Violence Associated Injury to Children: The Psychological effect

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Exposure to violence

• Children are more likely than adults to be exposed to violence and crime.

• Violence is a major cause of death and disability for young people, and it is a major health problem in our society, whether the child is a perpetrator, victim, or witness.
In an event where there is exposure to violence among children, the actors and the effects can be very similar.
The effect of inequalities

• Children, who occupy marginal or subordinate positions within peer hierarchies, will be more susceptible to violence associated with both physical and psychological injury.
• Certain children experience higher risks than others.
• Violence-associated injury among children is neither randomly nor evenly distributed within the population.
Short to long term effects

- Children who are exposed to violence experience short-term and long-term physical, mental, and emotional harm.

- Anxiety
- Emotional dysregulation
- Behavioral problems
- School problems
- ADHD
- Developmental problems
• Adverse childhood experiences include verbal, physical or sexual abuse, family dysfunction as well as poverty.
Adversity

• Exposure to violence is recognized as an adverse childhood experience.
• Any single form of adverse childhood experience is more likely to be related to other adverse experiences.
Inter-connections

• Inter-connections between injury, adversity, exposure to violence, and victimization and re-victimization.

• Different forms of interpersonal violence are connected across contexts over the life span, from birth and adulthood, and in the lives of victims, perpetrators and those involved in violence as both victims and perpetrators.
Age effect

• This study presented pictures of female models posing angry, happy or with neutral facial expressions in maltreated and non-maltreated children at 42 months of age.

Long-term effects

- Psychological problems have shown to be associated to adverse childhood experiences
- Children might suffer chronic diseases, mental illness, as well as aggressive and violent behaviors.

- Multiple risk factors for several of the leading causes of death in adults:
  - PTSD
  - Mental Health Problems
  - Violent behaviors
  - ADHD
  - Antisocial behaviors
Effects

• Single or intermittent stress responses from this exposure affect child development and profile the future behavior of the child as both a victim and perpetrator.
Cycles

• Child turns to one, a few, or all of the following:
  • Victim to further victim either at home or the community
  • Victim to child abuser
  • Victim to perpetrator of violence against their own partner, or victim to perpetrator in the community as an antisocial offender
Violence Associated Injury to Children Model

- High Socioeconomic Status
- Low Socioeconomic Status

Effects

Physical related
- Physical and psychological related
- Psychological related

- Anxiety
- Emotional dysregulation
- Behavioral problems
- School problems
- ADHD
- Developmental problems

Short-term effects
- Severity
  - Concurrence with other adverse child events or different forms of victimization
  - Age
  - Cumulative effects

Long-term effects
- Multiple risk factors for several of the leading causes of death in adults.
  - PTSD
  - Mental Health Problems
  - Violent behaviors
  - ADHD
  - Antisocial behaviors