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# **Sub-Category D-iii: Domestic Violence and Children**

**COMPENDIUM OF RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN  
1993-2016**

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## Category D: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

### iii. Domestic Violence and Children

<b>1998-IJ-CX-0069:</b>	<b>Children Exposed to Domestic Violence: Providing Help Through Community Oriented Policing &amp; Community Partnerships</b>
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>\$140,960</b>
<b>PI:</b>	<b>Laura Nickles</b>
<b>Program Officer:</b>	<b>Rosemary Murphy</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Completed</b>

The proposed project will examine how community oriented police departments are working with community partners to address the needs of children exposed to domestic violence. The goals of the project are to determine:

(1) how many law enforcement departments are working with community providers to help children exposed to domestic violence; (2) what types of working partnerships are being formed between law enforcement and child protective services and/or community service providers to address the needs of children exposed to domestic violence; (3) what approaches, techniques, methods, and other responses should be replicated in a coordinated community response to children exposed to domestic violence; and (4) what data exist, or can be collected, to measure the impact of a partnership response to children exposed to domestic violence. The proposed research will begin with a national mail survey of approximately 500 community-oriented law enforcement departments, followed by a follow-up telephone survey of 30 communities, with coordinated response between law enforcement and child protective services and/or community service providers to address the needs of children exposed to domestic violence. During site visits, a process study will be conducted that includes interviews with key informants, and focus groups with nonoffending parents, about the types of service children received or failed to receive.

**Product: NCJ# 193416**

**Helping Children Exposed to Domestic Violence: Law Enforcement and Community Partnerships (2001) – B. Smith, L. Nickles, D. Mulmat, H. Davies**

A mail survey provided a national perspective on how law enforcement departments were responding to children who were exposed to domestic violence. Telephone surveys with police departments and service providers in select communities provided greater details and site visits to five communities provided insight into the coordinated response between police and service providers to help children exposed to DV. The mail survey found that nearly 75% of the departments surveyed had a policy, protocol, and/or law that required officers to investigate whether any children had been exposed to DV in households being investigated by the police. Recommendations were derived from the telephone surveys and the site visits. First, communities should recognize that children exposed to DV often suffer short-term and long-term effects that require special services. Second, police should play a pivotal “gatekeeping” function in referring children exposed to DV to services. Third, proactive responses to children exposed to DV require substantial commitment from the community and service providers. Fourth, coordination of efforts and rapport-building between police and service providers should be implemented to serve children exposed to DV. Fifth, resources should be dedicated to effectively serve children exposed to DV. Sixth, evaluation is required to determine “best practices” for serving children exposed to DV.

<b>1998-WT-VX-0021:</b>	<b>Understanding the Intergenerational Transmission of Violence: From Pregnancy Through the First Year of Life</b>
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>\$248,830</b>
<b>PI:</b>	<b>G. Anne Bogat</b>
<b>Program Officer:</b>	<b>Leora Rosen</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Completed</b>

The proposed project will: (1) examine the effect of domestic violence on four infant outcomes (physical health, temperament, social development, and cognitive development); (2) examine four factors that may mediate the relationship between battering and infant outcomes (maternal physical health, maternal mental health, parenting behavior, and child abuse and neglect); (3) examine the mental health effects of battering during pregnancy; and (4) inform criminal justice policy regarding families in which domestic violence occurs while the women is pregnant and during the first year of a child's life. Battered women ( $n = 105$ ) and non-battered women ( $n = 110$ ) will be recruited

for a longitudinal investigation beginning when the women is pregnant and following her and her infant through the child's first year of life. Women will be determined as battered or non-battered according to responses to the Violence Against Women Scales. Measures will be collected at three points, during the last trimester of pregnancy, two months after delivery, and one year after delivery. Data will be analyzed using MANOVAs in SPSS and structural equation modeling using AMOS.

**Product: NCJ# 196681**

**Understanding the Intergenerational Transmission of Violence Against Women from Pregnancy Through the First Year of Life (2002) – G. Anne Bogat, A. Levendosky, W. Davidson II**

Maternal physical health, maternal mental health, and parenting behavior were proposed as factors that mediated the relationship between DV and infant outcomes, to examine the effects of violence during pregnancy and first year of life. Data collection occurred in three phases: when the women were in their last trimester of pregnancy (T1), when the baby was 2 months old (T2), and when the infant was about 1 year old (T3). During T1 data collection, 207 women were recruited from 53 sites throughout a tri-county area. The study found that victims of DV during pregnancy experienced later entrance into prenatal care, more prenatal health problems, greater likelihood of threats to miscarry, lower infant birth weight, and a greater likelihood of staying at the hospital due to health problems for the mother. Mothers who were victims of DV during pregnancy also used significantly more chemical substances during pregnancy and used more health care services for their infants after birth than non-battered women. Only depression was identified as possibly mediating the effects of violence on prenatal health problems. Infants born to women abused during their pregnancy did not have more health problems after birth, but these women reported using more health care services for their infants.

**Additional NCJ Citations: 195579**

<b>1999-WT-VX-0001:</b>	<b>Battered Women, Battered Children</b>
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>\$191,444</b>
<b>PI:</b>	<b>Debra Whitcomb</b>
<b>Program Officer:</b>	<b>Cynthia Mamalian</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Completed</b>

Violence against women and violence against children are not isolated phenomena. Rather, such violence often co-exists in families. The goal of the proposed project is to inventory and better understand interventions for families where domestic violence and child abuse co-occur, with a specific focus on the role of law enforcement agencies. The project will: (1) identify efforts around the country to address the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child abuse; (2) examine existing law enforcement policies and practices; (3) document promising interventions and services that are provided to families where domestic violence and child abuse are co-occurring; (4) articulate areas of agreement and controversy and identify ways that communities have met these challenges; and (5) synthesize this collective wisdom and experience toward questions to guide additional research and policy analysis. The research methods will include telephone surveys of national experts, police departments, child welfare and domestic violence personnel and advocates, and site visits in communities with promising approaches.

**Product: NCJ# 185355**

**Children and Domestic Violence: Challenges for Prosecutors (2000) – D. Whitcomb**

This study investigated the challenges facing prosecutors when children are exposed to domestic violence, how new laws effective in a small number of states are affecting practice, and what prosecutors can do to help battered women and their children. The study used data from a national telephone survey of prosecutors and intensive field research at sites in Texas, Georgia, Oregon, and Utah. The survey found that prosecutors are more aware of the risks to children and many are taking steps to hold offenders accountable for the risks to children by arguing for harsher sentences and charging offenders with child endangerment. New laws that identify children as victims allow children access to crime victim compensation funds, enable the courts to issue protective orders on the children's behalf and signal a need to file a report with the child protection agency, even in the absence of laws naming DV as a condition of mandatory reporting. The study suggests ways prosecutors can help battered women and their children, including: (1) instituting protocols within prosecutors' offices to facilitate information sharing; (2) identifying avenues for earlier intervention; (3) using every means to enforce no-contact orders and probationary sentences; (4) promoting increased attention to services for battered women; and (5) advocating for needed change, whether legislative, fiscal or programmatic.

**Additional NCJ Citations: 190632, 197297, 199701, 199721**

<b>1999-WT-VX-0009:</b>	<b>Domestic Violence and Child Aggression</b>
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>\$249,854</b>
<b>PI:</b>	<b>Renee McDonald</b>
<b>Program Officer:</b>	<b>Leora Rosen</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Completed</b>

Aggressive behavior during childhood is a predictor of later violent and criminal behavior in adolescence and adulthood, and there is concern that a great number of children are at risk for aggressive behavior because of DV. However, it is not possible to discern from existing research the magnitude of the risk for aggressive behavior that DV poses for children. Specifically, much of the research on children and domestic violence suffers from a variety of conceptual and methodological limitations. The primary goal of the proposed research is to refine our understanding of the nature and limits of the relation between children's exposure to DV and children's aggressive behavior. A secondary goal is to contribute to our understanding of the measurement of DV. Three samples: (1) DV with shelter; (2) DV with no shelter; and (3) no DV will be included in the study.

<b>2002-WG-BX-0012:</b>	<b>Intimate Partner Violence During Visitation: A Longitudinal Study of Supervised and Unsupervised Access</b>
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>\$198,946</b>
<b>PI:</b>	<b>Chris O'Sullivan</b>
<b>Program Officer:</b>	<b>Bernard Auchter</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Completed</b>

This study explores the extent to which different court-ordered visitation arrangements expose victims of domestic violence to further abuse from ex-partners and result in their children being threatened or witnessing violence by their fathers. The researchers will interview victimized mothers in New York City—100 whose ex-partners are receiving short-term supervision at a visitation center and 250 whose ex-partners are receiving unsupervised or family-supervised visitation. In addition, the researchers will investigate whether court-ordered visitation arrangements for non-custodial parents conform to a model code for visitation issued by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. The project goal is to increase the understanding of court-ordered visitation under different conditions in DV cases in order to prevent future violence against women and children in these situations. Specific aims are to examine: (1) the outcomes for children and mothers under conditions of supervised visitation, unsupervised visitation, family-supervised visitation, and supervised or public transfer; (2) which families receive professionally supervised visitation and which do not; and (3) how courts handle visitation for families with a history of DV when professional supervision is not ordered or cannot be accessed. Study findings will provide information to the courts and affiliated programs, including family court judges, custody evaluators, law guardians, resource coordinators, and supervised visitation programs.

**Product: NCJ# 213712**

**Supervised and Unsupervised Parental Access in Domestic Violence Cases: Court Orders and Consequences (2006) – C. O'Sullivan, L. King, K. Levin-Russell, E. Horowitz**

When a victim of intimate partner violent separates from and secures an order of protection against her partner and the couple has children in common, New York City Family Courts are likely to grant the father visitation. Accordingly, the Model Code of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges recommends that child visitation be granted to a perpetrator of domestic violence only if the safety of the child and victimized parent can be protected through such arrangements. Researchers recruited 242 women from the New York City Family Courts and supervised visitation centers—baseline interviews were conducted in person and 168 participants were re-interviewed by telephone an average of six months later. Questions focused on physical and psychological abuse and injuries, children's exposure to the abuse and visitation orders. Results indicated that if: (1) the father had recently been physically abuse or if he abused alcohol or drugs, he was significantly more likely to receive an order for family-supervised than for unsupervised visits; and (2) the father had access to a gun, he was more likely to receive an order to a visitation center. Visitation conditions were not significantly associated with abuse during the follow-up period and significantly more children showed externalizing and internalizing behavior problems if the mother had been severely injured by the father. This report recommends: (1) more funding for visitation centers; (2) guidelines for family members who supervise visits; and (3) that unsupervised visits and family supervised visits need to be monitored for compliance with conditions on visits.

<b>2002-WG-BX-0014:</b>	<b>Co-Occurring Intimate Partner Violence and Child Maltreatment: Local Policies/Practices and Relationships to Child Placement, Family Services, and Residence</b>
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>\$399,774</b>
<b>PI:</b>	<b>Kelly Kelleher</b>
<b>Program Officer:</b>	<b>Bernard Auchter</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Completed</b>

The purpose of this project is to improve outcomes for women, children and families affected by intimate partner violence in the presence of co-occurring child maltreatment through research on state, county and local variation in policies and practices. The research goals are to: (1) Describe the variation in policies/practices related to the issue of co-occurring child maltreatment and IPV; (2) assess the relationships of these policies/practices with placement of children in out-of-home care; uses of family preservation services and residential stability for maternal/child dyads; and (3) report on outcomes for cases in the child welfare system with co-occurring IPV known or unknown to caseworkers. The National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW) is a three year, representative survey of 92 primary sampling units in 36 states including 5504 children and their families in the child welfare system. Researchers will re-survey the 92 participating Primary Sampling Units with snowball sampling to identify the best informant. This contextual data on policies/practices will be confidentially linked to the NSCAW survey data. Hierarchical models are used to examine variations in policies/practices, identify associations between these and outcomes, and examine the impact of co-occurring IPV that is known to the child welfare system compared to IPV reported by women but unknown to caseworkers.

**Product: NCJ# 213503**

**Co-Occurring Intimate Partner Violence and Child Maltreatment: Local Policies/Practices and Relationships to Child Placement, Family Services and Residence (2006) – K. Kelleher, W. Gardner, J. Coben, R. Barth, J. Edleson, A. Hazen**

The results from the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well Being and the related study of local child welfare and domestic violence service agencies found the extent of co-occurring domestic violence and child maltreatment to be larger than indicated by previous research. The following findings indicate the need for more widespread collaboration between child protection and domestic violence service providers to effectively intervene in cases to stop the related abuse in both realms: (1) among families referred for child welfare investigations for child maltreatment, lifetime prevalence of domestic violence is 44.8%, past year prevalence is 29% and caregiver depression is associated with increased prevalence; (2) although domestic violence prevalence was high, child welfare agency workers identified only 15% of cases reported by mothers of children in their care; (3) families of children referred for child maltreatment infrequently receive services from domestic violence service organizations—this is often true even when domestic violence is known to child welfare agencies; and (4) women victimized by their partners employ more psychological aggression and physical discipline, including some severe violence, than women not victimized.

<b>2005-WG-BX-0001:</b>	<b>Consequences of Childhood Exposure to Intimate Partner Violence</b>
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
<b>PI:</b>	<b>Clifton Emery</b>
<b>Program Officer:</b>	<b>Carrie Mulford</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Completed</b>

The goal of this study is to explore the causal effects of exposure to intimate partner violence, and to identify the theoretical perspectives that best explain any identified effects. Three major policy issues will be relevant to these results: (1) the criminalization of exposure to intimate partner violence; (2) funding for interventions that focus on children exposed to intimate partner violence; and (3) the concept of in-house treatment for victims of battering and outpatient treatment for batterers. The project will use longitudinal data taken from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods

**Product: NCJ# 215347**

**Consequences of Childhood Exposure to Intimate Partner Violence (2006) – C. Emery**

The findings indicate that intimate partner violence has a significant and negative effect on externalizing child behavior, internalizing child behavior, general behavior problems, and drinking among children. The author also examined whether any of the theories that explained deviance, development, and stress could account for the effects



of intimate partner violence on child externalizing, internalizing, and total behavior problems, as well as on alcohol consumption patterns. It was found that anxiety and the parent-child relationship partially mediated the effects of partner violence on child externalizing behavior. The impact of anxiety on externalizing behaviors should be taken into consideration by policymakers and clinicians when dealing with the aftermath of intimate partner violence exposure on children. Research suggests that individual treatment for children exposed to intimate partner violence may reduce stress and, in turn, some of the problem behaviors. Data were drawn from the first two time periods of the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods, a longitudinal study of crime, delinquency, substance abuse, and violence that included a representative random probability sample of 6,228 children and their primary caregivers. The sample was drawn from a three-stage cross-sectional stratified cluster sample of 80 Chicago neighborhoods. The data provide information on family structure, parent-child relationships, parent discipline styles, family mental health, and family history of crime and drug use. Data analysis involved the use of logistic regression and both ordinal and multinomial logits (chapter 5 discusses in detail the effect of using data augmentation algorithms on the means, standard errors, and relationships among the variables under examination). Future studies should focus on the cost effectiveness of treatment for anxiety for children who have been exposed to intimate partner violence or child abuse.

<b>2006-WG-BX-0006:</b>	<b>Multiple Perspectives on Battered Women and Their Children Fleeing to the U.S. for Safety: A Study of Hague Convention Cases</b>
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>\$370,996</b>
<b>PI:</b>	<b>Jeffrey Edleson</b>
<b>Program Officer:</b>	<b>Christine Crossland</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Closed; Change of Program Officer</b>

This study is the first step in understanding the situations of battered women and children who flee to the United States to find safe haven from a violent partner. Researchers will undertake a multi-tiered qualitative study of mothers, the attorneys who defend or prosecute them, and the judges who hear their cases under the Hague Convention. Study objectives: (a) conduct in-depth interviews with 25 women who have been prosecuted under the Hague Convention and collect documents relevant to their cases; (b) select 10 defense attorneys, 10 prosecuting attorneys and 10 judges for in-depth interviews; and, finally, (c) develop recommendations and protocols to be incorporated into scholarly journal articles, research conference presentations, a NIJ Research In Brief, and a National Bench Guide for use in Hague Convention cases involving domestic violence.

**Product: NCJ# 232624**

**Multiple Perspectives on Battered Mothers and Their Children Fleeing to the United States for Safety: A Study of Hague Convention Cases – J. Edleson, T. Lindhorst, G. Mehrotra, W. Vesneski, L. Lopez, S. Shetty**

This study examined the situations of women who experienced domestic violence in another country and came to the United States in an effort to protect themselves and their children, only to face civil actions in U.S. State or Federal courts for child abduction under international legal agreements. In cases in which the left-behind fathers filed Hague Convention petitions to have their children returned, the study found that the mothers and children had often experienced severe violence from these men. The study also found that mothers were unable to access needed resources in their home countries, so their only recourse was to take their children and seek safety and support from family members living in the United States. Further, the study found that U.S. authorities and courts were not receptive to the safety concerns expressed by the mothers. Another key finding was that mothers and children faced great hardship after a Hague Convention decision; legal fees and representation were major barriers for women in responding to Hague Convention petitions. The study found that Hague Convention decisions have not taken into account two decades of research on child exposure to domestic violence when deciding on what constitutes grave risk for a child. The study concludes that safety for battered mothers and their children facing Hague petitions requires training for attorneys and judges on both domestic violence and the law that pertains to Hague Convention cases. For this study, researchers interviewed battered mothers around the world, their attorneys and their husbands' attorneys. Published judicial decisions were examined in cases involving the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, with attention to those cases that involved allegations of domestic violence by one parent against the other. Twenty-two mothers who responded to Hague petitions in U.S. courts were interviewed. (4 figures, 23 tables, references, cited legal cases, and appended study instruments)

**Additional publication:** Edleson, J., Lindhorst, T., & Shetty, S. *Mothers and Children Seeking Safety in the U.S.: A Study of International Child Abduction Cases Involving Domestic Violence*. In NIJ Seminar Series, *Research for the Real World*, October 23, 2010. Click on links for [videotape \(86 min.\)](#) and [50-slide presentation](#), and [transcript \(Word doc, 26 pp.\)](#). The Netherlands: The Hague Domestic Violence Project.

<b>2010-IJ-CX-0022:</b>	<b>Impact of Legal Representatives on Child Custody Decisions Among Families With History of Intimate Partner Violence</b>
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>\$844,297</b>
<b>PI:</b>	<b>Mary Kernic</b>
<b>Program Officer:</b>	<b>Bethany Backes</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Completed</b>

A collaborative research study will be conducted to examine the impact of legal representation on child custody and visitation decisions in marital dissolutions between spouses with a history of intimate partner violence (IPV). A retrospective cohort study will be conducted among King County couples with minor children filing for marriage dissolution with the King County Superior Court (KCSC) or Kent Regional Justice Center (RJC) between January 1, 2000, and December 31, 2010, who have a history of police- or court-documented IPV. Specifically, a complete list of all such cases filed at the KCSC in Seattle, Washington, or the RJC in Kent, Washington, between January 1, 2000, and December 31, 2010, available from the OAC SCOMIS database, will comprise the initial eligible pool from which the study sample will be drawn. Also examined will be the 2-year period post-decree among the subset of cases with filings between January 1, 2000, and December 31, 2009, for post-decree court proceedings indicative of continued child custody/visitation disputes. Using propensity score matching, both civil paid ( $n = 500$ ) and pro bono/legal aid ( $n = 250$ ) represented cases will be matched with pro se cases ( $n = 750$ ) for a total sample size of 1,500 cases. This study is designed to address the critical gap in IPV and legal representation research through accomplishing these specific aims: (1) To describe the prevalence of legal representation (both paid civil representation and pro bono/legal aid representation) among IPV victims undergoing marriage dissolution involving children during a 10-year period in a population-based sample of marriage dissolutions; (2) To estimate the effect of legal representation, both globally (any legal representation) and by payor status (paid civil vs. pro bono/legal aid) on child custody and visitation outcomes and post-dissolution child custody and visitation disputes, including the proportion of couples for whom: (a) visitation is denied to the abusing parent, (b) supervised visitation between the abusing parent and the child(ren) is ordered, (c) restrictions are placed on the abusing parent's child visitation, (d) treatment program completion is a prerequisite to the abusing parent's child visitation, and (e) sole decision-making is awarded to the non-IPV-abusing parent; (3) To estimate the effect of legal representation on the following set of secondary outcomes: (a) court order of professional supervision of visitation, (b) court order that future dispute resolution to be conducted only through the court, (c) prohibition of overnight visitation by the abusing parent, (d) formal court findings of IPV, (e) post-decree child custody/visitation disputes, and (f) primary residential parent status is awarded to the abusing parent (adverse outcome).

**Product:** NCJ# 248886

**Final Report of the "Impact of Legal Representation on Child Custody Decisions Among Families With a History of Intimate Partner Violence Study" (2015) – M. Kernic**

The overall finding is that attorney representation of IPV victims, particularly by legal-aid attorneys with expertise in IPV cases, resulted in greater protections being awarded to the IPV victims and their children. The study found that in cases where a parent who was an IPV victim had legal representation, the abusive parent was 85 percent more likely to be denied child visitation and was 77 percent more likely to have restrictions or conditions placed on the abusive parent's child visitation. Also, in the subset of cases in which the abusive parent was awarded visitation, 47 percent were more likely to have treatment or program completion ordered for the abusive parent. These cases were also 46 percent more likely to award sole decision-making to the victim parent. This was a retrospective cohort study conducted among King County (Washington) couples with minor children who filed for marriage dissolution between January 1, 2000, and December 31, 2010. Only those couples who had a history of police- or court-documented IPV were included in the study. The effect of legal representation of the IPV victim was examined separately according to whether the victim parent was represented by a legal aid attorney or a private attorney. A comparison group of unrepresented abused parents was matched to represented subjects.



<b>2013-VA-CX-0044:</b>	<b>Intimate Partner Violence and Custody Decisions: A Randomized Controlled Trial of Outcomes from Family Court, Shuttle Mediation, or Videoconferencing Mediation</b>
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>\$763,686</b>
<b>PI:</b>	<b>Amy Holtzworth-Munroe and Connie Beck</b>
<b>Program Officer:</b>	<b>Amy Leffler</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

The proposed study is a randomized control trial of family mediation cases with intimate partner violence. If the parties agree to study participation, these cases will be randomly assigned to one of three study conditions: traditional court based litigation, shuttle mediation, or videoconferencing mediation. An IPV screen, administered at mediation intake, will be used to examine IPV level and determine study eligibility. It is estimated that there will be 75 mediation cases per study condition. The study will be conducted at a metropolitan court within a dispute resolution division. Immediate outcome measures include: (1) data coded from divorce decrees and mediation agreements, regarding resolution of disputed issues; (2) party self-reports of satisfaction and perceptions of process and outcomes; and (3) for mediation cases, mediator's report regarding process and outcome. One-year outcomes, coded from court records, include: (1) number and nature of legal motions filed; and (2) evidence of continuing IPV. Demographic information will be gathered to describe the sample, determine if randomization was successful, and predict outcomes. A follow-up survey will be sent to all participants to examine continuation of IPV, self-reported outcomes, and self-reported satisfaction with mediation method. For exploratory purposes, court records for cases that refuse study participation will be coded, providing a nonrandomized court comparison sample. After conducting measurement models of IPV and outcome variables to create theory- and statistically based latent measures of constructs from multiple measures, data analyses will be conducted to test analyses. Cost-benefit analyses will be conducted.

<b>2014-MU-CX-0859:</b>	<b>Child Custody Outcomes in Cases Involving Parental Alienation and Abuse Allegations</b>
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>\$501,791</b>
<b>PI:</b>	<b>Joan Meier</b>
<b>Program Officer:</b>	<b>Amy Leffler</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

Arguably the most troubling aspect of justice system response to intimate partner violence is custody courts' failure to protect children when mothers allege the father is abusive. Family courts' errors in assessing adult and child abuse, and punitive responses to abuse allegations, have been widely documented. A significant contributor to these errors is the pseudo-scientific theory of parental alienation (PA). Originally termed parental alienation syndrome (PAS), the theory suggests that when mothers allege that a child is not safe with the father, they are doing so illegitimately, to alienate the child from the father. PA labeling often results in dismissal of women's and children's reports of abuse, and sometimes trumps even expert child abuse evaluations. PAS was explicitly based on negative stereotypes of mothers and has been widely discredited. However, the term parental alienation is still widely used in ways that are virtually identical to PAS. However, because PA is nominally gender neutral (and not called a scientific syndrome), it continues to have substantial credibility in court. The first goal of this project is to ascertain whether empirical evidence indicates that parental alienation is also gender-biased in practice and outcome. Drawing from courts' own reports of facts, findings and outcomes, such research could powerfully inform advocates and the courts regarding the validity or invalidity of relying on PA to strip mothers of their children and potentially subject children to ongoing abuse. Second, inspired by some tentative findings, the study seeks to explore outcomes in custody/abuse litigation by gender and by differing types of abuse. The study relies solely on electronically available published opinions in child custody cases; to date, we have identified 240 cases involving alienation and alienation plus abuse. We seek to expand the database to include non-alienation abuse cases as a comparison, and to address additional questions about custody/abuse adjudications. The Principal Investigator, Joan Meier, Professor of Clinical Law at GW Law School, will be supported by consultants Chris O'Sullivan, PhD, Leora Rosen, PhD, Sean Dickson, MPH, Esq., and the Institute for Women's Policy Research. The objective in the first year is to collect a dataset of opinions coded by relevant factors. The second-year objective is to perform statistical analyses. Scholarly publications and practice tools will be developed in the third year. The project will also produce an invaluable database identifying 15 years of published cases involving alienation, abuse and custody while coding parties' claims and defenses, outcomes, and other key factors by gender and parental status.

<b>2015-R2-CX-0003:</b>	<b>Child Exposure to Intimate Partner Violence and Parent Aggression in Two Generations</b>
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>\$407,802</b>
<b>PI:</b>	<b>JoAnn Wu Shortt</b>
<b>Program Officer:</b>	<b>Amy Leffler</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a complex and significant public health problem with adverse physical and mental health consequences not only for the adults involved but also for the children who are exposed to IPV. However, the impact of IPV exposure on children's adjustment has shown substantial variability. The proposed study draws upon Dynamic Development Systems Theory to examine IPV dynamics and family/child risk and protective factors and processes that relate to children's adjustment, including psychopathology, social competence, and academic achievement into adolescence. The current study advances the field in important regards. The inclusion of dyadic aggression data across multiple family contexts, over two generations, will help build theory and inform more tailored, timely interventions. *Subjects:* We will conduct a secondary analysis study using a prospective multi-generation data set involving the children ( $N = 265$ , approximately 50% of girls at age 5 years) of the Oregon Youth Study (OYS) men and the children's biological mothers (even if the couple has separated) from the Three Generational Study (3GS). At enrollment into the OYS in grade 4, the men were at risk for aggression (by virtue of living in neighborhoods with relatively high rates of juvenile delinquency) and from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. *Research Design, Methods, Analysis:* The available 3GS data set includes two generations with childhood data on each (i.e., developmental history of the OYS fathers and their offspring) and includes 5 waves of IPV data and 6 waves of child adjustment data for the offspring over a 12-year period using a multi-agent/multi-method measurement strategy. We will first examine (1) moderation of early childhood proximal associations between exposure to violence (IPV and parent aggression) and child adjustment by child and parent gender. Next, we will capitalize on the prospective, longitudinal design to examine (2) how the developmental timing of violence exposure may effect changes in offspring adjustment across adolescence; (3) risk and protective factors (e.g., child emotion regulation, parent monitoring) that may mediate associations between violence exposure in childhood and adolescence adjustment; (4) intergenerational transmission of IPV (and parent aggression) and the circumstances whereby parents' developmental risk factors (e.g., exposure to IPV during childhood) increase the occurrence of IPV (and parent aggression) in adulthood and the risk of child adjustment difficulties. *Products, Reports, and Data Archiving:* Study results will be disseminated via local and national meetings and in manuscripts submitted for publication in peer reviewed journals.

<b>2015-VA-CX-0073:</b>	<b>Interdisciplinary Evaluation of Child Custody Decision-making among IPV Families</b>
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>\$697,120</b>
<b>PI:</b>	<b>Mary Kernic</b>
<b>Program Officer:</b>	<b>Amy Leffler</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

The major aim of this study is to examine the involvement of custody evaluators, and corroborating evidence of a history of parental intimate partner violence (IPV), for their potential contribution to increasing protections awarded in child custody and visitation orders and lessening rates of post-dissolution IPV and child abuse. *Subjects:* This study will involve a sample of King County, Washington, couples with minor children, filing for marriage dissolution between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2010, who have a history of police- or court-documented intimate partner violence (IPV) preceding the filing date of the marriage dissolution. A complete sampling of custody cases with a history of IPV and a custody evaluation will be performed. Cases with a custody evaluation will be matched via propensity score techniques to comparison group cases without a custody evaluation. Propensity score matching will also be used for corroborating IPV-evidence study groups, if deemed necessary. *Research Design and Methods:* A retrospective cohort study will be conducted to accomplish study aims. Data collection will involve the use of existing police and court electronic data as well as extensive data collected from dissolution case files. Study groups will be assessed for covariate balance, and propensity score matching will be used for independent variables with insufficient covariate balance. The goals of this study will benefit from the substantial efforts of an NIJ-sponsored parent study designed, using propensity score matching, to examine the effect of legal representation of the IPV victim on child custody and visitation decisions. The parent study will provide approximately half of the custody evaluation cases and all the comparison group cases needed to accomplish study aims and the infrastructure for successful, accurate data collection and efficient production of working datasets. The results from this project will help to inform U.S. policy

regarding the degree to which child custody evaluations and corroborating evidence of IPV history contribute to greater protections being awarded in child custody arrangements and the degree to which these protections lead to lower rates of IPV and child abuse following marriage dissolution among this high-risk population. *Analysis:* Multiple logistic, robust Poisson and Cox regression analyses will be conducted on the full or propensity score-matched samples. *Products, Reports, and Data Archiving:* Study deliverables will include study data, interim and final reports, peer-reviewed manuscripts, dissemination of findings at professional scientific meetings and to stakeholders regionally, nationally, and globally.

For an index of all grants, go to <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/223572/223572-grants-index.pdf>.