

**In-person**  
March 13-16, 2024


**Virtual**  
May - July 31, 2024

## 45th National Conference on Pediatric Health Care

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### Intimate Partner Violence and Children

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Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
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Experts in pediatrics, Advocates for children. 1

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## Speaker Disclosure

- The planners, presenters, and content reviewers of this course disclose no conflicts of interest.




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## Learning Objectives

- Analyze the presentation of individuals and family members who present with a possible exposure to IPV
- Evaluate the impact of IPV on parenting
- Describe possible consequences of exposure to IPV in infants, children and adolescents
- Explore practice implications to address IPV in pediatric patients



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## Intimate Partner Violence

Abuse or aggression occurring in the context of a romantic relationship that is perpetrated by a current or former partner


- Physical violence
- Sexual violence
- Stalking
- Psychological aggression



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## Consequences

- Severe psychological trauma
- Physical injury
- Death

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## Epidemiology

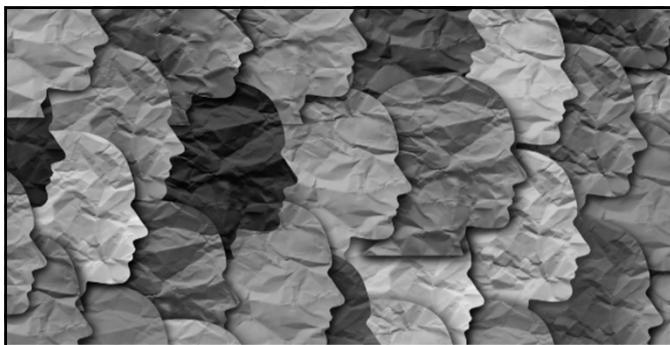
- 1 in 4 women and nearly 1 in 10 men will experience IPV
- 1 in 5 homicide victims in the U.S. killed by an intimate partner
- 1 in 15 children exposed to IPV each year

COVID-19 pandemic

- Average increase 12% with 20% increase working/school

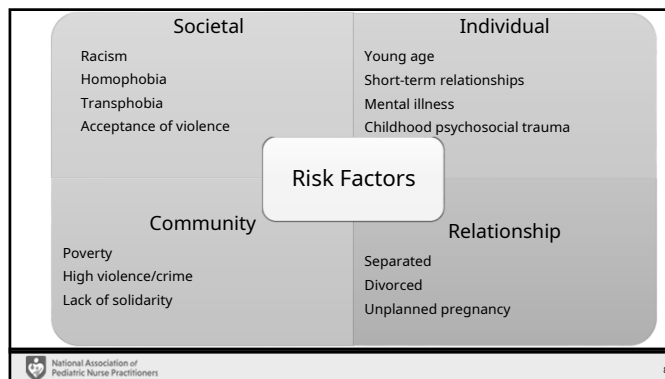
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## Risk Factors

- Heterosexual and homosexual
- LGBTQ relationships IPV may be higher
- Both men and women can be perpetrators and victims
- Men more likely to inflict severe injury on women
  - 62% of individuals injured by a partner and seeking medical care are female



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## Mother and Child Relationship

- Child's emotional and physical well-being
- Resilience
- Maternal physical and mental health
- Consequences of maternal IPV victimization



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## Impact on Women / Mothers

### Homicide

- Having a gun in the home
- Strangulation / head injuries

### Non-fatal physical injuries

- Bruises/abrasions (43.4%)
- Lacerations (16.9%)
- Strains/sprains (15.6%)
- Internal organ injuries (14.4%)
- Fractures (9.7%)

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## Impact on Women / Mothers

### Mental health

- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Generalized anxiety disorder
- Dysthymia
- Depression
- Phobias
- Substance abuse

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## Conception

### Unintended pregnancy

- Forced sexual intercourse
- Fear of discussing contraception
- Interference with contraception

### Infant outcome

- Exposure to substances
- Low infant birth weight
- Preterm labor/birth

### Maternal pregnancy outcomes

- Postpartum depression
- Substance use
- Low prenatal care
- No engagement health promoting behaviors

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## Prenatal / Perinatal

### Mother

- Little or no prenatal care
- Perinatal death

### Infant

- Fetal demise
- Miscarriage
- Placental abruption
- Preterm labor or birth
- Low birth weight
- HPA axis dysregulation



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## Child Maltreatment

- IPV is definite risk factor for child maltreatment
- Adverse Childhood Experiences Study
  - 6 x more likely suffer emotional abuse
  - 4.8 x more likely suffer physical abuse
  - 2.6 x more likely suffer sexual abuse
- Mothers who are victims of IPV
- Poly-victimization
- Culture of violence

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## Death

- IPV- related homicide
  - 54% Type 1
  - 46% Type 2
- Peripheral IPV victim
  - Adolescent
  - Teen dating violence
  - Murder suicide
  - Suicide



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## Non-fatal Physical Injury

- Collateral victims
  - Young children at increased risk
  - Caregiver's arms when violence occurs
  - Older children / adolescents
  - Intervene to stop the violence
- Variety of injuries
    - Contusions
    - Fractures
    - Abdominal trauma
    - Head trauma

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## Physical Health: Adverse Childhood Experiences Study

- Adult health behaviors
    - Tobacco
    - Alcohol / drugs
    - Unsafe sex
    - Diet / exercise
  - Adult health consequences
    - Heart disease
    - Diabetes
    - Cancer
    - Early death
- Childhood health
- Chronic health conditions
  - Asthma

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## Infancy and Early Childhood

- Impact on child functioning and development
- Most dependent on parents to meet their needs
- IPV interrupts parental ability to provide care and attention
- Safety and security
- Sense of trust and autonomy
- Lack verbal skills to express feelings

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## Infancy and Early Childhood

- Excessive irritability
- Behavioral regression
- Sleep disturbance
- Emotional distress
- Separation anxiety
- Fear of being alone
- Externalizing behaviors
- Trauma symptoms
- Language delays
- Attachment disorders

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## Infancy and Early Childhood

- Developmental delays
- Somatic problems (preschool)
- Sleep disturbances
  - Insomnia
  - Nightmares
  - Sleepwalking
  - Enuresis
- Self regulation difficulties
- Reactivity to verbal conflict
- Internalizing symptoms

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## Touch



- Primary form of mother/infant communication
- Respond to infant needs
- Communicate safety and security
- Teach infants how to regulate themselves
- Infants learn to initiate touch
- Communicate needs and feelings

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## Bernard et al. 2022

- 174 mother/infant dyads
  - Infants 12 months of age
  - 32% mothers IPV pregnancy
  - 25% mothers IPV post-partum
- Pregnancy / post-partum IPV
- No differences maternal touch
- No differences infant affectionate touch
- Boy infants more likely to use negative touch behaviors to mother



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## Childhood Impact

### Internalizing Symptoms

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Withdrawal
- Somatic complaints
- Poor sleep
- School avoidance
- Disordered eating
- Suicidal ideation
- Suicidal behaviors

### Externalizing Behaviors

- Attention problems
- Poor academic performance
- Aggression
- Bullying behaviors
- Unruly behaviors
- Difficulty forming and maintaining relationships with peers
- High risk behaviors

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## Childhood Impact

- Additional negative exposures
- Frequency of exposure
- Persistence of exposure
- Child age at time of exposure
- Developmental stage at time of exposure



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## School-aged Children

- Internalizing behaviors
  - Withdrawal
  - Anxiety
- Externalizing behaviors
  - Aggression
  - Delinquency
- Decline social competence
- Decline school performance
- Increase sleep disturbance
- More responsive to aggressive cues
- Attempt to intervene in violence



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## Adolescence Impact

- Physical, mental, and social developmental changes
- Puberty and sexual development
- Abstract thinking
- Defined sense of self
- Leveraging independence
- Define other people in relationship to themselves
- Greater cognitive skills
- Intervene in IPV



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## Adolescent Impact

- Aggression
- High-risk behaviors
- Academic failure
- Teen dating violence
  - Physical violence
    - 1 in 12 U.S. teens
  - Sexual violence
- Adolescent relationships set the stage for future relationships

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## Implications for Practice



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## Prior to Screening

All states mandatory child maltreatment reporting

- Intentional or unintentional injury to child

Know your state law defining IPV mandated reporting

- Use of weapon or presence of a child
- Child Welfare Gateway
  - <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/lawsandpolicies/statutes/witnessdv>

Reporting without state specific requirements

- Futures Without Violence
  - <https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/domestic-violence-and-health-care-protocols/>
- Consult with social work

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## Decision to Report

- Assess potential risk to child
- Caregiver ability to protect the child
- Caregiver social supports
- Linkage to community resources

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## Reporting IPV

- Could compromise IPV survivor's safety
- Assure caregiver report is not punitive
- Offer caregiver the option of reporting themselves
- Inform CPS of efforts made by caregiver to protect child
- Support caregiver before, during, and after report

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## Screening for IPV

- Identify available, affordable, and evidence-based community resources for IPV victim and children
- Inform caregiver of any mandatory reporting and/or reporting if concern for safety of child
- Aware of cultural attitudes towards violence against women
- Evidence-based tool

## Evidence-based Screening Tools

### Hurt, Insult, Threatened & Scream (HITS)

Sherin et al. (1998): [http://www.ctcadv.org/files/4615/6657/9227/HPO\\_HITS\\_Screening\\_Tool\\_8.19.pdf](http://www.ctcadv.org/files/4615/6657/9227/HPO_HITS_Screening_Tool_8.19.pdf)

### Women Abuse Screening Tool (WAST)

Brown et al. (2000): <http://womanabuse.webcanvas.ca/documents/wast.pdf>

Humiliation, Afraid, Rape, Kick – Children (HARK-CSohal, Eldridge, & Feder (2007):  
<https://www.metroallianceforhealthyfamilies.org/Media/PDF/MAHFDomesticViolenceHARK-C.pdf>

### Slap, Threatened & Thrown (STaT)

- Have you ever been in a relationship where your partner pushed or slapped you?
  - Have you ever been in a relationship where your partner threatened violence?
  - Have you ever been in a relationship where your partner has thrown, broken or punched things?
- Paranjape & Liebschutz (2003)

## Evidence-based Screening Tools

### Abuse Assessment Tool

<http://chipts.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/01/Abuse-Assessment-Screen-AAS.pdf>  
Center for HIV Identification, Prevention, and Treatment Services (2012)

### Safe Environment for Every Kid (SEEK)

Dubowitz et al. (2011): <https://seekwellbeing.org/>

### Bright Futures Pediatric Intake/Family Psychosocial Screen

[https://www.brightfutures.org/mentalhealth/pdf/professionals/ped\\_intake\\_form.pdf](https://www.brightfutures.org/mentalhealth/pdf/professionals/ped_intake_form.pdf)  
Children's Hospital Association (2018)

### Social Needs Screening Tool

[https://www.aafp.org/dam/AAFP/documents/patient\\_care/everyone\\_project/hops19-physician-form-sdoh.pdf](https://www.aafp.org/dam/AAFP/documents/patient_care/everyone_project/hops19-physician-form-sdoh.pdf)  
American Academy of Family Physicians (2018)

### Accountable Health Communities Screening Tool

<https://innovation.cms.gov/files/worksheets/ahcm-screeningtool.pdf>  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (2017)

## National IPV Resources

- Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233 <https://www.thehotline.org/>
- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence <https://ncadv.org/get-help>
- National Network to End Domestic Violence <https://nnedv.org/>
- National Resource Center on Domestic Violence <https://www.nrcdv.org/>
- Office of Violence Against Women <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/domestic-violence>
- Domestic Violence Resource Center <https://www.adf.hhs.gov/fysb/fv-centers>
- Live Your Dream <https://www.liveyourdream.org/get-help/domestic-violence-resources.html>
- National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health  
<http://www.nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org/resources/national-domestic-violence-organizations/>
- Resources for Supporting Victims of Domestic Violence  
<https://www.onlinemswprograms.com/resources/supporting-survivors-domestic-violence-resources/>

### IPV Plan of Care

- Create safety plan for self and children with the IPV survivor
- Provide IPV community resources
  - Phone numbers
  - Web sites
  - IPV shelter
  - Survivor-centered mental health care
  - Trauma-focused care for children and survivors
  - IPV community mentor/advocate
- Provide legal resources to IPV survivor
- Help IPV survivor think through social supports

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### Adolescents

- Does the person you are dating get mad at you if you do not respond to his/her calls or texts right away?
- Does the person you are dating ever monitor your phone or texts?
- Has the person you are dating ever hit, kicked, choked, or otherwise physically hurt you?
- Has the person you are dating ever threatened to hurt or kill you?
- Has the person you are dating ever done anything sexually that made you feel uncomfortable?

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### Adolescents


- Healthy relationship anticipatory guidance
- Discuss potential limits to confidentiality prior screening
- If disclose safety concerns may need to inform parents, child protective services, and law enforcement
- Assess lethality
  - Weapon, strangulation, serious bodily injury
  - Report and inform caregiver
  - Safety planning
- Consult other members of the health care team

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### Healing for Exposed Children

- Eliminate trauma exposure
- Educate caregivers regarding negative impact
- Mental health therapy
  - Trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy
  - Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing

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### Pediatric Health Care

- Thorough head to toe cutaneous exam
- Explore discipline with caregiver and child
- Use anogenital exam as an opportunity to educate

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### Discipline Screening

#### Caregiver


- How do you discipline your child?
- How does your partner discipline your child?
- Does anyone ever spank your child with their hand?
  - Where on their body?
  - How often?
  - Has it ever left a mark?
- Does anyone ever hit your child with an object?
  - What object?
  - Where on their body?
  - How often?
  - Has it ever left a mark?
- Do you or anyone else ever use other physical methods of discipline?
  - Pinching/pulling hair/kicking
- Do you or anyone else ever use nonphysical methods of discipline?

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### Discipline Screening

#### Child



- What happens when you get in trouble?
- What does Mom do when you get in trouble?
- What does Dad do when you get in trouble?
- Does anyone ever hit/whoop/spank you?
  - What do they hit you with?
  - Where on your body do they hit you?
  - How often do you get hit?
  - Does it ever leave a mark on your body?

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### Sexual Abuse Education and Screening

- Explain to the child that everyone has private parts – parts of their body that no one should touch, kiss, tickle, hurt, or put anything in.
- What are your private parts?
  - Have the child verbally tell you or point to their private parts
- What should you do if anyone bothers or tries to bother your private parts?
  - Do you tell or keep it a secret?
- Who could you tell if anyone bothered your private parts?
  - Make sure the child can name at least two adults
- You could also tell your teacher, nurse practitioner (doctor, nurse, etc.), or a policeman
- Has anyone ever touched, tickled, kissed, or hurt your private parts?
- Who is allowed to help you with your private parts if you need help?

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### Case Study #1

- 22 month old Michelle presents to primary care provider for a well child check accompanied by her mother
- Mother endorses IPV on universal screening
- Child will not answer when asked about the injury
- Mother states she fell and hit her eye on coffee table




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### Case Study #1

- As exam progresses PNP asks child again about her eye.
- Child answers – Dada
- Mother starts crying and states that father accidentally hit child last night when she was holding her. Mother states he meant to hurt me not Michelle. He never hurts her.
- No additional injuries noted on physical exam
- What interventions are indicated?



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### Case Study #1

- A. Report to CPS and law enforcement
- B. Send to ED for physical abuse workup
- C. Safety plan with mother
- D. Provide mother with local IPV resources and counseling
- E. Monitor linkage with resources
- F. All the above

### Case Study #2



- 6 year old Jarrett presents to primary care provider for well child check accompanied by mother
- Mother endorses IPV on universal screening
- Mother and child deny use of corporal punishment
- What interventions are indicated?

### Case Study #2

- A. Knowledge of state IPV reporting requirements
- B. Explore IPV with mother
- C. Determine risk for child
- D. Discuss with mother potential negative impact on child of witnessing IPV
- E. Safety plan with mother
- F. Provide local resources
- G. Monitor linkage with resources
- H. All the above

### Case Study #2

Is a report to  
child protective  
services  
indicated?



### Case Study #3

- 9 year old Melia presents to ED for dysuria and vaginal bleeding
- No concerns for sexual abuse
- PNP is seeing patient
- Mother endorses IPV on universal screening and the use of corporal punishment
- You explore IPV with mother
- What interventions are indicated?



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### Case Study #3

- A. Anogenital exam with sexual abuse education and screening
- B. Safety planning with mother
- C. Local IPV resources
- D. Report to CPS and law enforcement
- E. Survivor-focused mental health
- F. Trauma-informed mental health
- G. All the above

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## Questions?

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