

# The Common Occurrence of Domestic Violence and Child Abuse

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between domestic violence and child abuse/neglect. Child abuse has existed throughout the history of mankind. Most child abuse takes place in the home and is instituted by people known to and trusted by the child. It is like a virus - it attacks the host and alters it physically. It self-replicates. "Infection" creates a downward spiral through generations, each victim more likely to infect more and more victims (Newton, 2001). Children who survive abuse to adulthood in turn are more likely to abuse their own children who, if they survive, grow up more likely to abuse their own children, and so on. There are cultures that believe that children are property, parents have the right to control their children in any way they wish, they need to be toughed up to face the hardships of life, and that girls need to be genially mutilated to assure virginity and later marriage (Kraizer, 1996).

The overall trend that has been displayed throughout the research is that there is a direct relation between domestic violence and child abuse. Some of the researchers believe that outside influences such as alcohol and drug use and also ecological factors play a major role. Most, if not all, of the studies say that there is something that ties domestic violence and child abuse together. The ties are that child abuse is more likely to occur in homes where there is violence between parents. *The Co-Occurrence of Child Abuse and Domestic Violence: An Issue of Service Delivery for Social Service Professionals (Avery, et al., 2003)* showed that some parents who had a history of child abuse and were currently abusing their own children had experienced both child abuse and domestic violence.

## PURPOSE/RATIONALE

According to Krazier (1996) children who survive abuse to adulthood in turn are more likely to abuse their own children who, if they survive, grow up more likely to abuse their own children, and so on. It is so very important to determine if there is a relationship between domestic violence and child abuse.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the relationship between the number of parent's in the home and child abuse?
2. What is the relationship between a history of mental illness and substance abuse?

## DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLING FRAME

The sample frame will consist of 43 cases from the Department of Children's Services dealing with child abuse and domestic violence.

## DESCRIPTION OF METHODS TO SELECT STUDY SAMPLE

The sampling technique that will be used is Convenient Sampling. There are only 43 cases that are available for this study so the information will be pulled from only those cases.

## STUDY

### PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS STEPS

1. Post test quantitative study will be conducted.
2. Data will be collected and entered into SPSS.
3. Correlation test will be conducted primary. Measures of central tendency and t-tests will also be used to analyze the data
4. The test statistics will be used to verify the relationship between domestic violence and child abuse.

## RESULTS

1. **What is the relationship between an the number of parent's in the home and child abuse?** A Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated for the relationship between number of parents in home and form of abuse or neglect. A positive correlation that was not significant was found ( $r(43)=.180, p<.05$ ). The number of parents in the home is not related to the form of abuse or neglect.
2. **What is the relationship between a history of mental illness and substance abuse?** A Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated for the history of mental illness and substance abuse. A weak correlation was found ( $r(43)=.335, p<.05$ ), indicating a significant linear relationship between the two variables. A history of mental illness is not necessarily related to substance abuse.

## Child Abuse



## DISCUSSION

The results of the study concluded that there is no real relationship between domestic violence and child abuse. The correlation results for the variables number of parents in the home and form of child abuse were not significant and showed that there was no relation. The correlation results for the variables history of mental illness and substance abuse concluded that there was a significant linear relationship, but the variables were not necessarily related.

## 5 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. Social workers need to educate others on the signs of abuse and who to report to.
2. Countries, nations and governments can work together to put the perpetrators of child abuse in jail and keep the victims safe.
3. Every new parent should be enrolled in parenting classes to learn how to handle the stressors of being a new parent.
4. If a person is suspected of child abuse or they fear that they may abuse a child, they should know to call the child abuse hotline for an intervention.
5. There should be community support systems for convicted child abusers.