

Understanding the Impact of Abuse & Neglect on Speech & Language Development



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Learning Outcomes

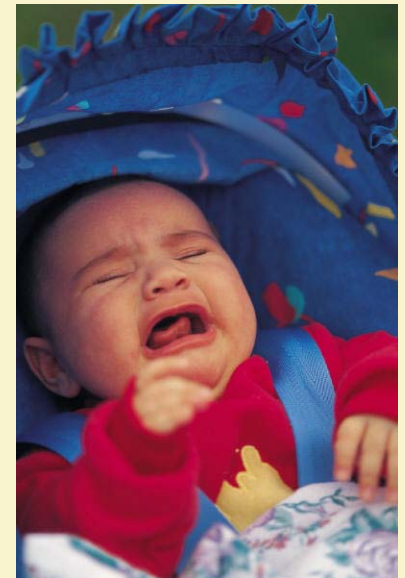


At the end of this presentation, attendees will :


1. Be aware of the prevalence of abuse and neglect in children
2. Understand the impact of maltreatment on speech and language development
3. Know the clinical implications for treating this population of children

Case Study: Mary

- Full term, health infant
- First child born to young parents
- Well until 8 months: Non-Accidental Trauma
- Multiple Injuries
- Delayed development
- Discharged home with mother
- Supportive services in the home
- Referral to Early Intervention



What is Abuse and Neglect?



“...any recent act or failure to act---by a parent or caretaker who is responsible for the child’s welfare---that results in imminent risk of serious physical or emotional harm, death, sexual abuse, or exploitation of a child under 18 years of age.”

Child Abuse and Protection Treatment Act (CAPTA)

http://www.act.hhs.gov/programs/cb/lawspolicies/cblaws/capta03/capta_manual.pdf

Abuse and Neglect



- Main types of child maltreatment
 - Neglect (most common)
 - Abuse
 - Physical abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Emotional abuse

Why Do We Need to Know about Abuse and Neglect?

- *35% of children with speech/language delays experienced maltreatment**
- “A number of children seen by SLPs are likely to have experienced some type of abuse, neglect, or trauma...”**
- “...speech language...may not have experience or training in working with children who have been abused”**
- **We are mandated reporters**

*Sullivan and Knutson, 2000

**Westby, 2007

**UNC FPG, 2008

Incidence of Abuse and Neglect



- 12 out of every 1000 children have experienced maltreatment Stahmer et. al, 2005
- The World Health Organization:
40 million children under 15 yrs experience maltreatment that require medical and social services.

Incidence of Abuse and Neglect



- Rates increased by 10% since 1976*
- Children under 3 have highest rates of abuse/neglect**
- 76% of children who died from maltreatment were under 4 years of age**

*Children's Defense Fund, 1996

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2006

Abuse and Neglect



- Perpetrators of child maltreatment: *
 - Parents: 83%
 - Non-parent caretakers: 11%
 - Unknown: 6%
- Increased likelihood of child abuse in homes with:**
 - Domestic violence: 30-50%
 - Substance abuse: 50-80%
 - Other socioeconomic factors

* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2005

**The National Incidence Study, 1996

What is the Child Welfare System?

➤ Child Welfare System

- Safety
- Permanency
- Well-being



Child Welfare Goals



➤ Safety

- Protection from Maltreatment
 - *Child Protection Services*
- In-Home Child Welfare Services
- Placement in substitute care
 - Kinship Care
 - Foster Care
 - Group Homes
 - Residential Facilities

Child Welfare Goals



➤ Permanency

- Stability with a Permanent Family
 - Reunification
 - Adoption

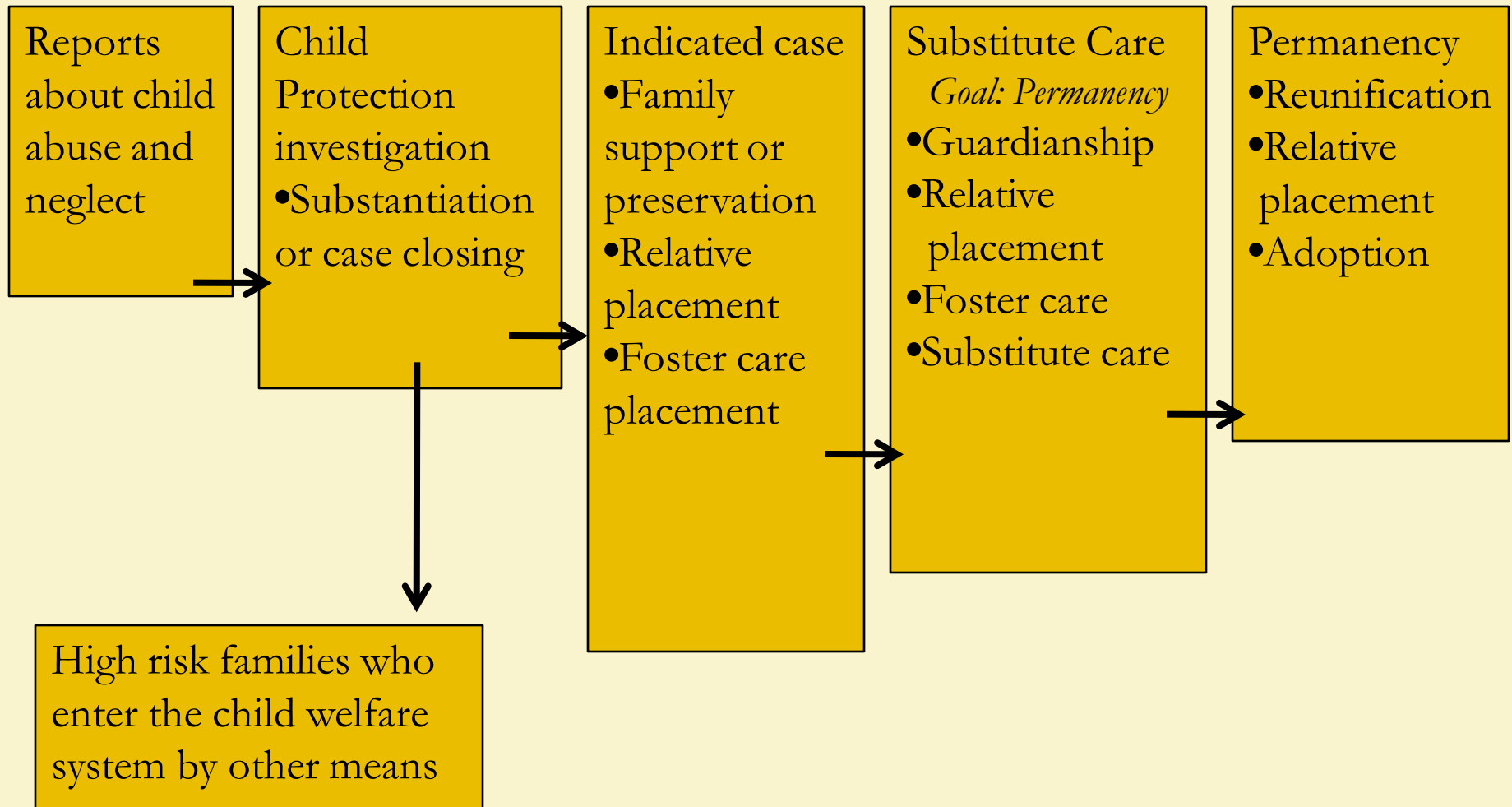
Child Welfare Goals



➤ **Well-Being**

- Physical Health
- Mental Health
- Educational Needs

Continuum of Child Welfare Services



Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)



- P.L. 93-247: Enacted in 1974
- P.L. 108-36: Reauthorized in 2003 by the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act
- Federal law which identifies acts and behaviors that characterize child maltreatment and provides basis for state legislation.
- For more detailed information:
 - http://www.act.hhs.gov/programs/cb/lawspolicies/cblaws/capta03/capta_manual.pdf

IMPACT ON SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT



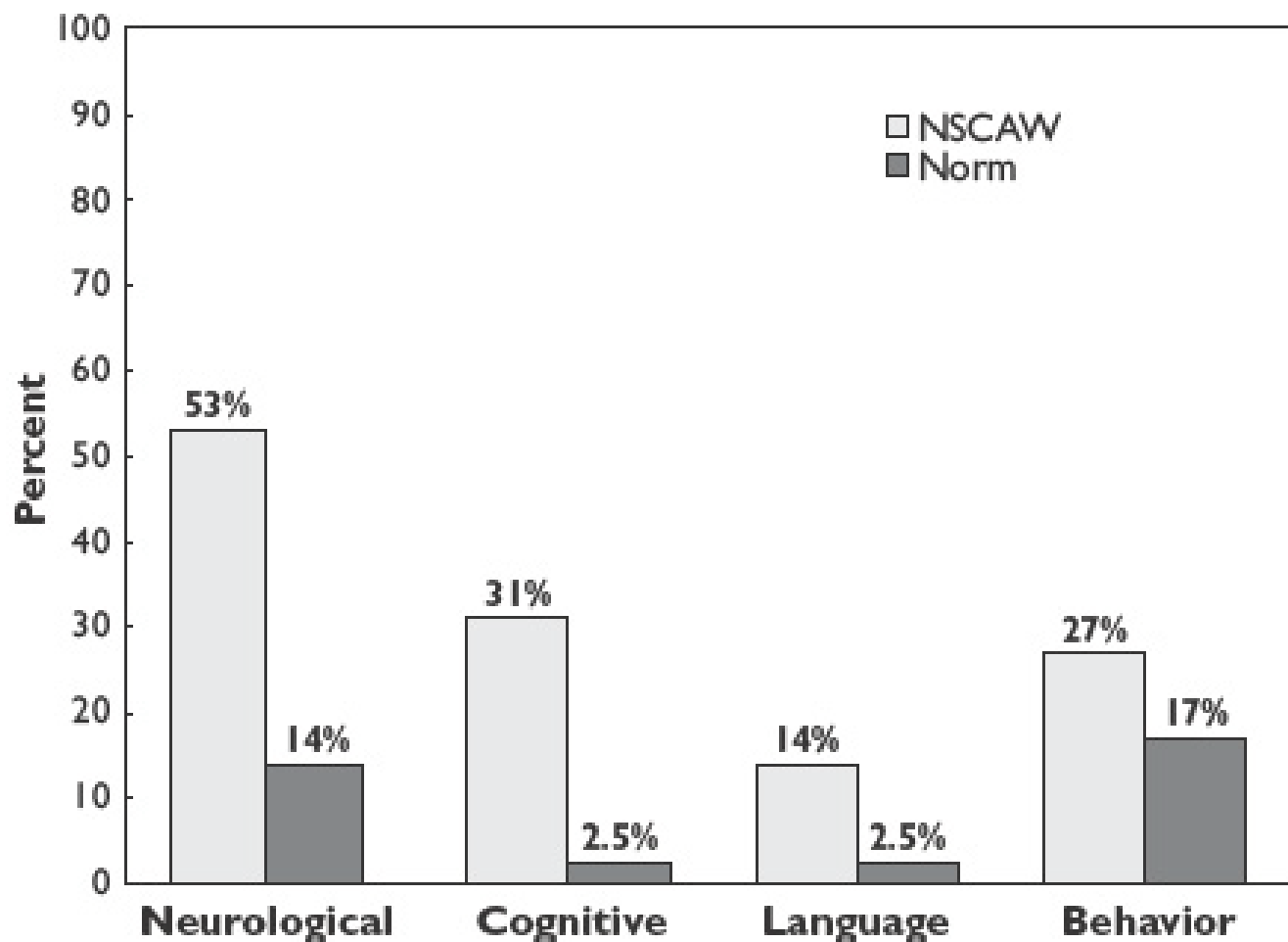
Who is at risk for developing speech and language problems ?

- Poverty
- Lack of social supports
- Level of parents education
- Teen parents
- Depressed mothers
- Exposure to drugs and/or alcohol during or after pregnancy
- Poor nutrition
- Preterm/low birth weight
- **Neglect and/or abuse**
- **Placement in kinship or foster care**

Amster, 1999

National Survey of Child & Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW)

Figure 1. Developmental risks in preschool age children.



Prevalence of Developmental Delays



- Delays in children in foster care \approx 60%
 - 57% have language delays
 - 33% have cognitive delays
 - 31% have gross motor delays
 - 20% have growth problems

Silver, J. et al., 1999

Prevalence of Maltreatment Among Children with Speech and Language Delays

Sullivan and Knutson Study (2000):

- Prevalence maltreatment rate:
 - Typically developing children: 9%
 - Children with disabilities: 31%
- Deaf /hard-of-hearing children: 2x the risk for neglect and almost 4x the risk for physical abuse than nondisabled peers
- Children with communication delays: 5x the risk for neglect and abuse than non-disabled peers

Impact of Maltreatment on Early Brain Development



- The brain is sensitive to environmental input in early childhood due to the rapid neuronal growth and neuroplasticity
- This makes maltreatment particularly detrimental during this period

Lee & Hoaken, 2007

Impact of Maltreatment on Early Brain Development



- Traumatic stress that maltreated children experience could impact brain development
- Changes in brain development can have a considerable impact on speech and language development

Atchinson, 2007

Effects of Maltreatment on Speech and Language Development



- Maltreatment of the young child can result in biochemical and structural changes in the brain...
 - Generalized language deficits
 - Difficulty using language to articulate needs and feelings
 - Difficulty conveying abstraction
 - Difficulty sustaining coherent narratives

Effects of Maltreatment on Speech and Language Development



➤ Difficulty with:

- Receptive and expressive language development
- Abstract communication skills (sarcasm, indirect commands)
- Pragmatics (peer body language and non-verbal cues)
- Language processing

Effects of Maltreatment on Speech and Language Development



- Shorter mean utterance length
- Limited expressive vocabulary
- Communication contains less information regarding:
 - Activities and feelings
 - References to persons/events outside of the immediate context

Effects of Maltreatment on Speech and Language Development



Which is worse...Abuse or Neglect?

- Severely neglected children: lower language comprehension skills than abused children
- Hypothesized severe neglect, rather than abuse, is a more critical element associated with language deficits

Fox et al., 1988

Effects of Maltreatment on Speech and Language Development



- Abused children: over-express anger
- Neglected children: difficulty recognizing emotions and show abnormal emotional responses
- Impacts children's pragmatic language development

Wiggins et al, 2007

Under Enrollment in Early Intervention



- Maltreated children who receive interventions early have the best potential for fostering healthy development *
- High rates of delay in children, yet they are less likely to receive developmental services **
- 63% of children determined to benefit from special education services did not currently have an active IEP***

*Shonkoff & Phillips, 2002

**Zimmer & Panko, 2006

***NCSAW, 1997-2010

CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS




Case Study: John



- Clinical findings: Concerns for PDD/Autism
- Lack of medical/developmental history at time of assessment
- Complex medical and social history
- Frequent foster care placement changes
- Placement with stable foster care parent
- Provision of appropriate medical and developmental services

Unidentified or Unaddressed Health Care Needs

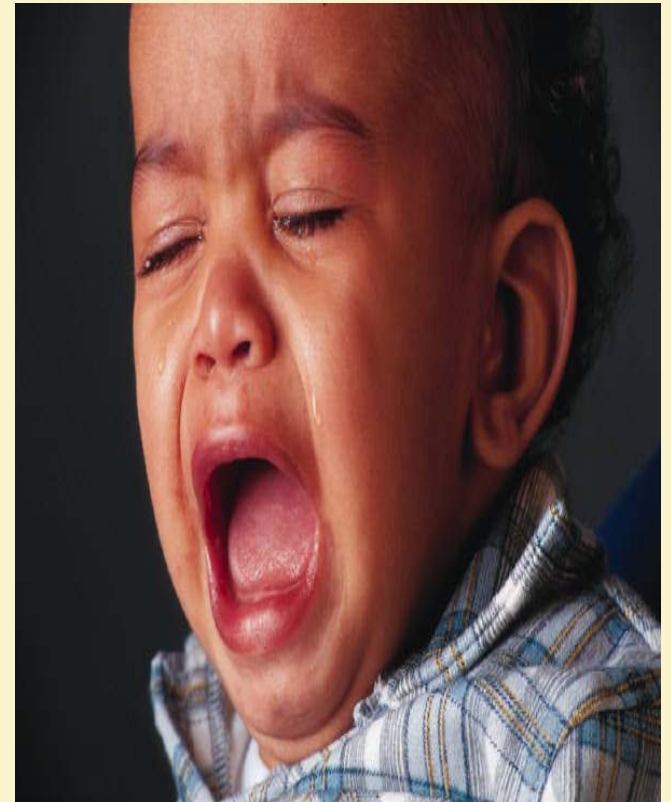


- 12% No routine health care
- 34% No immunizations
- 32% Unmet health care needs
- Dearth of medical records
- Lead exposure

Government Accountability Office 1995

Common Behavior Problems of Foster Children under 4 years old

- Eating
- Sleeping
- Attention
- Aggression



Navigating the Child Welfare System



- Dearth of records
- Confidentiality confusion
- Legal consent issues
- Poor communication
- Foster vs. biological parent dynamic

Assessment Considerations



- Timing of assessment
 - Recent removal from home
 - Placement instability
- Caregiver-child interaction and familiarity

What is the SLPs Role?



- Watch for signs of maltreatment
- Know your role as a mandated reporter
- Be an advocate

SIGNS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT



Signs of Physical & Sexual Abuse



➤ Warning signs:

- Unexplained injuries
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Delay in seeking medical care
- Sudden change in appetite
- Fear of the caregivers or other adults, or reports that the caregiver or other adult has abused them
- History of injuries provided by family changes over time

Signs of Neglect



- Frequent missed therapy sessions or absences from school
- Presents as hungry or thirsty
- Appears dirty
- Lack sufficient clothing for the weather
- Lacks the appropriate medical or dental care
- Extremes in behavior noted during sessions
- Delays in emotional development
- Apparent lack of attachment to the parent or caregiver

OUR ROLE AS MANDATED REPORTERS



Reporting Signs of Child Abuse & Neglect



- Mandatory reporters are all those who in the course of their employment, occupation or practice of their profession, come into contact with children

Child Protective Services Law 23 Pa.C.S.A. 6301

Reporting Signs of Child Abuse & Neglect



- If child abuse/neglect is suspected the mandated reporter is required to report these suspicions to the authorities
- In most states there is a “child abuse” hotline operated by that states’ or county’s child protective services organization
- Failure to report can result in criminal liability for the mandated reporter

CHOP Policy

- An individual required to report must contact social worker assigned to your department
- Oral telephone report immediately
- Within 48 hours of making oral report a form must be sent to the child protective services organization in the county where suspected abuse occurred
- Parents/legal guardians must be informed by the reporter that a report has been made and the rationale

BE AN ADVOCATE



Building Caregiver Capacity



- Caregiver training
- Model appropriate interactions
- Reset caregiver expectations
- Teach behavioral strategies
- Include both biological and foster parents

Resources for Children and Families



- Early Head Start and Head Start
- Child Care Resources and referral Programs
(<http://www.ndchildcare.org>)
- The Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
- The CWS worker
- CAPTA & IDEA created Part C referral provisions
 - Child Welfare Information Gateway – www.childwelfare.gov

Additional Speech, Language, and Child Welfare Resources

- Zero to Three
 - <http://www.zerotothree.org>
- Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)
 - www.cwla.org
- American Academy of Pediatrics
 - www.aap.org
- Child Welfare Information Gateway – www.childwelfare.gov
 - <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/partc/>
- American Bar Association: Children and the Law
 - <http://new.abanet.org/child/Pages/default.aspx>



QUESTIONS



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Disclosure Statement



I have no financial or nonfinancial interest in any organization whose products or services are described, reviewed, evaluated or compared in the presentation.