



The dark side of social support: Understanding the role of social support, drinking behaviors and alcohol outlets for child physical abuse[☆]



Bridget Freisthler^{a,*}, Megan R. Holmes^b, Jennifer Price Wolf^c

^a Luskin School of Public Affairs, University of California, Los Angeles, USA

^b Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University, USA

^c Prevention Research Center, Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 25 November 2013

Received in revised form 12 March 2014

Accepted 20 March 2014

Available online 14 April 2014

Keywords:

Child physical abuse

Alcohol outlets

Alcohol use

Social support

Dose-response

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine how parental drinking behavior, drinking locations, alcohol outlet density, and types of social support (tangible, emotional, and social companionship) may place children at greater risk for physical abuse. Data on use of physical abuse, drinking behaviors, types of social support, social networks, and demographic information were collected via telephone interviews with 3,023 parent respondents in 50 cities in California. Data on alcohol outlet density were obtained by the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. Multilevel Poisson models were used to analyze data for the drinking levels in the entire sample and dose-response drinking models for drinkers. Social companionship support was related to more frequent use of physical abuse. Having a higher percentage of social companionship support network living within the neighborhood was related to more frequent physical abuse in the full sample. This relationship was moderated by on-premise alcohol outlet density. With regards to drinking behaviors, drinking practices from ex-drinkers to frequent heavy drinkers used physically abusive parenting practices more often than lifetime abstainers. The dose-response models show that each additional drinking event at a bar or home/party was related to more frequent use of physical abuse. Practitioners working with parents who abuse their children should be aware that not all social support is beneficial. Findings build evidence that child maltreatment is influenced by the interaction between individual and ecological factors.

© 2014 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Introduction

In 2011, an estimated 677,000 children were victims of abuse or neglect (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). Nearly 18% of these victims were physically abused, with 81% of the perpetrators being the child's parents (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). Because only a small fraction of child maltreatment cases are ever reported to child protective services, general population estimates are much higher. According to the most recent National Incidence of Child Abuse and Neglect Study (NIS-4), an estimated 1.25 million children in the United States experienced maltreatment; over 25% of those children were physically abused (Sedlak et al., 2010). Yet much of the published literature has focused on

[☆] This project was supported by grant number P60-AA-006282 from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism or the National Institutes of Health.

* Corresponding author.

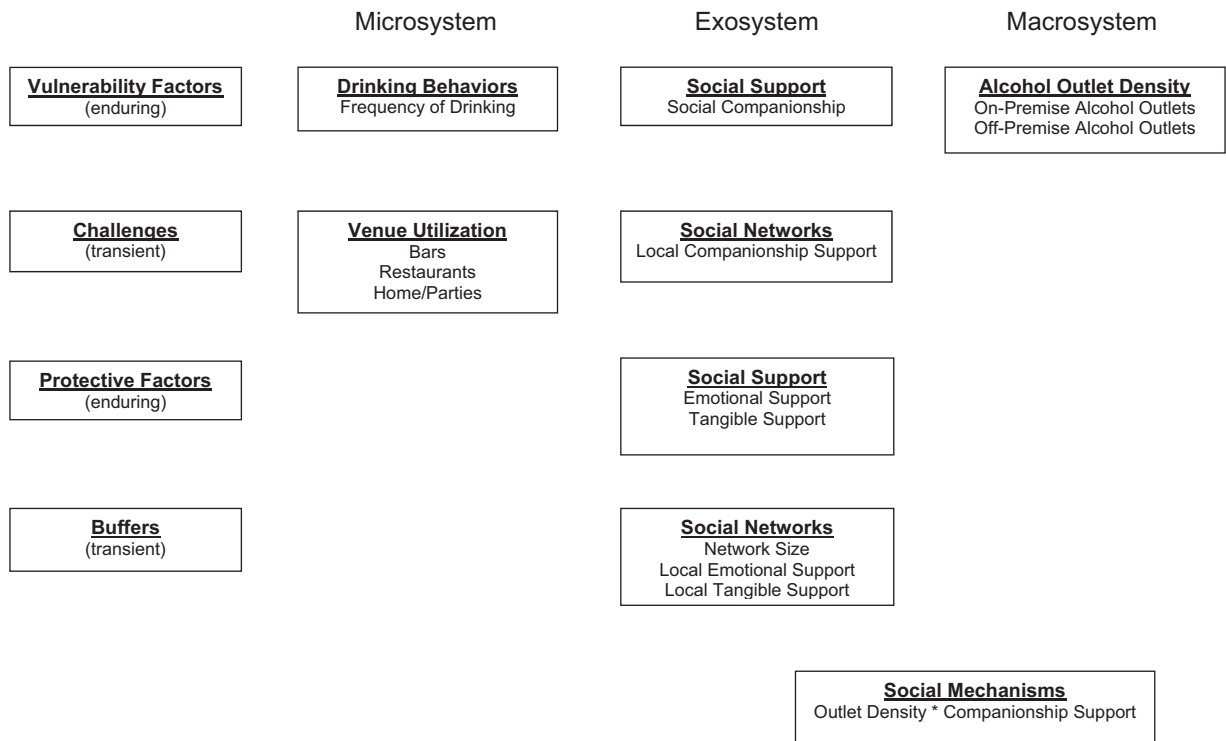


Fig. 1. Conceptual model showing key study variables in the ecological-transactional systems.

children involved with the child welfare system, limiting our ability to understand factors that might lead to better prevention efforts. A growing body of research has contributed to understanding ways to reduce or prevent child maltreatment by identifying protective and risk factors. In particular, the relationship between child maltreatment and social connections (i.e., social networks and social support) has been examined. Social networks are considered an individual's broad collection of social ties including family members, friends, coworkers, neighbors and other people in the community whereas social support refers specifically to the supportive resources (i.e., tangible support, emotional support, and social companionship) available through social networks (Barrera, 1986).

Conceptual Model

This study is situated in the ecological-transactional framework of child maltreatment (Cicchetti & Lynch, 1993; Cicchetti, Toth, & Mauchan, 2000). This model suggests that child maltreatment occurs as a result of a wide range of interactions that an individual has with neighbors, friends, family, and community institutions and vulnerability factors that include low income status and substance misuse (Cicchetti, Toth, & Mauchan, 2000). The ecological-transactional model specifies four systems levels with various vulnerability and protective factors associated with each of these systems. These factors are further delineated by the length of time they occur: transient or enduring. The systems of the ecological-transactional model are distinguished by their proximity to the individual being abused and include the octogenic system (individual developmental tasks that may contribute to further behaviors and psychological problems), microsystem (family environment), exosystem (formal and informal structures within the immediate environment for the family), and macrosystem (cultural values, beliefs, and institutions of larger communities). More specifically, this study tests a specific social mechanism described in a conceptual model by Freisthler and Holmes (2012) that details how alcohol outlet density, alcohol use, and social support may interact resulting in maltreatment. The piece of this model being tested can be found in Fig. 1, along with the corresponding system levels from the ecological-transactional model. The particular aspects being studied primarily fall within the micro-, exo-, and macrosystems and are described in more detail below.

Social Support, Support Networks, and Child Abuse

Limited access to supportive resources is a risk factor for child maltreatment (Coohey, 1995; Giovannoni & Billingsley, 1970; Oats, Davis, Ryan, & Stewart, 1979; Wolock & Magura, 1996). Parents who have fewer contacts with their social network members are more likely to maltreat their children (Coohey, 1995; Giovannoni & Billingsley, 1970; Oats et al., 1979; Polansky, Ammons, & Gaudin, 1985; Wolock & Magura, 1996). Child maltreatment is also more likely to occur when a

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/344862>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/344862>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)