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# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: ITS IMPACT ON LEARNING AMONG STUDENTS

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## Introduction

This review addresses research on the overlap in physical child abuse and domestic violence, the prediction of child outcomes, and resilience in children exposed to family violence. The authors explore current findings on the intersection of physical child abuse and domestic violence within the context of other risk factors, including community violence and related family and environmental stressors. Evidence from the studies reviewed suggests considerable overlap, compounding effects, and possible gender differences in outcomes of violence exposure. The data indicate a need to apply a broad conceptualization of risk to the study of family violence and its effects on children. CHILDREN SUBJECTED TO CHILD ABUSE are often exposed to other forms of risk, including co-occurring exposure to domestic violence (DV) and environmental stressors. Often, these different sources of risk are examined separately in research studies. Children from birth to age 3 have the highest rate of victimization, and slightly more than half of all victims are girls. By most accounts, these figures represent just a fraction of all abuse and neglect cases in a given year, with numerous acts of child maltreatment going unreported to protective service agencies. DV exposure in involved individuals' recollections of their fathers (or stepfather) having abused (e.g.,) pushed, grabbed, slapped, hit, or threatened) their mothers (or stepmothers). As with rates of exposures, what constitutes and/or defines DV also differs from one study to another, although common criteria include a child's visual or auditory witnessing of violence; his or her witnessing of violence' his or her witnessing of consequences such as injuries, household damage and police involvement; or the child's being otherwise aware of violence in the home.

## Factors Associated with exposure to domestic Violence :-

Although evidence of the co-occurrence of child abuse and domestic Violence exposure is compelling, it appears that these are among the numerous other risk factors encountered by some families. The co-occurrence of domestic Violence and physical child abuse was related to fathers' use of drugs, alcohol, and arrest for criminal offenses involving something other than domestic Violence . Tajima (2004) also found overlap in domestic Violence exposure, child

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abuse, and substance use within the family; other factors related to the co-occurrence of abuse and domestic Violence in that study included lower education, poor health, and depression in the family.

The extent to which exposure to violence out-side the home further elevates a child's risk for psychosocial problems beyond that associated with violence exposure within the home is unclear from existing research, although there is evidence an increasing level of risk when children exposed to violence in the community simultaneously encounter problem in the home and school. Evidence from several studies suggests that parenting behaviors can mediate the effects of community violence exposure so that child outcomes depend in part on the degree to which children experience warmth and consistent prosocial discipline. Evidence here would suggest that positive parenting lessens the risk for adverse outcomes for children exposed to community violence ; conceivably, then, poor and/ or abusive practices would further elevate that risk. There is relatively strong evidence that the direct abuse of children and their exposure to domestic Violence occur together and that both increased the likelihood of a full range of psychosocial problems for youth and young adults.

**Conclusion**

The combined effects of these and other risk factors appear to be greater than the effect of one risk exposure apart from the others, although research is less clear as to how much greater or for which outcomes a combination of risks is most detrimental. The outcomes of several studies suggest that family violence is likely to occur with other risks, including parental substance use and unemployment, financial stress on the family, and co-occurring violence and other adverse conditions in the surrounding community. Risks from simultaneous exposure to community violence are an important consideration, especially for children in areas (neighborhoods) in which violence occurs with the greatest frequency, such as in low-income, urban settings. Further study of the overlap in family violence and environmental influences is needed to more



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fully understand the range and interaction of experiences that produce the many adverse outcomes documented in the literature.

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