



SPR 18th Annual Meeting

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Location: Maroon Peak (Grand Hyatt/2nd Floor)

Time of Presentation: Jun 04 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Category/Theme: Etiology

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Conduct Disorder, and Young Adult Intimate Partner Violence

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Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a serious public health problem affecting millions of people each year. A variety of individual and family risk factors for IPV perpetration have been identified, but relatively little attention has been paid to childhood attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Studies using clinical samples suggest a connection between ADHD and IPV perpetration. However, no study has examined this relationship using a population-based sample. The present study examined the association between childhood ADHD and conduct disorder (CD) and IPV perpetration in young adulthood in a population-based sample, using both categorical analyses using diagnostic criteria and dimensional analyses on hyperactivity/impulsivity (HI), inattention (IA), and CD symptom counts.

The study population consisted of 14,322 participants in the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health), a nationally representative sample of adolescents. Multiple logistic regressions and propensity score matching were used to analyze the relationships among IPV in young adulthood and childhood ADHD and CD, adjusting for demographic, socioeconomic, and familial factors. ADHD and CD symptoms were assessed by self-report in Wave I, when youth were in 7th-12th grade (mean age 15.7). IPV perpetration was measured using respondents' answers to two questions in Wave III, 7 years later (mean age 23.0). IPV perpetration resulting in injury was assessed with an additional follow-up question.

IA independently predicted future IPV perpetration, whereas there was no significant relation between HI and IPV perpetration controlling for IA and CD. HI independently predicted IPV perpetration resulting in injury; IA was not significantly associated with IPV perpetration resulting in injury controlling for HI and CD. Categorical analyses using symptom criteria revealed that ADHD was not a significant predictor of IPV perpetration once CD was controlled, but significantly predicted IPV perpetration resulting in injury. CD significantly predicted both IPV perpetration and IPV perpetration resulting in injury. Co-occurring ADHD and CD also predicted both IPV perpetration and IPV perpetration resulting in injury.

Results suggest significant and independent associations between ADHD and injurious violence in intimate relationships, even controlling for CD which is common among individuals with ADHD. The findings indicate that there may be distinctive associations among inattention and partner violence on the one hand, and hyperactivity/impulsivity and severe partner violence on the other. Results suggest the need for services and treatment strategies that specifically address the risks for violence and promote healthy intimate relationships for youth with CD and ADHD.