

Violence, crime, and abuse exposure in a national sample of children and youth: an update.

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Violence, crime, and abuse exposure in a national sample of children and youth: an update.

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Source

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Abstract

IMPORTANCE:

Because exposure to violence, crime, and abuse has been shown to have serious consequences on child development, physicians and policymakers need to know the kinds of exposure that occur at various developmental stages.

OBJECTIVES:

To provide updated estimates of and trends for childhood exposure to a broad range of violence, crime, and abuse victimizations.

DESIGN:

The National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence was based on a cross-sectional, US national telephone survey conducted in 2011.

SETTING:

Interviews by telephone.

PARTICIPANTS:

The experiences of 4503 children and youth aged 1 month to 17 years were assessed by interviews with caregivers and with youth in the case of those aged 10 to 17 years.

RESULTS:

Two-fifths (41.2%) of children and youth experienced a physical assault in the last year, and 1 in 10 (10.1%) experienced an assault-related injury. Two percent experienced sexual assault or sexual abuse in the last year, but the rate was 10.7% for girls aged 14 to 17 years. More than 1 in 10 (13.7%) experienced maltreatment by a caregiver, including 3.7% who experienced physical abuse. Few significant changes could be detected in rates since an equivalent survey in 2008, but declines were documented in peer flashing, school bomb threats, juvenile sibling assault, and robbery and total property victimization.

CONCLUSIONS AND RELEVANCE:

The variety and scope of children's exposure to violence, crime, and abuse suggest the need for better and more comprehensive tools in clinical and research settings for identifying these experiences and their

effects.

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