

Study explores the co-occurrence of intimate partner violence and child maltreatment

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Child welfare agencies are charged with the herculean task of ensuring children's safety. When families are impacted by intimate partner violence, this task can be complex.

A new study in the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* by CUNY SPH doctoral grads Erika Tullberg and Wendy Vaughn examines the co-occurrence of intimate partner violence and child maltreatment among families who are the subjects of abuse allegations.

The researchers found that, after controlling for other risk factors, children living in a household with intimate partner violence were more likely to be determined to be physically abused and emotionally maltreated than neglected, and less likely to be determined to be sexually abused than neglected, compared with children who did not live in a household with intimate partner violence. Those children were also more likely to be determined to be emotionally maltreated than physically abused, and less likely to be determined to be sexually abused than physically abused, compared with children who did not live in a household with intimate partner violence.

"While there is consensus in the field that child maltreatment and intimate partner violence often co-occur, our analyses suggest that the actual amount of co-occurrence may be inflated because exposure to intimate partner violence may be classified as a type of maltreatment even though it is not identified as such in most states' laws," says Dr. Tullberg.

"It's important that people working in the field do their own assessment of what children and families have experienced. Researchers working with intimate partner violence and/or child maltreatment data should make sure they know how each of these things are captured in their data set."

More information: Erika Tullberg et al, Revisiting the Co-Occurrence of Intimate Partner Violence and Child Maltreatment, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* (2022). [DOI: 10.1177/08862605221104533](https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605221104533)

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