THE SCIENCE OF PREVENTING / INTERRUPTING THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

Washington, DC
Jan 28, 2011

Claire Crooks, Ph.D., C.Psych.
Associate Director, CAMH Centre for Prevention Science
Cycle of Violence

Adult IPV

Dating violence

Bullying / Peer aggression

Child direct and indirect exposure
What do We know about the Cycle of Violence?

- Abusive behavior is multiply determined
- Most youth exposed to DV do not become abusive
- Most abusers have a history of exposure to violence (e.g., maltreatment/witnessing DV)
- Dose-response effect suggested
- Co-existing adversities increase probability of violence
Cycle of Violence: Mechanisms

- **Attachment**
- **Social learning**
  - What they learn
  - Importance of perceived utility of behavior
  - Hostile attribution bias
  - What they don’t learn
- **Trauma**
  - “Hibernation of the soul”
  - Anger / arousal dysregulation
  - Neurological contributions
Intervention Points

Prevention before occurrence

Prevention of recurrence

Prevention of impairment

Physical abuse
Sexual abuse
Emotional abuse
Neglect
Exposure to IPV

Long-term outcomes

Universal
Targeted

Types of Intervention: What the evidence supports

- 26 reviews summarizing 298 treatment evaluations
- 7 approaches reviewed


- Thorough review considering quality of programming and implementation to identify promising practices

Approaches with Some Evidence

1. Early childhood home visitation to **prevent** maltreatment

2. Parent training and education both to prevent maltreatment and prevent re-occurrence

3. Abusive head trauma and enhanced pediatric care
The Period of PURPLE Crying

- **P** Peak of Crying
- **U** Unexpected
- **R** Resists Soothing
- **P** Pain-like Face
- **L** Long Lasting
- **E** Evening

© 2009 Ronald G. Barr, MDCM, FRCPC

Ineffective Intervention

- Support and mutual aid
- Aim to strengthen parents’ social network (e.g., Parents Anonymous)
- Little to no evidence of effectiveness
The most promising interventions still have limited evidence.

Cannot collapse findings across types of intervention:
- Quality of implementation matters
- Training of implementers matters

No evidence on effective prevention of indirect abuse (i.e., exposure to DV)
Challenges and Gaps

1. Where are the dads?
2. Is stopping violence enough?
3. Silos in research and intervention approaches
4. Ethnically / culturally-informed approaches
5. Multi-systemic interventions that respond to risk