



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**NEWCASTLE**  
AUSTRALIA  
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**HEAL FOR LIFE**  
FOUNDATION

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## In this issue:

- Exposure to childhood neglect and physical abuse and developmental trajectories of heavy episodic drinking from early adolescence into young adulthood.
- The impact of childhood maltreatment history on parenting: A comparison of maltreatment types and assessment methods
- Childhood Trauma and Psychosis
- Adverse childhood experiences and health anxiety in adulthood
- Relationships with mothers and peers moderate the association between childhood sexual abuse and anxiety disorders
- The interrelatedness of multiple forms of childhood abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction.
- Childhood abuse and neglect in body dysmorphic disorder
- Institutional abuse of children: Types of abuse and impact on adult survivors' current mental health
- Hospitalized youth and child abuse: A systematic examination of psychiatric morbidity and clinical severity

Childhood sexual abuse and adolescent substance use  
A latent class analysis

Child Sexual Abuse: Consequences and Implications

Impact of childhood stress on psychopathology

Relationship between Childhood Trauma,  
Mindfulness, and Dissociation in Subjects With and  
Without Hallucination Proneness

Why People with Bipolar Disorder are Bigger Risk-  
Takers

**This research bulletin aims to inform those working with survivors of childhood trauma of recent research from social science and family studies journals and reports. It is produced and distributed free of charge to interested individuals and organisations. For subscription details see end of bulletin.**

## Advisory Group

The role of the advisory group is to suggest topics of interest for the bulletin, to offer guidance on strategies for developing the bulletin, provide feedback on its quality, scope and style, and to facilitate links between the bulletin to other organisations and publications.

**Dr Andrew Walker**, Senior Staff Specialist in Psychiatry, Wyong Hospital, NSW  
**Christabel Chamarette**, Clinical Psychologist, WA

## Exposure to childhood neglect and physical abuse and developmental trajectories of heavy episodic drinking from early adolescence into young adulthood

### Synopsis

The purpose of this study is to examine the long term effects of childhood maltreatment (CM) on adolescent heavy episodic drinking (HED). This longitudinal study fills a gap in the literature which consists mostly of short term studies on CM and HED. This study also furthers the literature on this subject by investigating the relationship between specific types of CM and the prevalence of HED. The study consists of data from 8503 subjects, assess on CM and prevalence of HED. The results of the study showed that childhood neglect and physical abuse appear to have long-lasting effects on prevalence of HED beyond adolescence and throughout much of young adulthood

Shin, S., Miller, D. and Teicher, M. (2013). Exposure to childhood neglect and physical abuse and developmental trajectories of heavy episodic drinking from early adolescence into young adulthood. *Drug and alcohol dependence*, 127(1), 31-38.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0376871612002220>

### Implications for practice.

*Alcohol addictions and misuse may be assisted through recognising and dealing with childhood maltreatment issues.*

## The impact of childhood maltreatment history on parenting: A comparison of maltreatment types and assessment methods

### *Synopsis*

The purpose of this study was to investigate a possible link between childhood maltreatment and parental abilities. The participants of this study were mothers of 4-6 year olds who were at moderate social risk. The study found that childhood maltreatment, more specifically, witnessing family violence, emotional maltreatment and neglect, were associated with mothers observed hostility towards their children. Childhood sexual abuse however, was associated with self-reported concerns regarding parental competence.

Bailey, H. N., Deoliveira, C. A., Wolfe, V. V., Evans, E. M. & Hartwick, C. (2012). The impact of childhood maltreatment history on parenting: a comparison of maltreatment types and assessment methods. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 36 (3), 236-246.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0145213412000282>

### ***Implications for practice***

*Programs for parents recognising and addressing childhood maltreatment need to also address strategies for strengthening parenting.*

## Childhood Trauma and Psychosis

### *Synopsis*

Psychosis is a severe mental disorder in which thoughts and emotions are so impaired that contact has been lost with external reality. Psychosis can be thought of as a divorce with reality. This article provides a summary on recent finding suggesting a strong causal link between childhood trauma, and the onset of psychosis. The findings specified in this paper state that those suffering from psychosis are 2.72 times more likely to have been subjected to childhood trauma than healthy controls.

Dvir, Y., Denietolis, B., & Frazier, J. A. (2013). Childhood Trauma and Psychosis . *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 22(4), 629–641.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1056499313000291>

### ***Implications for practice***

*This study shows the strong causal link between childhood trauma and psychosis. Understanding childhood history is vital when assisting clients presenting with a mental illness.*

## Adverse childhood experiences and health anxiety in adulthood

### *Synopsis*

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and the development of health anxiety in adulthood. The study was conducted on 264 adults ages 18-59 who conducted a battery of measures to assess both their ACEs and health anxiety (including associated traits). The results of this study showed there were significant associations between cumulative ACEs and the development of traits associated with health anxiety.

Reiser, S. J., McMillan, K. A., Wright, K. D., & Gordon J.G. Asmundson (2013). Adverse childhood experiences and health anxiety in adulthood. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 2-8.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0145213413002251#>

### ***Implications for practice***

*Further confirmation of the need to investigate the childhood history of anyone presenting with a mental health illness.*

## Relationships with mothers and peers moderate the association between childhood sexual abuse and anxiety disorders

### *Synopsis*

The objective of this study was to assess whether positive, supportive relationships between mothers and peers moderate the association between childhood sexual abuse and anxiety disorders. The results of this study found that those reporting low quality relationships had a stronger link between childhood sexual abuse and anxiety disorders, where as those with high quality relationships reported a weak link between abuse and anxiety. The strongest link between abuse and anxiety was found in those that reported having no friends and a low quality maternal relationship, with the weakest link being found in those with the opposite.

Adams, R. E., & Bukowski, W. M. (2007). Relationships with mothers and peers moderate the association between childhood sexual abuse and anxiety disorders. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 31, 645–656.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0145213407001044>

### ***Implications for practice***

*An interesting study which confirms that a high quality relationship with mother or peers can ameliorate the impact of anxiety associated with childhood trauma.*

## The interrelatedness of multiple forms of childhood abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction.

### *Synopsis*

The purpose of this study was to examine the co-occurrence of childhood abuse and other adverse childhood events (ACEs), as well as the nature of this co-occurrence. From a sample size of 8,629 adults, two-thirds reported some form of ACE, from that two-thirds, a median 87% reported the co-occurrence of a second ACE. The presence of one ACE significantly increased the prevalence of having additional ACEs.

Dong, M., Anda, R. F., Felitti, V. J., Dube, S. R., Williamson, D. F., Thompson, T. J., Loo, C. M., ... Giles, W. H. (2004). The interrelatedness of multiple forms of childhood abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 28(7), 771–784.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0145213404001486>

### *Implications for practice*

*A foundational study which reviews the prevalence and co-concurrence of adverse childhood events.*

## Childhood abuse and neglect in body dysmorphic disorder

### *Synopsis*

Body dysmorphic disorder is a concern with body image, manifested as an obsession and preoccupation with a perceived defect of physical appearance. The aim of this study was to investigate a possible link between childhood abuse and neglect and body dysmorphic disorder. The results of this study showed that a large majority of participants (78.7%) reported a history of childhood maltreatment. The majority of this maltreatment was emotional neglect (68%), closely followed by emotional abuse (56%). Although there seems to be a link between childhood maltreatment and body dysmorphic disorder, the severity of the maltreatment did not seem to correlate with the severity of the body dysmorphic disorder.

Didie, E. R., Tortolani, C. C., Pope, C. G., Menard, W., Fay, C., & Phillips, K. A. (2006). Childhood abuse and neglect in body dysmorphic disorder. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 30, 1105–1115.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0145213406002109>

### *Implications for practice*

*Those presenting with Body Dysmorphic Disorder require an in depth history of childhood maltreatment in order to address the core concern. We have certainly found in practice at Heal For life Foundation with guests presenting with this disorder that the symptoms of the condition were considerably reduced by healing from their childhood trauma.*

## Institutional abuse of children: Types of abuse and impact on adult survivors' current mental health

### *Synopsis*

The aim of this study was to explore the nature and dimensions of institutionalised child abuse and to investigate the current mental health of adult survivors. The study showed that 48.6% of those who suffered institutionalised child abuse met the criteria for post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) with 84.9% showing clinically relevant symptoms. The conclusion that was drawn from these findings was that institutionalised abuse includes a wide spectrum of violent acts, and has a massive negative impact on the current mental health of adult survivors.

Lueger-Schuster, B., Kantor, V., Weindl, D., Knefel, M., Moy, Y., Butollo, A., Jagsch, R. & Gluck, T. (2013). Institutional abuse of children in the Austrian catholic church: types of abuse and impact on adult survivors' current mental health. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 38(1), 52-64.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0145213413002081>

### ***Implications for practice***

*This research supports current practice understanding and media reporting.*

## Hospitalized youth and child abuse: A systematic examination of psychiatric morbidity and clinical severity

### *Synopsis*

This study aimed to determine the between histories of abuse and psychiatric complexity and severity of mental illnesses in psychiatrically hospitalised youths. The focus of the study included comorbidity patterns, psychotropic medication use, and the reason for, and length of hospital admission. The results found that those with a history of abuse were more likely to be diagnosed with multiple DSM-IV conditions than those with no history. Sexually based abuses correlated with a higher rate of medication use as well as an extended stay, where as physical abuse was only associated with a longer hospitalisation.

Keeshin, B. R., Strawn, J. R., Luebbe, A. M., Saldana, S. N., Wehry, A. M., Delbello, M. P. & Putnam, F. W. (2013). Hospitalized youth and child abuse: a systematic examination of psychiatric morbidity and clinical severity. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 38, 76-83

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0145213413002317>

### ***Implications for practice***

*This research is supported by the cohort who attend programs at HFL. In research conducted by FARE (Foundation for alcohol and education research) in 2011, results showed that 6 months after our program the number of people being treated for a diagnosed mental illness dropped from 100% of the guests to 65% being treated for a diagnosed mental illness six months after completion of the three week program. Showing that all indications are that if we treat the childhood trauma it will impact positively on the severity of the mental illness.*

## Childhood sexual abuse and adolescent substance use:

### A latent class analysis

#### *Synopsis*

This article focuses on the concept of child sexual abuse being a risk factor for adolescence substance abuse. The paper aimed to characterise the variations in patterns of adolescent substance abuse and to examine the association between childhood sexual abuse and qualitatively distinct patterns of adolescent substance abuse. The subjects of this study were adolescents selected from five publically funded service systems. The results found that childhood sexual abuse was associated with an increased risk of being a heavy polysubstance user in girls.

Shin, S., Hong, H., Hazen, A. (2010). Childhood sexual abuse and adolescent substance use: A latent class analysis. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 109, 226-235.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0376871610000530>

#### ***Implications for practice***

*An interesting article which reinforces the need to take a comprehensive assessment history when assisting adolescents.*

## Child Sexual Abuse: Consequences and Implications

#### *Synopsis*

Child sexual abuse: Consequences and implications outlines the various psychological and physical issues that result from abuse suffered during childhood. The report details psychological conditions such as, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, substance abuse, eating disorders and suicide. The article suggests that the likelihood of developing one or more of these conditions is heightened as a result of childhood trauma. The impact on parenting styles is also discussed in the article, stating “children born to abused mothers are at increased risk to be abused (physically, emotionally, or sexually) by their mothers or other individuals who are allowed access to vulnerable children”

Hornor, G. (2010). Child Sexual Abuse: Consequences and Implications. *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*, 24(6), 358-364.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0891524509002089>

#### ***Implications for practice***

*The outcomes of this research are observed in programs delivered at HFL.*

## Impact of childhood stress on psychopathology

### *Synopsis*

Psychopathology can be defined as the collective features of a person's mental health. The purpose of this study was to review the evidence regarding the role of childhood stress on the pathophysiology of mental disorders. MRI studies have shown that exposure to trauma at an early age can result in several neurostructural changes, including a reduction in the hippocampus and corpus callosum. The paper also states that childhood stress and trauma leads to an increased risk of developing mental disorders such as depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and substance abuse.

Page | 7

Brietzke, E., Sant'Anna, M. K., Jackowski, A., Grassi-Oliveira, R., Bucker, J., Zugman, A., Mansur, R. B. & Bressan, R. A. (2012). Impact of childhood stress on psychopathology. *Revista Brasileira De Psiquiatria*, 34 (4),480-488.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1516444612000426>

### ***Implications for practice***

*This paper reinforces past research and understanding in current practice.*

## Relationship between Childhood Trauma, Mindfulness, and Dissociation in Subjects With and Without Hallucination Proneness

### *Synopsis*

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between childhood traumas, mindfulness, and dissociation in healthy subjects with and without hallucination proneness. The results of this study found a positive relationship between childhood traumas and absorption and depersonalisation. The other finding of this study was a significant, negative association between mindfulness and absorption and depersonalisation. A multiple mediation analysis found that absorption and depersonalisation variables acted as mediators between childhood traumas and hallucination proneness.

Perona-Garcelan, S., Garcia-Montes, J., Rodriguez-Testal, J., Lopez-Jimenez, A., Ruiz-Veguilla, M., & Ductor-Recuerda, M. et al. (2014). Relationship between Childhood Trauma, Mindfulness, and Dissociation in Subjects With and Without Hallucination Proneness. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 15(1), 35-51.

## Why People with Bipolar Disorder are Bigger Risk-Takers

### *Synopsis*

The purpose of this paper is to explain the reasoning behind the impulsivity and risk-taking behaviours of those with Bipolar disorder. Through the use of fMRI studies, the researchers found a dominance of the brain's pleasure centre, in those with bipolar disorder, urging them to seek out pleasure before conscious awareness activates. Another key neurological difference was found in the prefrontal cortex. In the control group, the prefrontal cortex guided them away from risky gambles, aiming for the safer option, in the bipolar group however, the opposite was seen.

ScienceDaily,. (2014). Why people with bipolar disorder are bigger risk-takers. Retrieved 23 July 2014, from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/07/140709095626.htm>

## **Contact us**

Would you like to call us for further information?

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