

A Scary Overview

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Violence

Against

People with Disabilities:

Many Kinds of Violence affect People with Disabilities

- ✓ It is not solely Child Maltreatment
- ✓ It is not solely sex crimes
- ✓ It is not solely crimes against women
- ✓ Some news from October 2006 provides too many examples.
- ✓ It is not just about DEVELOPMENTAL disability
- ✓ It is not just about DISABILITY

Bad News

- ✓ Which of the following news stories makes you the maddest?
- ✓ Are these unrelated coincidences or do they have a central connection.

ASSAULT WITH INTENT TO INJURE

- ✓ 13 October 2006. Uniontown, PA. Mark Downs, a former T-Ball coach was sentenced to 1 to 6 years for bribing one his players to deliberately injure a 9-

year-old team mate. The court heard that Downs wanted the victim who was described as autistic with an intellectual disability out of the game to give his team an edge in tournament play.

CHILD ABDUCTION

✓16 October 2006. Louisville. Ten-month old Saige Terrell, described as developmentally disabled, was on a supervised visit with his mother who lost custody because of maltreatment issues. The social worker was found in the mother's home dead from blunt force injury. Mother and child are missing.

BULLYING, TORTURE, ATTEMPTED MURDER

✓6 October 2006. Brisbane, Australia. Queensland police charges two 12-year-old girls, a 17-year-old boy, and a 15-year-old boy with assault for torturing a boy described as intellectually and physically disabled. Charges include deprivation of liberty, assault occasioning bodily harm and torture. The victim was treated in hospital.

BULLYING, ATTEMPTED MURDER

✓16 October 2006. Winnipeg, Canada. A 14-year-old boy with spina bifida was rescued after a group of younger children locked him in a shed and set it on fire.

TORTURE, MURDER

✓17 October 2006. EDWARDSVILLE, Ill. A second man was sentenced to 75 years for the murder and dismemberment of Jesse Emery. Emery, who had an

mental disability, was tortured and stabbed to death by the two men who wanted to find out how it would feel to stab someone. Witnesses described the offenders as “peace-loving” and “caring.” According to the judge “Someone was poking him to have fun while he was dying.”

TORTURE, MURDER

✓17 October 2006. Manchester, England. The 14-year-old son of a policeman was convicted of luring an eleven-year-old to his home where he battered and stabbed him to death. The victim was small and physically disabled as a result of cystic fibrosis. Evidence presented at trial indicated that the murder had been planned for at least 4 weeks.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

✓2 October 2006. Winnipeg, Canada. A study based on 7,000 interviews by statistics Canada concluded that women with disabilities experienced domestic violence 40% more frequently than other Canadian women.

NEGLECT, ATTEMPTED MURDER

✓2 October 2006. Spring Lake, NC. S.W. was charged with neglect after police concluded that she was trying starve a child in her care who has cerebral palsy and intellectual disabilities. Twelve-year-old Wesley Carter weighed just 32 pounds when he was rescued. Williams is charged with attempted murder.

LIFE-THREATENING NEGLECT INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE

✓12 October 2006. New Jersey. The Department of Human Services issued \$5000 fines to 38 workers in state institutions and group homes for failing to call emergency services in actually or potentially life-threatening emergencies. The charges stemmed from 11 emergencies and resulted in at least two deaths. Fifty additional cases of failure to seek medical assistance remain under investigation.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

✓9 October 2006. San Antonio. A 30-year-old woman who was paralyzed from the neck down was removed from her family home after reporting that she had been sexually assaulted by her father. She died shortly thereafter in the custody of Adult Protective Services.

✓17 October 2006. Hobart, Australia. A 51-year-old respite worker pleaded Not guilty to raping a 17-year-old girl with intellectual disabilities in his care.

WRONGFUL INCARCERATION

✓Montana. 20 October 2006/ Court orders the release of sealed state documents regarding T.L.S. “a developmentally disabled man” who choked to death in a Montana mental institution while involuntarily incarcerated due what Missoula County Attorney Leslie Halligan called “clerical error”

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

- ✓ 12 October 2006. New York. The World Report on Violence against Children is released reporting children with disabilities are much more likely than other children to be victimized.
- ✓ According to the World Health Organization about 54,000 children are reported to die as a result of Homicide each year, NOT INCLUDING WAR and COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE.

EUTHANASIA, MERCY KILLING

- ✓ 10 October 2006, Germany. A mass grave is unearthed uncovering the body of about 50 children with disabilities euthanized sometime between 1939 and 1941
- ✓ 17 October 2006. London. A refugee physician from north Korea charged that babies with disabilities are routinely euthanized in North Korea as part of a plan to develop a Korean super race.
- ✓ In Canada and the United States about 20% of ALL infant deaths die as a result of medical decisions that their lives are not worth living because of a disability.

The Westat Study

- ✓ **What is great about the study**
- ✓ Great epidemiological study of disabilities among children with disabilities!
- ✓ **What is terrible about the study**
- ✓ Inappropriate comparisons make the estimates of relative risk useless.

Sullivan & Knutson (2000)

- ✓ Intellectual disabilities were 3.8 - 4.0 times as frequent among children with history of maltreatment or neglect
- ✓ study provides best evidence. Many other studies found similar associations.
- ✓ Relationship exists for all categories of maltreatment
- ✓ About 1/3 of children with developmental disabilities had reported maltreatment histories.

Wilson & Brewer (1992)

- ✓ Found that adults with intellectual disabilities were victims of violent crime 4.7 times as often as other adult Australians.
- ✓ Women with intellectual disabilities were more than 12 times as likely to be sexually assaulted.

deHaan 1997

Critical and Fatal

Child Maltreatment in Oregon

- ✓ Study of fatal and potentially fatal abuse and neglect of children.
- ✓ 42 children actually died/ 40 of these had pre-existing disabilities

Canadian Incidence Study

- ✓ 26% of children with substantiated maltreatment had disabilities.
- ✓ 44% of children with multiple categories of abuse had disabilities

- ✓ This is very consistent with Sullivan and Knutson & Westat when one considers age range differences

Goodman and colleagues (2001)

- ✓ 20.3% of women and 7.6% of men with “severe mental illness” had been sexually assaulted within the last year
- ✓ 57.1% of women and 24.5% of men with “severe mental illness” had been sexually assaulted sometime in adulthood

WHY there is a strong relationship between violence and disability...

- ✓ Having a disability increases vulnerability to violence...
- ✓ Violence causes disabilities
- ✓ Some other factor increases risk for violence and disability
- ✓ *There is some truth in all of these ideas and each of these mechanisms connects violence and disability. But which ones are **big reasons** and which are **small ones**.*

Violence & Disability:

3 Connections

Violence to Disability

- ✓ Children with developmental disabilities aged 3 to 10 in Atlanta, only 0.9% of children with developmental disabilities had “child battering” as an etiological

factor (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1996). Specifically, *child battering was identified as a causal factor in 1.7% of cases of cerebral palsy and 0.6% of cases of mental retardation.*

✓.

How Abuse Causes Disabilities

- ✓ Physical Trauma
- ✓ Psychogenic- Behavioural
- ✓ Neurogenic
- ✓ Stress reactions
- ✓ Learning effects and distribution shift
- ✓ Social construction

Mutual Risk Factors

A MULTIFACTORIAL MODEL

Disability to Violence

Direct Effects

- ✓ Impaired ability to avoid, escape, or defend

Disability to Violence

Indirect Effects

- ✓ Actions
- ✓ Attitudes & Beliefs

Three Components of Inhibition

Instrumental motivation is common, but most parents will not overcome inhibition.
Disinhibition becomes central issue. Culture may defeat inhibition.

Displacement

“look what you made me do”

Ambivalence Amplification Theory

- ✓ We all hold both positive & negative attitudes.
- ✓ Under neutral or ideal circumstances, positive attitudes come out.
- ✓ In difficult circumstances, negative attitudes come out.