their batterers have also committed some form of child abuse. According to an extensive study conducted by the American Humane Association (2000), 60% of battered women report that their batterers have also committed some form of child abuse. Further, even using the most conservative figures, child abuse is 15 times more likely to occur in households where domestic violence is present (McKay, 1994). Additionally, women who are beaten by their partners are twice as likely than other women to abuse a child (California Department of Social Services, 2001). Therefore, rather than the fictional "Ozzie and Harriet" television family, families such as the Gellers, with

overlapping issues of family violence, are today's horrible reality.

Unfortunately, advocates for the protection of children and those who advocate for the protection of battered woman are frequently at odds with one another; thus, the programs and services that each group facilitates and supports, often have competing goals and interests. This somewhat adversarial relationship is based on the historical roots and struggles of these individual movements. Today's child welfare agencies and dependency courts are deeply rooted in the child protection movement of the late 1800's, and continue to be primarily "child centered," focusing on the needs of children. Conversely, the fight for the protection of battered women has grown out of the feminist movement, and is philosophically rooted in women's rights issues (McKay, 1994). In fact, advocates for battered women are often outraged when the child welfare system accuses, or the courts criminally charge, battered women for failing to protect their children from their batterer.

Clearly, the most serious cases of child abuse often involve multi-faceted risk factors and familial problems such as domestic abuse. Other factors and issues related to the abuse of children include, but are not limited to:

socio-economic issues (poverty, unemployment), familial stress, substance abuse, lack of family support systems, lack of community support systems, religion, family of origin issues, and the cycle of family violence. Although many of the above issues have been studied in detail, there have been few studies conducted specifically related to how domestic abuse between parents (or intimate partners) impacts the risk of physical harm of the children within the context of child welfare programs.

Problem Focus

In 1999, the San Bernardino County Department of Children's Services (DCS) received 47,601 reports of child abuse or neglect in which 15,852 reports involved physical abuse or non-accidental injury to a child. In 1999, approximately 1,500 children in San Bernardino County were removed from "parental custody" due to severe physical abuse by a parent, legal guardian or caretaker. Unfortunately, there are no current data available related to the number of San Bernardino County child abuse cases in which both physical abuse and domestic abuse were related to DCS intervention. Currently, San Bernardino County has approximately 5,000 children placed in out-of-home care due to severe abuse or neglect.

As stated above, understanding the connection between child abuse and domestic violence is a relatively new area of study in the behavioral sciences, including social work. Clearly studying the affiliation of child abuse and domestic violence is important for a myriad of professionals for a variety of reasons. In fact, research has shown that child welfare social workers need to have a clear understanding of this linkage in order to appropriately assess for the risk to the child, risk to the social worker while in the home, recommend adequate services, provide suitable case planning, and to promote improved family functioning (Aron & Olson, 1997).

Within the context of the San Bernardino County Child Welfare System, there are countless stakeholders who are concerned about the issue of domestic violence coupled with the physical and emotional harm of children. At the public agency level, the San Bernardino County Department of Children's Services and the Juvenile Court are frequently faced with questions such as: Under what circumstances does domestic abuse endanger children in the home? Since there are many serious domestic abuse cases in which the children are never physically harmed, children are rarely removed from parental custody due to the emotional harm caused by domestic abuse alone (no

physical harm to the child). Therefore, this complex and interrelated issue is critical for these public entities on a case management level (i.e., initial risk assessment, providing services for risk reduction, training needs). At a legal level, attorneys need knowledge of domestic violence (coupled with child abuse) when advocating for their clients and judges must decide under what circumstances should children be legally removed from parental custody at the risk of violating the civil rights of the parents/legal guardians. And at an administrative level, policy and procedure must be constantly re-evaluated while remaining in line with the law, current models of best practice, networking with other agencies and implications for staff development.

Further, other public and private agencies (or entities) that have a stake in this issue include:

- Local law enforcement agencies, who frequently deal with family violence and child abuse cases without specific knowledge and training that would assist them in risk assessment.
- The District Attorney's Office, which would likely benefit from research findings that provide outcome measures related to compliance and treatment of violent offenders.

- Mental health practitioners (public and private), who often provide treatment services for these families (i.e., individual counseling, parenting classes, anger management).
- Educational institutions at all levels (i.e., school personnel must educate students who are victims of domestic and physical abuse).
- Institutions of higher learning in which studies such as this can provide valuable information for educators and future practitioners.
- Clients could be impacted by such research if research findings result in child welfare policy changes.
- Foster parents, who often become the caretakers of children that are victims of physical abuse and domestic abuse, must be aware and sensitive to these complex issues to be effective surrogate parents.

Purpose of the Study

The focus of this study was to expand the theoretical knowledge about the complexities of cases that encompass both domestic abuse and serious physical abuse of children. This will provide key stakeholders (mentioned above), including social work practitioners in the field of child welfare, with valuable information. This

information could be used to advance risk assessment tools, to improve provision of services and case management, to advance staff development and training, and to further develop policy and procedures specific to these very serious cases in the child welfare system.

Therefore, this study thoroughly examined the following research question:

"In San Bernardino County child welfare cases, in which children have been removed from parental custody due to serious physical abuse and where domestic partner abuse is also present, what factors are most associated with successful family reunification?"

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Chapter Two consists of a discussion of the relevant literature. Specifically, presented below is an extensive review of the literature and research related to domestic abuse and child physical abuse. Additionally, chapter Two concludes with a summary of the theories that guided this research.

Review of Existing Literature

Although there have been studies directly related to these overlapping issues (i.e., primarily focusing on theories of causes and treatment), few studies have been conducted from the context of child welfare services in relation to case management policy. To date, there have been no studies of this issue conducted to examine this population within the San Bernardino County Child Welfare System. At this point, most of the national empirical studies are of women residing in domestic abuse shelters.

Societal responses to abused children and to domestic violence have developed along separate tracks. Child protective services and programs for battered women maintain different histories and are part of different

systems (public versus private). Child welfare services seek to protect the child while domestic violence programs have the goal of empowering the woman (McKay, 1994). Similarly, researchers studying either child maltreatment or spousal abuse have most often focused on one or the other form of violence. Often when one type of victimization has been studied, other types of family violence have been overlooked, thus limiting the scope of the available research.

Existing studies allow us to determine what degree of overlap exists between child abuse and domestic violence but not much more than this. Part of the problem is that most studies published to date report simple statistics on the percentage of overlapping violence in families based on survey questions or case record reviews that were carried out for other purposes. The data on this overlap are often mentioned as an aside to the primary research findings. Hughes' (1988) study of children is a good example of this. This study mentions that 60% of the children accompanying battered women to a shelter are reported by their mothers to have also been physically abused. The primary focus of the study was the psychological and behavioral problems associated with a child's witnessing violence in the home, not on the

overlap between child maltreatment and domestic violence. As a result, there is an estimate of the overlap in this shelter-based population, however, no information is presented related to how these forms of abuse are connected.

When trying to understand the overlap of child abuse and domestic violence, it is also important to review the research methods, data collection techniques and results for reliability and validity. Researchers have come to study the link between child abuse and domestic violence mostly from two different directions. One strategy has been to identify evidence of women battering where known cases of child abuse exists. These studies have most often examined archived case records of child abuse and looked for information indicating that a child's mother was also being abused. For example, Whitney and Davis (1999) looked at the Massachusetts Department of Social Services' Child Protection case records for indications that an incident of adult domestic violence had occurred since the last case review. The researchers examined computerized records for all active child protection cases in Massachusetts over a seven-month period and found that the average incidence of adult victimization recorded on a case summary form by the social worker was 32.48%

statewide. The overlap jumped to 48.2% when these researchers added into the data analysis any cases where the social worker also indicated a treatment goal of protecting the child from adult domestic violence.

A second and more frequently used strategy has been to look for evidence of child maltreatment in families where abuse of the mother is known to exist. The percentages of overlap most often include only battered women with children present in the home, not all battered women (or battered men) in a particular sample. Some of the studies have drawn their data from interviews with women residing in battered women's shelters, others have advertised in the media to recruit families, and still others have located battered women who were using other social services. For example, in a 1988 study, Bowker, Arbitell, and McFerron advertised in a national magazine, and developed a national sample of 1,000 battered women of which 775 had children in the home. This study found that 70% of the male partners were reported to also abuse their children.

According to another national study entitled, "The 1985 National Family Violence Survey" in which there were occurrences (at least one) of both domestic abuse and child abuse, social researcher, M.A. Straus found that

children of battered women "run a particularly high risk of being abused themselves." In fact, this 1978 study of a nationally representative sample of American families found that there was a "129% greater chance of child abuse in families in which the husband had hit his wife." From this same study, Straus further concluded that in one-third of the families in which the husband-wife violence was severe enough to be considered wife abuse, the child(ren) were also victims of abuse by the mother and/or the father. Incidents of abuse by the mother were actually slightly higher.

Further, a longitudinal study of battered children of battered wives was conducted, in which 27 battered women residing in shelters with children under 18 were studied pre-treatment and post-treatment (six-month treatment program including self-esteem building and "de-legitimizing" violence), found that 55.6% of the women and 63% of the men in this small sample had used "abusive tactics" on their children within the year prior to the mother and children entering the "battered woman shelter." From this study, the researcher found that this type program may reduce the risk of child abuse significantly (approximately 40%) within the first six months of leaving the program (Giles-Sims, 1985).

Researcher Susan M. Ross in her 1996 study, entitled "Risk of Physical Abuse to Children of Spouse Abusing Parents," also relied heavily on data and findings from the 1985 National Family Violence Survey. In her study Ms. Ross focused primarily on how the findings in the 1985 National Family Violence Survey influenced risk assessment related to child custody issues in family court. Therefore, Ms. Ross addressed two primary research questions in this study. First, did greater amounts of marital violence increase the probability of child abuse by the violent spouse? And second, did husbands show a stronger relationship between marital violence and child abuse than wives?

Ms. Ross' study had several significant findings, including: 1). 22% of husbands who were physically violent toward their wives had also engaged in physical child abuse; 2). 23.9% of violent wives had engaged in physical abuse of their child; and that, 3). female children are far less likely to sustain abuse from either violent parent. There were also findings related to race, age, and other demographics. The primary limitations of this study were that other factors likely related to family violence, such as: substance abuse, employment

issues, intergenerational abuse, and access to support systems were not made variables in this study.

Other family characteristics have been examined in association with the overlap between child maltreatment and women battering. Bowker, Arbitell and McFerron (1988), found two family factors to be significant predictors of children being abused in families where known domestic violence existed. First, they found that the more dominant a husband was in the family's decision-making process, the more likely a child was to be abused.

Second, the larger the number of children in a family the more likely there is to be child abuse in the home.

Gender and birth order of a child also appear to be factors in which child is targeted for abuse. It appears that male children are more at risk of being abused when spouse abuse is present in the home. For example, as stated previously, Ross (1996) reports that female children are much less likely than their male siblings to be abused by the violent men (47% decrease) or by violent women (27% decrease) in the household. Prescott & Letko (1977) also found that the oldest male child was the most likely victim of child abuse when men who also batter their women partners turned on their children.

While some studies have found that the presence of children fathered by former male partners put women at greater risk of being abused (Daly, Singh, & Wilson, 1993), and that the presence of a step-parent put children at greater risk of being abused (Wilson & Daly, 1987), other studies have found the contrary. In fact, McCloskey, Figueredo and Koss (1995) found no association between the biological relationship of a father and abuse of a child.

In a 1987 research article, it was suggested that because domestic violence involving male perpetrators has received increasing public attention, many researchers and practitioners had begun to falsely frame domestic abuse as essentially a masculine form of assaultive behavior (McNeely, 1987). In this study, these researchers argue that their analysis of the "National Crime Survey" and Straus's "1985 National Family Violence Survey" show that the claims that the perpetrators of domestic abuse are overwhelmingly male are not supported by empirical studies and; thus, are destructive to clients, practitioners and policy makers.

Other research indicates a link between women battering and subsequent abuse by the mother. The issue of a mother's use of violence toward her spouse and her

children is unclear at this point. Some would argue that women are just as violent as men. Most data provide a different picture. The "National Crime Victimization Study" has shown women to be more likely the victims of violence and homicide at the hands of intimate partners (Bachman & Saltzman, 1995). Saunders (1986) has documented that a great deal of violence involving women and their partners is used in self-defense. Conversely, a subsequent study conducted by Straus and Gelles (1990), found that men who were reported to most frequently beat their wives were also the ones most likely to be reported as abusing children in the home. Clearly, based on the contradictory research findings presented above, further in-depth research of how men's and women's use of violence differs, and how these forms of violence are linked to child abuse is needed.

In reviewing various therapeutic treatment approaches related to this problem, one study (Whiteman, 1987), suggests that anger is closely related to abusive acts. Therefore, child abuse intervention strategies that focus on the immediacy of the violent interactions between the parent and child are most useful. This study of a cognitive-behavioral approach to treatment used structured therapeutic interventions, such as cognitive

restructuring, a relaxation-training program, problem solving skills building, and a composite of all three techniques. Findings from this study indicate that the use of one or a composite of all three techniques resulted in parents being more empathic toward their children and accepting of age appropriate behavior of their children, thus, reducing the risk of future anger and abusive behavior toward their children.

Another researcher (Stosny, 1994), suggests that successful intervention with spouse abusers, most of whom are ordered into treatment by the court, must overcome formidable anger and resistance, often expressed by high attrition and limited client participation. In his study, clients are shown a dramatic video that depicts spousal abuse from the viewpoint of a young boy, who as a man has become a spousal abuser. According to Stosny, although the video used for this study was designed to combat treatment resistance, clients also "experienced compassion for the child witness to family violence" and learned to convert their habitual anger response into non-violent actions. As intended, the use of the video also significantly increased attendance and participation in the group treatment process.

Another researcher (Hamlin, 1991), highlights the necessity for easily accessible comprehensive community based services for the treatment of families that are impacted by both domestic abuse and child abuse. In his study, Hamlin found that typically treatment services for these families are fragmented, often competitive (for example, turf wars over funding) and plagued by poor communication. From his study findings, Hamlin recommends that teams consisting of law enforcement, medical practitioners, mental health professions and child welfare workers work together on cases to address this fragmentation and provide client-centered interventions and treatment services. In addition to the research reviews presented above, other research relevant to incidence, risk assessment and treatment of families, in which domestic abuse and child physical abuse are prevalent, will be reviewed and summarized in the final study.

Guiding Theories

One important theory related to domestic abuse is the theory of learned helplessness. According to psychologist, Lenore Walker (1984), who builds on the earlier theories of experimental psychologist, Martin

Seligman, (who first tested this theory in a laboratory experiment with animals, primarily dogs), "learned helplessness" occurs when faced with "uncontrollability."

Walker further hypothesizes that the battered women's perception of helplessness may or may not be accurate. However, this theory does not propose that the victim is actually powerless to effect change over a situation, but rather it postulates that the victim believes nothing she can do will facilitate positive change and/or outcomes. Thus, it becomes extremely difficult for victims to "change their cognitions" to believe that their actions can change their current life situation.

While the theories described above can provide specific theoretical framework for assessment and treatment of the family in the "crisis of violence," a more holistic or ecological approach to assessment and treatment is often required to address the complex and multifaceted issues related to family violence (Martin Bloom, 1996). In the Ecological-Configural model, it is theorized that every significant social event, such as making a friend, getting married, having a baby, talking with a client about a significant problem, and so on, is the product of several forces (internal and external) acting on the people involved. "One set of forces

strengthens the individual, the support of some group, and the resources from the physical environment, while another set of forces increases personal limitations, social stresses, and environmental pressures."

Each type of force (either positive or negative) impacts one's ability to grow, change behavior or achieve goals. For example, a conservative Christian may use inappropriate physical discipline on their child that results in injuries and members of their church community may condone and encourage this type of discipline. However, if such a case was referred to the authorities, a law enforcement official (CPS or law enforcement) might discourage this type of discipline and may in fact threaten legal consequences. How a parent disciplines their child in the future may be seen as a result of the "pushes and pulls" of these forces/pressures.

According to Bloom (1996), "all of life is filled with pushes and pulls of various degrees and intensity." Therefore, "social services may be seen as an additional force that clarifies these various pushes and pulls and perhaps contributes new energy, helping clients achieve the goals they seek within their contexts." Bloom further suggests that that is not enough to analyze these six factors for what they contribute to a particular

situation/behavior. The practitioner must "specify the subsystems or components of these major factors, such as cognitive, affective, behavioral, and physiological attributes of individual strengths and limitations; the various kinds of social groups (i.e. families, peers, organizations, communities); and possibly the differences between built and natural environments."

In summary, the strength of the ecological perspective to assessment and treatment of individuals and families is the holistic approach that views each person within their own unique environment. Far too often, an inexperienced practitioner views and defines the client only by their diagnosis, prescribed treatment approach and their own theoretical framework/biases (Freud, Erickson, Jung, Rogers), rather than taking a holistic view of people and environments. Neither of which can be fully understood except in the context of its relationship with the other. In fact, if the practitioner routinely considered using ecologically based assessments, they would be less likely to overlook critical client strengths or limitations and are more likely to thoroughly analyze/assess complex life situations such as family violence; Thus, provide the foundation for a more comprehensive treatment approach.

Finally, other less known, but related theories include the frustration-aggression hypothesis which suggests that people become frustrated, angry and physically aggressive when their goals are blocked (Miller, 1941). And the resource theory of violence which hypothesizes that "the more resources a person can command, the more force that person has available, but that there is a decreased likelihood of using that force toward a safe object" (Goode, 1971). This theory more simply states that persons with few resources are more likely to resort to violence and to choose a "safe target," someone with less power than they have.

Summary

Chapter Two was a review of the literature and research important to the study of the overlapping issues of child physical abuse and domestic abuse. This chapter further presented a summary of the theories guiding this research project including the theory of learned helplessness, the ecological model, the frustration aggression hypothesis, and the resource theory of violence.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Introduction

Chapter Three documents the steps used in developing this research project. Specifically, the study design, sampling, data collection and instruments, procedures, protection of human subjects and data analysis are presented below.

Study Design

The purpose of this study was to identify, describe and analyze the factors most associated with successful family reunification, within the context of San Bernardino County child welfare cases in which children were removed from parental custody due to serious physical abuse and underlying issues of domestic abuse. The general research methodology consisted of a qualitative and quantitative review (content analysis) of an existing data set (case records). Specifically, this study examined a non-random sample of 35 San Bernardino County child welfare cases extracted from the State of California "Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS)."

This exploratory investigation of existing automated data was selected because of the following:

- Data are readily available and easily extracted.
- This research approach allows for unobtrusive study of the research question that clearly reduces and/or eliminates bias due to reactive behaviors of the study population.
- Content analysis of case records allows for the collection of qualitative data from case records and the conversion of this data into quantitative data that can be statistically analyzed (reduces the potential researcher bias of a purely qualitative study).
- And finally, this research approach provides historical information on families that can be utilized to conduct a longitudinal study.

An exploratory longitudinal research design was employed in this study to examine the relationships between critical independent variables and the reunification or non-reunification (dependent variable) of children who had been removed from parental custody due to serious physical abuse, and underlying issues of domestic partner abuse. This design provides a picture of a phenomenon, which has not been thoroughly examined, by studying non-randomly selected families over a predetermined period of time. The results of this

exploratory study can be used to increase the current understanding of these phenomena and provide a foundation for future research.

This is, in essence, a study of the success, or failure (reunification vs. no-reunification), of clients who are court ordered (not randomly selected) to a "full coverage program" (all clients provided with same services and treatment programs for the purpose for family reunification). The preliminary assumption of this study was that: specific services and/or factors, such as: level of client participation, demographic differences, perpetrator arrest and the experience and education of the caseworker are associated with successful reunification. In this study, quantitative and qualitative comparisons are made between clients who successfully reunify with their children and those who fail to reunify, using the data generated in relation to the independent and dependent variable(s).

Limitations of this study related to the study design and the use of an automated case management system include:

- Possible inconsistencies in entry of case notes and demographic data into the CWS/CMS system (data may be inaccurate, incomplete or missing from case files).

- Inconsistencies in case assessments conducted and recorded by social workers.
- Data inconsistencies related to automation problems (data can be missing or damaged).
- And finally, data may be influenced by the biases of the assigned social workers.

Sampling

The primary data source for this study was San Bernardino County Child Welfare Services records extracted from the Child Welfare Services/Case Management Services (CWS/CMS) database. This statewide automated system keeps data on history of abuse, type of abuse, detailed demographic data, detailed court reports, services received and detailed case notes. From these fully automated records, quantitative (demographic data) and more detailed qualitative data related to the variable(s) was gathered from general data screens, case notes and structured court reports.

In this study, the research sample included all San Bernardino County child welfare cases in which children were removed from parental custody due to serious physical abuse, and underlying issues of domestic abuse between January 1, 1999, and September 30, 1999. A longitudinal

study of these identified cases was conducted, by reviewing relevant information recorded in these case records from January 1, 1999, through June 30, 2001.

The longitudinal nature of this study is crucial, due to the statutory time-frames related to family reunification services in most child abuse cases. Specifically, this study examined the records of identified families for up to two years because California State law mandates that parents or legal guardians receive family reunification services for a minimum of 6-months to a maximum of 18-months.

Finally, a sample of court involved families taken from January 1, 1999, to June 30, 1999, allowed the case records of identified families to be extensively reviewed throughout the maximum reunification cycle (18-months). The automation of the CWS/CMS system and the use of archival, secondary data, allowed for systematic content analysis of this research sample.

Data Collection and Instruments

Using content analysis of each identified family case (archival data), qualitative information was assessed and translated into a quantitative form for statistical analysis. While reviewing each case for relevant

quantitative and qualitative information, a case data abstraction tool, designed specifically for this study, was used to record pertinent data related to the independent and dependent variables (See Case Data Abstraction Tool, APPENDIX A)

Independent variables in this study included the following demographic information on each parent which was measured at a nominal level: sex, race, employment status, educational level, role in domestic abuse case, role in child abuse case, history of substance abuse. Each parent's specific age, length of current domestic relationship and the number of children was recorded as a continuous level of measurement.

Additionally, independent variables related to service provision were examined in this study. Services provided to the family include separate categories for family counseling, individual counseling, parenting classes, substance abuse and anger management classes. These categories of service provision and completion of services will be measured at a nominal level.

Other independent variables related to perpetrator arrest (nominal measurement) were also recorded during the case review process. Further, independent variables related to incidents of prior child abuse and domestic

abuse are also recorded in this study. Finally, independent variables related to the assigned caseworker's years of experience (continuous measurement) and educational level (nominal measurement) was recorded and analyzed in this study.

In this study, the dependent variable was successful reunification of the child(ren) in the parental home. This was measured at a nominal level based on family reunification verses no family reunification.

Data Collection Procedure

In this study, the initial research sample was selected by screening for all San Bernardino child welfare cases which resulted in child removal from parental custody due to serious physical abuse between January 1, 1999, and June 30, 1999. These records were extracted from the automated CWS/CMS system by use of a "query" made to the database (linking court cases between January 1, 1999, and June 30, 1999, and cases involving serious physical abuse).

From this preliminary non-random research sample, all cases were reviewed (by the researchers), and those that do not contain documented domestic partner abuse were eliminated from the research sample. As stated previously,

the final research sample was comprised of 35 cases. After the final research sample was selected, each sample case was assigned an identification number in order to track each identified case through the research process, and to preclude any disclosure of confidential information.

Finally, this study utilized content analysis and a case data abstraction tool (APPENDIX A) to categorize additional independent variables in a SPSS spreadsheet form for statistical analysis. The data needed to complete the exploratory research process was extracted from automated court reports, case notes and other documentation contained in the CWS/CMS system and written primarily by DCS social workers over the two-year period studied.

Protection of Human Subjects

The confidentiality and anonymity of the study participants was a primary concern of these researchers. For the sake of protecting the participants' anonymity and inputting the data, a numbering system was utilized. No participant names were used. The sample used by the researchers has been kept confidential by only allowing the researchers to have access to the case name. The research data obtained, and presented in the final

research project was coded by number only. No names of clients have been released or connected to the information gathered for this study, in order to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the families studied. The unobtrusive nature of this study design (review of archival records) further protects the privacy of the families studied.

Data Analysis

Using content analysis and general case review, all relevant qualitative and quantitative data were gathered, quantified and categorized in a SPSS spreadsheet format. This data was statistically analyzed using univariate, bivariate (Chi-square) and multivariate statistical analysis (Independent Means T-Test) to compare the critical variables of cases in which children were reunified with their family and cases in which reunification did not occur.

Initially simple statistical tools (bivariate correlations) were utilized to identify logical groupings of variables (i.e., demographics, types and levels of services, worker characteristics) to be analyzed using more complex statistical analysis (Chi-Square and Independent Means T-Test). It was initially hypothesized

that various correlations between critical independent variables (individual and familial characteristics, services completed, perpetrator arrest, social worker experience and educational level) and the dependent variable (reunification versus no reunification) exist and would be evident in this study.

Summary

In summary, this study utilizes an exploratory research design in which extensive content analysis was conducted on 35 child welfare cases in which children were removed from parental custody due to serious physical abuse and the presence of domestic violence. From this data, critical variables were analyzed in order to address the research question of:

"In San Bernardino County child welfare cases, in which children have been removed from parental custody due to serious physical abuse and where domestic partner abuse is also present, what factors are most associated with successful family reunification?"

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

Included in Chapter Four is a presentation of the results of this research project. First, presented below, are the results of statistical analysis of the characteristics of the non-random sample of the 35 court cases identified for this study. The Chapter concludes with a summary of the key findings of this research project.

Presentation of the Findings

In relation to the dependent variable in this study, in 25 cases (71.4%) reunification occurred while in 10 cases (28.6%) children were not reunified with their parents. In relation to a prior history of domestic abuse, in 85.7% of the cases there had been domestic violence in the family home prior to child removal. In 82.9% of the cases there had been prior child abuse. Finally, in 29 of the 35 cases (82.9%) of the cases, the perpetrator of the domestic abuse and/or child abuse was arrested.

Based on the design of this study, all families in this sample were comprised of two adults with male and

female parents being evenly distributed throughout this sample. The age range of the female parent was 20 to 44 with a mean of 30.41 and a median of 30.50. The age range of the male parent was 21 to 59 with a mean of 34.58 and a median of 33.0. The number of years in which the parents were in a relationship prior to child removal ranged from 1 to 18 with a mean of 5.18 and a median of four. In fact, in 75% of the families studied, the parents had been in the relationship five years or less. The number of children in each family studied ranged from one to six with a mean of 2.91 and a median of three.

In this study, 23 (65.7%) of the female parents were Caucasian, 7 (20%) were Hispanic, 3 (8.6%) were African-American, and 2 (5.7%) were categorized as other. In 11 cases (31.4%) the female parent was employed, in 19 cases (54.3%) unemployed, and in 5 cases (14.3%) the employment status of the female parent was unknown. In 28 of the cases (80%) the female parent was the victim of the domestic abuse and in 15 of the cases (42.9%) the female parent was the perpetrator of the physical abuse. Finally, in 21 of the cases (60%), the female parent had a history of substance abuse prior to child removal.

In relation to the male parents in this study, 20 (57.1%) were Caucasian, 8 (22.9%) were Hispanic, 6 (17.1%)

were African-American, and 1 (2.9%) was categorized as other. In 19 cases (54.3%) the male parent was employed, in 9 cases (25.7%) unemployed, and in 7 cases (20%) the employment status of the male parent was unknown. In 33 of the cases (94.3%) the male parent was the perpetrator of the domestic abuse and in 28 of the cases (80%), the male parent was the perpetrator of the physical abuse. Finally, in 22 of the cases (62.9%), the male parent had a history of substance abuse prior to child removal.

Although all families in this study were identified as having children removed due to domestic abuse and physical abuse of the children, in only 11 (31.4%) cases the family completed court ordered family counseling. In 12 of the cases (34.3%), parents completed individual counseling and in 27 (77.1%) of the cases parenting classes were completed. Finally, in 16 (45.7%) of the cases, the parent identified as the perpetrator of the domestic violence completed an anger management program.

Using statistical analysis to examine the relationships between the dependent variable (child reunification vs. no reunification) and the independent variables, there were no statistical relationships found between the dependent variable and the independent variables (measured as continuous) of:

- The age of female parent
- The age of male parent, and
- The years of experience of social worker.

Further, there were no statistical relationships found between the dependent variable and the nominally measured independent variables of:

- Race of the female parent
- Employment status of female parent
- Role in domestic violence of female parent
- The female parent's history of substance abuse
- The role of female parent in physical abuse
- Race of the male parent
- Role in domestic violence of male parent
- The male parent's history of substance abuse
- The role of male parent in physical abuse
- Completion of individual counseling
- Completion of an anger management program
- Arrest of the perpetrator
- Prior child abuse history
- Prior history of domestic abuse, and
- The educational level of the social worker.

Using the Independent Means T-Test to analyze the statistical relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables measured as continuous data, it was found that the greater the years in the relationship the more likely reunification would occur, $t=2.393$, $df=23.868$, $p=.025$. Using this same statistical test, it was also found that in this sample, successful family reunification was strongly associated with a greater number of children within the family, $t=2.204$, $df=21.841$, $p=.038$ (see APPENDIX C, Table 1).

Using the Pearson Chi-Square Test to analyze the statistical relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables measured as nominal data, it was found that employment of the male parent was associated with successful reunification, $X^2=4.732$, $df=1$, $p=.030$ (see APPENDIX C, Table 2). Next, using the same statistical test, it was found that the completion of parenting class was strongly associated with successful reunification, $x^2=5.85$, $df=1$, $p=.016$ (see APPENDIX C, Table 3). And finally, it was found that the completion of family counseling was very strongly associated with successful family reunification, $x^2=6.417$, $df=1$, $p=.011$ (see APPENDIX C, Table 4).

The Pearson Chi-Square Test was also used to analyze the statistical relationship between other interesting correlations between various independent variables. First, an association was found that suggests that if the female parent was the perpetrator of the domestic abuse, the male parent was also likely to be identified as a perpetrator, $\chi^2=8.485$, $df=1$, $p=.004$ (see APPENDIX C, Table 5). Next, an association was found that suggests that if the female parent had a history of substance abuse there was likely also a prior history of child abuse, $\chi^2=5.666$, $df=1$, $p=.017$ (see APPENDIX C, Table 6). Third, an association was found that suggests if the male parent had a history of substance abuse there was likely also a prior history of child abuse, $\chi^2=6.618$, $df=1$, $p=.01$ (see APPENDIX C, Table 7). Fourth, an association was found that suggests that if the female parent in this sample had a substance abuse history, the male parent would also likely have a history of substance abuse, $\chi^2=11.748$, $df=1$, $p=.001$ (see APPENDIX C, Table 8).

Fifth, an association was found that suggests that if the male parent was the perpetrator of the domestic abuse, they were also likely to be the perpetrator of the child abuse, $\chi^2=8.485$, $df=1$, $p=.004$ (see APPENDIX C, Table 9). Sixth, an association was found that suggests that if

there was a prior history of domestic abuse there would likely be a prior history of child abuse, $\chi^2=7.543$, $df=1$, $p=.006$ (see APPENDIX C, Table 10). Seventh, an association was found that suggests that if the female parent is employed, she is far more likely to be a perpetrator in the domestic abuse, $\chi^2=7.033$, $df=1$, $p=.008$ (see APPENDIX C, Table 11). And finally, a statistical association was found that suggests that if the female parent is the perpetrator of the domestic violence, she will likely also be a perpetrator of the physical abuse, $\chi^2=6.563$, $df=1$, $p=.010$ (see APPENDIX C, Table 12).

Summary

Chapter Four presented the results extracted from the project. Key findings related to the research question include:

- The greater the years in the relationship the more likely reunification would occur.
- Successful family reunification was strongly associated with a greater number of children within the family.
- Employment of the male parent was strongly associated with successful reunification.
- The completion of parenting class was also strongly associated with successful reunification, and

- The completion of family counseling was very strongly associated with successful family reunification.

Additional findings not related to the initial research question include:

- A statistical association that suggests that if the female parent was the perpetrator of the domestic abuse, the male parent was also likely to be identified as a perpetrator.
- A statistical association that suggests that if the female parent had a history of substance abuse there was likely a prior history of child abuse.
- A statistical association that suggests if the male parent had a history of substance abuse there was likely a prior history of child abuse.
- A statistical association that suggests that if the female parent in this sample had a substance abuse history, the male parent would also have a history of substance abuse.
- A statistical association that suggests that if the male parent was the perpetrator of the domestic abuse, they were also likely to be the perpetrator of the child abuse.

- A statistical association that suggests that if there was a prior history of domestic abuse there would also be a prior history of child abuse.
- A statistical association that suggests that if the female parent is employed, she is far more likely to be a perpetrator in the domestic abuse, and finally
- A statistical association was found that suggests that if the female parent is the perpetrator of the domestic violence, she will likely also be a perpetrator of the physical abuse.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

Chapter Five presents an overview of the conclusions drawn from the research findings of this project. Limitations of the study are reviewed, and recommendations for future research are made. The chapter concludes with a summary of the research findings.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine which demographic, familial and service related variables are associated with family reunification in adjudicated cases of physical child abuse where domestic violence is also present. In relation to the dependent variable (reunification vs. no reunification), statistical analysis (Independent Means T-Test) showed two continuous independent variables with significance. The first significant variable identified was the number of years the parents or intimate partners had been together. The longer the duration of the relationship, the more likely reunification was to occur. This finding suggests that longevity in a relationship may add to family stability.

The second continuous independent variable found to

be significant was the number of children in the family. This study revealed that in families with greater numbers of children, reunification was more likely. It is interesting to note Bowker, Aritell, and McFerron's 1988 study, found that the greater number of children in a family unit, the greater the chance of child abuse in the home. Even with that being true, it is suggested that children can also be a strong motivation for parents to work toward bringing the family back together. The continuous variables found not to impact reunification status included: age of the female parent, age of the male parent, and years of experience in Child Protective Services of the social worker.

Only three of the nominally measured independent variables in this study were found to be associated with reunification of the family. Thus, Employment status of the male was found to impact the family reunification outcome; in that, most of the families that reunified had an employed male parent. Further, the nominal variables related to client services of completion of family counseling and completion of a parenting class were found to be associated with successful reunification. What is intriguing is the long list of nominal variables not

correlated with family reunification. This list is as follows:

- Race of the female parent
- Employment status of the female
- Female role in domestic violence
- Female role in physical abuse
- Female history of substance abuse
- Race of the male parent
- Male role in domestic violence
- Male role in physical abuse
- Male history of substance abuse
- Completion of individual counseling
- Completion of substance abuse treatment
- Completion of anger management program
- Arrest of the perpetrator
- Prior child abuse history
- Prior domestic violence history
- Education level of social worker

It is unknown why the nominal variables listed above did not impact whether the family reunified. Certainly one would question why when studying the issues of domestic violence and physical abuse that completion of an anger

management program was not necessary when reuniting families. It is possible that the anger management issues may have been addressed in the family counseling sessions although that is speculation. Results also show that family history of child abuse, substance abuse, and domestic violence did not play a part in reunification. This would suggest that families are more likely to be reunified based on their current behavior rather than keeping the children out of the home due to past behavior.

This study also yielded other interesting findings in relation to associations between key independent variables. Previous research has documented that if the male is the batterer then he is likely to be the abuser of the children too. This study replicated those findings in that if the female parent was the victim of domestic violence then the male parent was the perpetrator of physical abuse, and the female parent was non-offending toward the children. Another finding that was duplicative of prior research was the adult roles in the domestic violence. For example, eighty percent of the cases studied in this sample found the female parent to be the victim. However, if the female parent was a perpetrator of domestic abuse, the male was also likely to be abusive toward his partner and the children. In relation to the

independent variable of substance abuse, this study found a high incidence of both parents having drug abuse problems coupled with a child abuse history. In fact, completion of substance abuse treatment did not prove to be significant in the families which were reunified. Lastly, one other interesting finding that resulted from this study was that the employed females were more likely to be the perpetrator of domestic violence.

Limitations

The following limitations of this study are important when considering the conclusions described above. First, the relatively small sample size limits the ability to generalize these findings to the general population. Further, some cases were found to contain incomplete, inaccurate, or missing data. Additionally, consistency of the documentation and availability of data was at times problematic given that most data was retrieved through a new automated case management system. Finally, social worker bias must also be noted as a possible limitation of this study when utilizing case assessments and documentation that would generally be considered subjective.

Recommendations for Social Work Practice, Policy and Research

Theories related to understanding the co-existence of child abuse and domestic violence are still in the infancy stage. It is clear from the studies reviewed that there are large numbers of children and adults in families who fall victim to both kinds of abuse. Social workers need to not only be aware of these forms of abuse but they need to routinely assess for the possibility of domestic violence in physically abusive families. This study demonstrates the necessity of clear assessment and documentation of all types of abuse and violence. Further, additional research of men's and women's use of violence and the link to child abuse is needed to assess and treat the families.

Additionally, this research begs for further exploration into how these issues are addressed through Child Protective Service agencies and the courts. The fact that in this study completion of an anger management program was not a significant factor in the return of children raises questions of how or even if the domestic violence behavior is resolved.

Further research is also needed not only to clarify the interaction between physical abuse and domestic

violence but to understand what other familial factors influence violence toward family members. This study has highlighted some factors such as employment, parenting classes and family counseling, which do impact reunification of families. More studies need to be conducted to amplify what factors make the most difference for these troubled families.

Since the incidence of child physical abuse and domestic violence have long been treated as separate issues, as evidenced by the existing research, the entities working with this population: child protective service agencies, the courts and domestic violence programs, need to work together to meet the needs of these families. Collaboration would not only assist the families but it would increase the knowledge base of all concerned with promoting healthy families.

Conclusions

In an effort to increase the theoretical knowledge of the complexities of cases involving serious physical child abuse and domestic violence, this exploratory study was undertaken to answer the question, "In San Bernardino County child welfare cases, in which children have been removed from parental custody due to serious physical

abuse where domestic partner abuse is also present, what factors are most associated with successful family reunification?"

The findings of the content analysis of a sample of thirty-five cases in San Bernardino County were that the familial factors of: length of relationship of the parents, the number of children, and employment of the male parent were associated with successful reunification.

Further, the completion of parenting classes and family counseling were also strongly associated with family reunification.

This exploratory study is another step towards understanding the dynamics of families experiencing physical child abuse and domestic violence. More studies will be needed to address these problems and to add to the existing theoretical foundation. This research, along with future similar studies, will lead to the expansion of the theoretical knowledge about family violence and may assist in increased family reunification, improved family services and the prevention of re-entry into the child welfare system.

APPENDIX A
DATA ABSTRACTION TOOL

Data Abstraction Tool

Dependent Variables

1. Reunification Status:

Reunification: 01 No Reunification: 02

Date of Removal: _____ Return Date: _____

Independent Variables

2. Parent Information:

Parent 1: Sex: Male (01) Female (02) Age: _____ Race: Cauc. (01) Hisp. (02) African-American (03) Asian (04) Other (05) Employed(01)Unemployed (02) Educational Level: Primary K-8 (01) Secondary 9-12 (02) Some College (03) 4 year college (04) >4 year college (05) Domestic Abuse: Victim (01) Perp. (02) Physical Child Abuse: Yes (01) No (02) Substance Abuse Hx: Yes (01) No (02)	Parent 2: Sex: Male (01) Female (02) Age: _____ Race: Cauc. (01) Hisp. (02) African-American (03) Asian (04) Other (05) Employed(01)Unemployed (02) Educational Level: Primary K-8 (01) Secondary 9-12 (02) Some College (03) 4 year college (04) >4 year college (05) Domestic Abuse: Victim (01) Perp. (02) Physical Child Abuse: Yes (01) No (02) Substance Abuse Hx: Yes (01) No (02)
--	--

4. Child Information (number of children): _____

5. Services Provided to Family:

☐ Individual Counseling

☐ Family Counseling

☐ Parenting Classes

☐ Domestic Violence Counseling

☐ Substance Abuse Counseling

6. Perpetrator Arrest: Yes (01) No (02)

7. Child Abuse History: Yes (01) No (02)

8. Domestic Partner Abuse History: Yes (01) No (02)

9. Social Worker Experience

(years of assigned social worker's experience in DCS): _____

10. Social Worker Education: BA / BS (01) M.A / M.S.

(02) M.S.W. (03) Other (04)

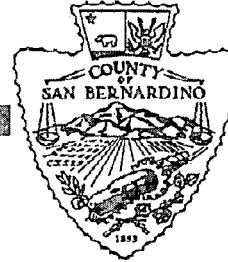
APPENDIX B
AGENCY AUTHORIZATION LETTER

Agency Authorization Letter

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

150 South Lena Road • San Bernardino CA 92415-0515

COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO
HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM



CATHY CIMBALO
Director

July 11, 2001

Dr. Teresa Morris
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY SAN BERNARDINO
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
5500 UNIVERSITY PARKWAY
SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92407-2397

This letter serves as notification to the Department of Social Work at California State University, San Bernardino, that Faye Johnson, Jane Scarlett, and Bryan Wing have obtained consent from the Department of Children's Services (DCS) of San Bernardino County to conduct the research project concerning reunification outcomes of children removed from their home due to serious physical abuse.

This letter also serves as notification to the Department of Social Work that the Department of Children's Services, San Bernardino County, consents to DCS staff participation in this research project.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cathy Cimbalo", is written above the printed name.

CATHY CIMBALO, LCSW
Director

APPENDIX C
DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1

Reunification Status and Years in Relationship

Independent Variable	Reunification Status	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean
Years in Relationship	Reunified	19	6.21	5.329	1.223
	Not Reunified	9	3.00	1.658	.553

t-test for Equality of Means

Independent Variable	Equal Variances	T	Df	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Years in Relationship	Assumed	1.752	26	.092	3.21
	Not Assumed	2.393	23.868	.025	3.21

Reunification Status and Number of Children

Independent Variable	Reunification Status	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean
Number of Children	Reunified	25	3.16	1.248	.250
	Not Reunified	10	2.30	.949	.300

t-test for Equality of Means

Independent Variable	Equal Variances	T	Df	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Number of Children	Assumed	1.958	33	.059	.86
	Not Assumed	2.204	21.841	.038	.86

Table 2

Reunification Status and Employment Status of Male Parent

Reunification Status * Employment Staus of Male Parent Crosstabulation

			Employment Staus of Male Parent		Total
			Employed	Unemployed	
Reunification Status	Reunified	Count	16	4	20
		Expected Count	13.6	6.4	20.0
	Not Reunified	Count	3	5	8
		Expected Count	5.4	2.6	8.0
Total		Count	19	9	28
		Expected Count	19.0	9.0	28.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.732 ^b	1	.030	.068	.044
Continuity Correction ^a	2.984	1	.084		
Likelihood Ratio	4.564	1	.033		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.563	1	.033		
N of Valid Cases	28				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.57.

Table 3

Reunification Status and Completion of Parenting Class

Reunification Status * Completion of Parenting Class Crosstabulation

			Completion of Parenting Class		Total
			Completed Parenting	No Parenting	
Reunification Status	Reunified	Count	22	3	25
		Expected Count	19.3	5.7	25.0
	Not Reunified	Count	5	5	10
		Expected Count	7.7	2.3	10.0
Total		Count	27	8	35
		Expected Count	27.0	8.0	35.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.850 ^b	1	.016	.027	.027
Continuity Correction ^a	3.893	1	.048		
Likelihood Ratio	5.419	1	.020		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.682	1	.017		
N of Valid Cases	35				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.29.

Table 4

Reunification Status and Completion of Family Counseling

Reunification Status * Completion of Family Counseling Crosstabulation

			Completion of Family Counseling		Total
			Completed Family Counseling	Incomplete Family Counseling	
Reunification Status	Reunified	Count	11	14	25
		Expected Count	7.9	17.1	25.0
	Not Reunified	Count	0	10	10
		Expected Count	3.1	6.9	10.0
Total	Count		11	24	35
	Expected Count		11.0	24.0	35.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.417 ^b	1	.011	.015	.011
Continuity Correction ^a	4.537	1	.033		
Likelihood Ratio	9.278	1	.002		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.233	1	.013		
N of Valid Cases	35				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.14.

Table 5

Parents Role in Domestic Violence

Role in Domestic Violence of Female Parent * Role in Domestic Violence of Male Parent
Crosstabulation

			Role in Domestic Violence of Male Parent		Total
			Victim	Perpetrator	
Role in Domestic Violence of Female Parent	Victim	Count	0	28	28
		Expected Count	1.6	26.4	28.0
	Perpetrator	Count	2	5	7
		Expected Count	.4	6.6	7.0
Total		Count	2	33	35
		Expected Count	2.0	33.0	35.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.485 ^b	1	.004		
Continuity Correction ^a	4.010	1	.045		
Likelihood Ratio	6.957	1	.008		
Fisher's Exact Test				.035	.035
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.242	1	.004		
N of Valid Cases	35				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .40.

Table 6

Substance Abuse by Female Parent and History of Child Abuse

Substance Abuse by Female Parent * Prior History of Child Abuse Crosstabulation

			Prior History of Child Abuse		Total
			Prior Child Abuse History	No Child Abuse History	
Substance Abuse by Female Parent	History of Substance Abuse	Count	20	1	21
		Expected Count	17.4	3.6	21.0
	No History of Substance Abuse	Count	9	5	14
		Expected Count	11.6	2.4	14.0
Total		Count	29	6	35
		Expected Count	29.0	6.0	35.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.666 ^b	1	.017	.028	.028
Continuity Correction ^a	3.696	1	.055		
Likelihood Ratio	5.780	1	.016		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.504	1	.019		
N of Valid Cases	35				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.40.

Table 7

Substance Abuse by Male Parent and History of Child Abuse

Substance Abuse by Male Parent * Prior History of Child Abuse Crosstabulation

			Prior History of Child Abuse		Total
			Prior Child Abuse History	No Child Abuse History	
Substance Abuse by Male Parent	History of Substance Abuse	Count	21	1	22
		Expected Count	18.2	3.8	22.0
	No History of Substance Abuse	Count	8	5	13
		Expected Count	10.8	2.2	13.0
Total		Count	29	6	35
		Expected Count	29.0	6.0	35.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.618 ^b	1	.010	.019	.019
Continuity Correction ^a	4.445	1	.035		
Likelihood Ratio	6.611	1	.010		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.428	1	.011		
N of Valid Cases	35				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.23.

Table 8

Substance Abuse by Female and Male Parent

Substance Abuse by Female Parent * Substance Abuse by Male Parent Crosstabulation

			Substance Abuse by Male Parent		Total
			History of Substance Abuse	No History of Substance Abuse	
Substance Abuse by Female Parent	History of Substance Abuse	Count	18	3	21
		Expected Count	13.2	7.8	21.0
	No History of Substance Abuse	Count	4	10	14
		Expected Count	8.8	5.2	14.0
Total		Count	22	13	35
		Expected Count	22.0	13.0	35.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.748 ^b	1	.001		
Continuity Correction ^a	9.428	1	.002		
Likelihood Ratio	12.203	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.001	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.413	1	.001		
N of Valid Cases	35				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.20.

Table 9

Role in Domestic Violence and Physical Abuse Male Parent

ole in Domestic Violence of Male Parent * Role in Physical Abuse of Male Parent Crosstabulation

			Role in Physical Abuse of Male Parent		Total
			Perpetrator	Non-Offending Parent	
Role in Domestic Violence of Male Parent	Victim	Count	0	2	2
		Expected Count	1.6	.4	2.0
	Perpetrator	Count	28	5	33
		Expected Count	26.4	6.6	33.0
Total		Count	28	7	35
		Expected Count	28.0	7.0	35.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.485 ^b	1	.004	.035	.035
Continuity Correction ^a	4.010	1	.045		
Likelihood Ratio	6.957	1	.008		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.242	1	.004		
N of Valid Cases	35				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .40.

Table 10

History Domestic Violence and History of Child Abuse

Prior History of Domestic Abuse * Prior History of Child Abuse Crosstabulation

			Prior History of Child Abuse		Total
			Prior Child Abuse History	No Child Abuse History	
Prior History of Domestic Abuse	Prior History of Domestic Abuse	Count	27	3	30
		Expected Count	24.9	5.1	30.0
	No Prior History of Domestic Abuse	Count	2	3	5
		Expected Count	4.1	.9	5.0
Total		Count	29	6	35
		Expected Count	29.0	6.0	35.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.543 ^b	1	.006		
Continuity Correction ^a	4.434	1	.035		
Likelihood Ratio	5.835	1	.016		
Fisher's Exact Test				.026	.026
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.328	1	.007		
N of Valid Cases	35				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .86.

Table 11

Domestic Violence and Employment Status of Female Parent

Role in Domestic Violence of Female Parent * Employment Status of Female Parent
Crosstabulation

			Employment Status of Female Parent		Total
			Employed	Unemployed	
Role in Domestic Violence of Female Parent	Victim	Count	6	18	24
		Expected Count	8.8	15.2	24.0
	Perpetrator	Count	5	1	6
		Expected Count	2.2	3.8	6.0
Total	Count		11	19	30
	Expected Count		11.0	19.0	30.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.033 ^b	1	.008		
Continuity Correction ^a	4.746	1	.029		
Likelihood Ratio	7.031	1	.008		
Fisher's Exact Test				.016	.016
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.799	1	.009		
N of Valid Cases	30				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.20.

Table 12

Domestic Violence and Employment Status of Female Parent

**Role in Domestic Violence of Female Parent * Role in Physical Abuse of Female Parent
Crosstabulation**

			Role in Physical Abuse of Female Parent		Total
			Perpetrator	Non-Offending Parent	
Role in Domestic Violence of Female Parent	Victim	Count	9	19	28
		Expected Count	12.0	16.0	28.0
	Perpetrator	Count	6	1	7
		Expected Count	3.0	4.0	7.0
Total		Count	15	20	35
		Expected Count	15.0	20.0	35.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.563 ^b	1	.010		
Continuity Correction ^a	4.557	1	.033		
Likelihood Ratio	6.897	1	.009		
Fisher's Exact Test				.027	.016
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.375	1	.012		
N of Valid Cases	35				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.00.

REFERENCES

- American Humane Association (1999). The story of Mary Ellen. Retrieved July 17, 2000 from the World Wide Web: http://www.americanhumane.org/store/cp_pubs./htm
- Aron, L. (1997). Efforts by child welfare agencies to address domestic violence. Journal of Public Welfare, Vol. 55, (3), 4-14.
- Bachman, R. & Saltzman, L. (1995). Violence against women: Estimates from the Redesigned survey. Washington, DC. Office of Justice Programs.
- Bowker, L. H., Arbitell, M., & McFerron, J.R. (1988). On the relationship between wife beating and child abuse. Yllo, K. & Bogard, M. (Eds). Feminist perspectives on wife abuse. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Children Now, Annual Report Card, 2000.
- Children's Network, Annual Report, 1999.
- Child's World, Report, 2000.
- Daly, M., Singh, L. S. & Wilson, M. (1993). Children fathered by previous partners: A risk factor for violence against women. Canadian Journal of Public Health, Vol. 84. pp.209-210.
- Davis, L. (1987). Battered women: the transformation of a social problem. Journal of National Association of Social Workers, Vol. 32, Number 4, pp.306-311.
- Giles-Sims, J. (1985). A longitudinal study of battered children of battered wives. Family Relations, Vol. 34, pp. 205-210.

- Goode, W. J. (1971). Force and violence in the family. Journal of Marriage and Family, 33, pp.624-636.
- Hamlin, Elwood R. (1991). Community-based spouse abuse protection and family preservation team. Social Work, Vol. 32, Number 5, pp. 402-406.
- Huges, H. M. (1988). Psychological and behavioral correlates of family violence in child witnesses and victims. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 58, pp.77-90.
- McClosky, L. A., Figueredo, A. J. & Koss, M. P. (1995). The effects of systemic family violence on children's mental health. Child Development, 66. 1239-1261.
- McKay, M. (1994). The link between domestic violence and child abuse: Assessment and treatment considerations. Child Welfare Journal, 73, (1) 29-40.
- McNeely, R.L. & Simpson, G.R. (1987). The truth about domestic violence: A falsely framed issue. Social Work, Volume 32, Number 6, pp. 485-490.
- Miller, N.E. (1941). The frustration-aggression hypothesis. Psychological Review, 48, pp.337-342.
- Prescott, S. & Letko, C. (1977). Battered women: A social psychological perspective. Roy, M. (Ed.). Battered Woman. New York.
- Ross, Susan M. (1996). Risk of physical abuse to child of spouse abusing parents. Child Abuse and Neglect, Vol. 20, Number 7, pp.589-598.
- Rossi, Peter H. & Freeman, Howard E. (1989). Evaluation: A Systematic Approach. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.

Seligman, M. (1975). Helplessness.
San Francisco: W.H. Freeman.

Straus, M.A. (1978). Family patterns and child abuse in a nationally representative American sample. Paper presented at the Second International Congress on Child Abuse and neglect. London.

Straus, M. A. & Gelles, R. J. (1990). Physical violence in American Families. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Stosny, Steven. (1994). "Shadows of the heart": A dramatic video for the treatment Resistance of spouse abusers. Social Work, 39, (6), 868-892.

Walker, L. E. (1984). The Battered Women Syndrome. New York: Springer.

Whiteman, M., Fanshel, D. & Grundy, J.F. (1997). Cognitive-behavioral interventions aimed at anger of parents at risk of child abuse. Social Work, Vol. 42, (4) 231-241.

Whitney, P. & Davis, L. (1999). Child abuse and domestic violence in Massachusetts: Can practice be integrated in public child welfare setting? Child Maltreatment, 4, (2), 158-166.

Wilson, M. & Daly, M. (1987). Risk of maltreatment of children living with step-parents. Gelles, R.J. & Lancaster, J. B. (Eds.). Child Abuse and Neglect: Biosocial Dimensions, pp.215-232.

ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES PAGE

This was a two-person project where authors collaborated throughout. However, for each phase of the project, certain authors took primary responsibility. These responsibilities were assigned in the manner listed below.

1. Data Collection:

Assigned Leader: Jane Margaret Scarlett

Assisted By: Bryan Anderson Wing

2. Data Entry and Analysis:

Team Effort: Jane Margaret Scarlett

Bryan Anderson Wing

3. Writing Report and Presentation of Findings:

a. Introduction and Literature

Team Effort: Jane Margaret Scarlett

Bryan Anderson Wing

b. Methods

Team Effort: Jane Margaret Scarlett

Bryan Anderson Wing

c. Results

Team Effort: Jane Margaret Scarlett

Bryan Anderson Wing

d. Discussion

Team Effort: Jane Margaret Scarlett

Bryan Anderson Wing