

# At a glance

## Association between exposure to child maltreatment and parental domestic violence and abuse and health, behaviours and labour market outcomes

### What we found out

- Exposure to Child maltreatment (CM) and/or parental domestic violence and abuse (DVA) in childhood was associated with increased risks of poorer outcomes across a range of measures including physical and mental health, behaviours known to pose health risks, employment and earnings.
- Of children reporting CM, parental DVA was identified in nearly one third of cases.
- The co-occurrence of CM and DVA resulted in increased risks across a range of adverse outcomes.

### Why we did this study

CM and DVA between parents are associated with adverse effects on the health and wellbeing of those affected. This study aimed to estimate the impact of childhood exposure to CM and/or parental DVA on life outcomes using a UK longitudinal study.

### Why this is important

Understanding the individual and combined impacts of CM and parental DVA is key to deriving accurate estimates of the burden that these adverse childhood experiences have on both services and the individual throughout the life-course. Previous estimates of the economic burden of abuse have focused on either CM or DVA in isolation, and may fail to fully account for the intersection of CM and DVA and their association with health and wellbeing.

### What we did

Using data from the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC) study<sup>1</sup> we calculated the frequency of CM or DVA reported by a parent or the child and occurring between the child's birth and age 16. We explored the association between exposure to CM and/or parental DVA on the physical

health, mental health, healthy behaviours, criminal justice system involvement, social welfare use, likelihood of employment, and earnings of children in the study population. Longitudinal outcomes in children for whom CM and/or DVA had been reported between the ages of 0 and 16 years were compared with their unexposed peers. We adjusted for other variables that may be associated with the outcomes, including sex, ethnicity and deprivation.

### What are the implications

Our analyses explored the association between the outcomes and exposure to household parental violence and CM.

**Reported exposure to CM or DVA as a child was associated with increased risks of subsequent perpetration of DVA as a young person.** Evidence of this association highlights the need for effective interventions to break the cycle across generations.

**1 in 3 children for whom exposure to CM was reported between birth and 16 years of age were also reported to have been exposed to parental DVA during this period.** Interventions to address CM should account for the fact that a notable proportion of affected young people may also be exposed to co-occurring DVA.

### References

1. Fraser A, Macdonald-wallis C, Tilling K, et al. Cohort profile: The avon longitudinal study of parents and children: ALSPAC mothers cohort. *Int J Epidemiol.* 2013. doi:10.1093/ije/dys066

### Research team

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