Women’s & Children Summit
Violence Against Women & Children

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Overview

- Do we have problem?
- Why should we care?
- Is the problem getting better or worse?
- What have we done to deal with the problem?
  - S  Strenths
  - W  Weaknesses
  - O  Opportunities
  - T  Threats
New Zealand Violence Against Women Study (NZ VAW Study)

- **Aim**
  - to assess prevalence and health consequences of violence against women, with a focus on intimate partner violence (IPV)

- **Method**
  - Cross-sectional survey of women aged 18-64, in two regions (Auckland, North Waikato) in 2003
  - Door-knocking at randomly selected houses, n=6,174
  - Face-to-face interviews with one randomly selected woman from each household
  - N=2,855, 67% Response rate

- Replication of the World Health Organization (WHO) Multi-country study on women’s health and domestic violence against women (10 + countries)

- Funded by the Health Research Council
Definitions

• CSA = Child Sexual Abuse
  • Sexually touched before the age of 15 years

• Intimate Partner: spouse, de facto partner, or ex-partner, boyfriend

• IPV = Intimate partner violence

• Lifetime prevalence
  • one or more times, ever in a person’s life

• Past 12 month prevalence
  • one or more times, in the 12 months prior to the survey
Childhood sexual abuse prevalence estimates by reporting method and location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Face-to-face interviews % (95% CI)</th>
<th>Anonymous report % (95% CI)</th>
<th>Either/or Best estimate % (95% CI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auckland</td>
<td>17.1 (14.9-19.4)</td>
<td>21.6 (19.2-24.0)</td>
<td>23.5 (21.0-25.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Waikato</td>
<td>23.2 (20.8-25.5)</td>
<td>26.0 (23.5-28.5)</td>
<td>28.2 (25.7-30.8)</td>
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IPV Definitions

- **Physical Violence**
  - Slapped or had something thrown at you that could hurt you
  - Pushed or shoved you or pulled your hair
  - Hit with fist or something else that could hurt you
  - Kicked you, dragged you, or beat you up
  - Choked or burnt you on purpose
  - Threatened to use, or actually used a gun, knife or other weapon against you

- **Sexual Violence**
  - Physically forced to have sexual intercourse
  - Have sexual intercourse because you were afraid of what your partner might do
  - Forced to do something degrading or humiliating

- **Psychological/Emotional abuse**
  - Insulted you or made you feel bad about yourself
  - Belittled or humiliated you in front of other people
  - Did things to scare or intimidate you on purpose
  - Threatened to hurt you or someone you care about
Health Consequences of IPV

**Physical.** Abdominal/thoracic injuries, Bruises and welts, Chronic pain syndromes, Chronic disease, Disability, Fibromyalgia, Fractures, Gastrointestinal disorders, Irritable bowel syndrome, Lacerations and abrasions, Ocular damage, Reduced physical functioning

**Sexual and Reproductive.** Gynaecological disorders, Infertility, Pelvic inflammatory disease, Pregnancy complications/miscarriage, Sexual dysfunction, Sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, Unsafe abortion, Unwanted pregnancy

**Psychological and Behavioural,** Alcohol and drug abuse, Depression and anxiety, Eating and sleep disorders, Feelings of shame and guilt, Phobias and panic disorder, Physical inactivity, Poor self-esteem, Post-traumatic stress disorder, Psychosomatic disorders, Smoking, Suicidal behaviour and self-harm

Top 8 Risk Factors contributing to the disease burden in women from Victoria, Australia (15-44 yrs)

- Tobacco
- Blood Pressure
- Cholesterol
- Body Weight
- Physical Inactivity
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Alcohol
- Illicit Drugs

**strengths**

- Good Legislation
  - Domestic Violence Act, 1995 + Amendment
  - Repeal of Section 59 of the Crimes Act
- Te Rito (2002-?) National Strategy on Prevention of family violence
- Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families (2005/2006- ) + MSD Family Violence Unit (established 2011)
- World Leading Programmes
  - It’s Not Ok Campaign.
  - Ministry of Health: Violence Intervention Programme
Weaknesses

- Lack of bringing good programmes to scale across the population while maintaining programme fidelity
  - (eg. Family Start )
- Lack of sustainability (e.g. Te Rito implementation)
- Missing links
  - E.g., need a stronger presence from key sectors like education
- Tendency to review, re-invent, rather than apply what we know
Threats

• Backlash
  • Referendum about reinstating right to use “force” as part of “discipline” of children
• Family Court Review
• Failure to consider the results of actions in other areas, e.g.,
  • Housing
  • Economic position of women in the labour market (cf Jacqui True, UoA)
• People thinking we are “done”
Opportunities

- Recognising that our relationships affect all aspects of our lives
  - People who are thriving are the most economically productive, and the most healthy

- Aotearoa/New Zealand has the chance to lead the world in eliminating family violence and fostering healthy, respectful relationships
References


FANSLOW, JL, ROBINSON, EM. (in press). Sticks, stones or words? Counting the prevalence of different types of intimate partner violence reported by New Zealand Women. Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma.


Other publications that may be of interest


Art, science and politics of creating a mentally healthy society (Barry & Jenkins, 2007)