

# **The Role of the Gender of Abusive Parents in the Inter-generational Transmission of Partner Violence: A Preliminary Study**

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At the first Haruv international conference, this researcher presented a call for complementary research on the role of the gender of abusive parents on the quality of their children's adult intimate relationships. This lecture will present the findings of a preliminary study of a sample of over one thousand Israeli Jewish and Arab students, asking them questions pursuant to this goal. The research inquires about three experiences in the student's family of origin and current personal life: being a child victim of emotional or physical abuse, being exposed to inter-parental emotional or physical violence, and being a victim and/or aggressor in romantic relationships as an adult. In addition, students were asked to state their attitudes regarding various scenarios of gender equality and intimate partner violence. This research project, to the best of our knowledge, is the first of its kind in Israel in that it addresses all three abusive dynamics while controlling the gender variable in analyzing the inter-generational transmission of violence. The questionnaire asks students about their fathers and mothers equally and separately, and questions the quality of their adult intimate relationship. Such multiple matrixes of age and gender positions may reveal interesting data on some under-researched mechanisms of child abuse and the quality of adult intimate relationships.

**Key words:** child abuse; exposure to inter-parental violence; intimate partner violence; inter-generational transmission of intimate partner violence.

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**The Relationship Between Exposure to Family Violence During Childhood and Adolescence and Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms During Young Adulthood: Is it Moderated and Mediated By Self-Efficacy and Social Support?**

By

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A cross-sectional survey, using a self-administered questionnaire, was conducted among a convenience sample of 516 students of social work in Israel, for examining the relationship between participants' exposure to (i.e., witnessing and experiencing) different patterns and types of family violence during childhood and adolescence, on one hand, and post-traumatic stress symptoms (PTSS) during young adulthood, on the other. The results reveal that the more the participants witnessed and experienced psychological aggression and physical violence in their families of origin the more they exhibited each of the following symptoms: Anxiety, depression, dissociation, and sleep-disorder, as indicators of PTSS. In addition, the results indicate that a significant amount of the variance in participants' each of these four symptoms as well as in their PTSS could be explained by their exposure to family violence, over and above the amounts of variance that were attributed to their sociodemographic characteristics as well as their self-efficacy and social support. The moderating and mediating effects of self-efficacy and social support on the relationship between exposure to family violence and these psychological

consequences were also examined. The limitations of the study and its implications for future research will be discussed.

Keywords: Exposure to family violence, witnessing interparental violence, experiencing parental violence, post-traumatic stress symptoms (PTSS), long-term psychological effects.

**Title of the Presentation: Complex-PTSD as a mechanism for the association between child abuse/neglect and intimate partner violence by men**

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One of the most devastating effects of child abuse/neglect is its potentially leading to the use of intimate partner violence (IPV) by adult males. The self-trauma model has suggested an explanation for this cycle of violence, but research in the field has focused primarily on the PTSD response to childhood traumatic events and not on the damage these events can cause to self-organization. In addition, no study has yet looked at the proposed ICD-11 Complex-PTSD diagnosis, which gathers these two main factors into one conceptual and clinical diagnosis; i.e., CPTSD includes, in addition to PTSD symptoms, DSO (disturbances in self-organization) symptoms. Therefore, we examined the association between exposure to child abuse/neglect and symptoms of CPTSD, and whether greater frequency and severity of male violence is associated with higher CPTSD.

Participants were 234 men drawn randomly from a national sample of 2,600 men receiving treatment at 66 clinical centers for domestic violence in Israel. They completed the new ICD-11 ITQ, the CTS for IPV and child abuse/neglect, and a life events questionnaire that assesses exposure to other traumatic events.

SEM findings revealed that high exposure to child abuse/neglect was associated with CPTSD, and CPTSD had an effect on perpetration of psychological violence. In addition, CPTSD was a mediator between child abuse/neglect and psychological IPV.

The study sheds light on the consequences of child abuse/neglect for adult life behaviors. These findings strengthen the self-trauma model which suggests that traumatic injuries in childhood stem from the injury of the self.

**Keywords:** Child abuse, neglect, domestic violence

# **PARENTAL ALIENATION AND RESTRICTIVE GATEKEEPING ARE CHILD MALTREATMENT: PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION**

**Philip Marcus**, Judge (Retired), Jerusalem Family Court

## **PROPOSAL FOR HARUV INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, DECEMBER 2017: CHILD MALTREATMENT IN CONTEXT**

Keywords: child maltreatment, parental alienation, gatekeeping, prevention

The children of parents who are engaged in high conflict litigation related to their separation are subjected to stress and conflicts which in many cases – 30% according to some researchers – cause lasting psychological, social and even physical harm, which last well beyond maturity.

Particularly damaging are situations in which a parent alienates the child from the other parent; this is often preceded by restrictive gatekeeping – reducing the level of contact between the child and the parent, badmouthing the other parent, and driving a wedge between the child and that parent. This is child maltreatment.

The existence of the phenomenon is not sufficiently known to the general public, and it is not usually addressed by child welfare authorities; perhaps because the welfare of the child is being considered by the court in any case, and because there is one parent who is not abusing the child, and also because inadequate resources permit child protection workers to deal only with acute cases of physical and sexual abuse.

The parents themselves may not be aware of the warning signs of distancing the child from a parent.

However, alienating behaviour usually starts before the opening of court proceedings, and only recognition of this conduct as abuse may allow early intervention. This requires training of people, in the education and health professions who are in contact with the child, to recognize the

parents who are especially liable to perpetrate this kind of abuse and the children who are particularly susceptible, so as to refer such cases for consultation and treatment at the earliest possible stage.

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