



**POVERTY & CHILD NEGLECT
UNIQUE & OVERLAPPING EFFECTS
ON CHILDREN'S OUTCOMES**



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Agenda



- **Child Neglect and Poverty**
- **Outcomes of Child Poverty and Neglect**
- **Unique Mechanisms and Outcomes re: Neglect**
- **Income Supports and Prevention of Maltreatment**
- **Policy and Practice Implications**

Poverty and Child Maltreatment

- **CPS intervention** (Berger & Waldfogel, 2011; Drake & Jonson-Reid, 2013; Eckenrode et al., 2014; Pelton, 2015; Putnam-Hornstein et al., 2021; USDHHS, 2022)
- **Child Neglect** (USDHHS, 2022)
 - **Epidemiology: 76.1% of maltreatment victims; disproportionality of minoritized populations**
 - **Material hardship (housing, food) related to neglect** (Yang, 2015)
 - **Poverty indicators (employment, material hardship) associated with parenting of young children** (Slack et al., 2004)
- **Caregiver Risk** (Child Maltreatment 2020, USDHHS, 2022)
 - **23.5% Public Assistance**
 - **13.1% Financial Problem**
 - **8.2% Inadequate Housing**

Import and process of examining developmental sequelae

- Maltreatment affects range of developmental outcomes across domains
- Child development related to adult functioning
- Critical to disentangle impacts of poverty vs. impacts of child maltreatment
- Examining impacts can inform child and family policy and practice

Physiology and Physical Health

Child Poverty (Miller & Chen, 2013)

- ❑ Brain development (Hair et al., 2015)
- ❑ Overall health
- ❑ Acute/chronic illness
- ❑ Obesity (Evans et al., 2011)
- ❑ Asthma (Assari et al., 2018)
- ❑ Health risk behaviors
- ❑ Adult health problems

Child Neglect (Leeb et al., 2011; Strathearn et al., 2020)

- ❑ Brain development
- ❑ Overall health
- ❑ Untreated illnesses
- ❑ Injuries due to lack of supervision
- ❑ Failure to thrive
- ❑ Health risk behaviors
- ❑ Interaction of race, poverty, & neglect (Nikolina & Widom, 2014)

Cognitive/Academic Skills

Child Poverty (Slack et al.,

- **<1 SD on cognitive & academic tests**
- **Neurocognition** (Farah et al., 2006)
- **Language delays**
- **Grade retention**
- **Special education**
- **HS graduation rates**
- **College attendance**

Child Neglect

- **Cognitive and academic tests** (Crozier & Barth, 2005; Geoffroy et al., 2016)
- **Neurocognition** (DeBellis et al., 2009)
- **Long-term outcomes** (Strathearn et al., 2020)
- **Neglect particularly related to these outcomes** (Strathearn et al., 2020)
- **Neglect predictive even with controls (eg, income)** (Mills et al., 2011)

Mental Health

Child Poverty (Yoshikawa et al., 2012; Reiss, 2013; Evans & Cassell, 2014; Gitterman et al., 2016)

- ❑ **Increased behavior problems**
 - ▣ Externalizing
- ❑ **Decreased self regulation**
- ❑ **Compromised coping**
- ❑ **Higher rates of ADHD**
- ❑ **Adult mental health impairment**

Child Neglect (Cecil et al., 2016; Strathearn et al., 2020)

- ❑ **Increased behavior problems**
 - ▣ Internalizing
- ❑ **Trauma-related symptoms**
- ❑ **Substance abuse and other risky behaviors**
- ❑ **Psychosis** (Abajobir et al., 2017)
- ❑ **Uniquely predicted adult PTSD & arrests** (Nikulina et al., 2011)

Long-Term Economic Outcomes

(Bunting et al., 2018; Currie & Widom, 2010; Mersky & Topitzes, 2010)

- Significant association between history of CM and economic inactivity and/or reduced income
- **CM independent contribution to adult economic outcomes, controlling for social disadvantage**
 - Larger effects for women (Currie & Widom)
- Neglect only
 - reduced earnings
 - lower employment
 - lower level of job skill
 - fewer assets
 - more absence due to sickness
 - reduced social class
 - increased risk of being on permanent sickness/disability pension
 - SES not independent contributor

Income Supports & Maltreatment

□ TANF/Welfare/AFDC

- **Decrease in state benefits: increased maltreatment**
(Berger, 2004; Paxson & Waldfogel, 2003; 2002)
- **Lower TANF participation: higher rates of neglect** (Albert & Lim, 2019)
- **Welfare limits/sanctions: increased substantiation** (Albert & King, 2017; Paxson & Waldfogel, 2003; Slack et al., 2007)
- **Welfare reform: higher rates of CM reporting & investigation** (Courtney et al., 2005; Fein & Lee, 2003)
- **Permanent exit from AFDC: lower rates of re-reporting**
(Drake et al., 2006)
- **Welfare receipt: protective factor in reunification** (Kang et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2017)

Income Supports and Maltreatment

- **SNAP participation**
 - ▣ **Reduced maltreatment** (Lee & Mackey-Bilaver, 2007; Millett et al., 2011)
 - ▣ **Proxy for economic hardship (increased CM)**
- **EITC (increases in income)**
 - ▣ **Lower rates of self-reported CPS involvement and neglect** (Berger et al., 2017)
 - ▣ **In states with refundable EITC: lower rates of hospital admission for abusive head trauma** (Klevens et al., 2017)
- **Medicaid**
 - ▣ **Medicaid expansion states: decreased rates of child neglect** (Brown et al., 2019)
- **Unconditional cash transfer experiments** (Slack & Noble)

Unique Mechanisms and Outcomes of Child Neglect

- **Poverty PLUS omitted variables** (Duncan et al., 2010)
 - **Parental depression and child outcomes** (IOM, 2009)
 - **Parental substance abuse and child outcomes** (Velleman & Templeton, 2016)
 - **Parenting stress and child outcomes**
- **Parenting** (Slack et al., 2004;
 - **Detached/disengaged parenting**
 - Low parental warmth
 - **Authoritarian and punitive parenting**
 - Use of physical discipline
 - **Less stimulating parenting**
 - More child television viewing
 - **Lack of attachment; positive parent-child interaction**
 - **Neglect mediated effect of depression on children** (Mustillo et al., 2011)

Implications

□ Policy

- Title IV-B and Title IV-E (Families First) funding utilized for supports to prevent child neglect
- Income supports to prevent child maltreatment

□ Practice

- **Community, differential or alternative response services** (Duva & Metzker, 2010; Johnson-Motoyama et al., 2022; Logan & Siegel, 2012)
 - Racial disparities in assignment (Choi et al., 2021)
- **Systems of care** (Daro & Dodge, 2009; Daro, 2016; Dodge, 2018; Slack & Berger, 2022)
 - Evidence-based parenting programs (MIECHV)
 - Parent-child interaction; skills building
 - Economic supports as a component of interventions
 - Interventions integrated into conventional income support programs (e.g., Family Check-up and WIC)
 - Cross-agency collaboration (Public Assistance and Child Welfare)