

## Examining the Association of Children's Academic Performance with Their Exposure to Parental Intimate Partner Violence and Child Maltreatment

*Translating research to practice may be difficult, yet a better understanding of current research is necessary to ensure child welfare workers engage in best practices when working with children and families. The Minn-Link Discussion Guide is designed to help facilitate thoughtful discussions about the information presented in the research brief in order to inform practice and enhance discussion surrounding meaningful issues.*

*In this issue, we examined the longitudinal association of children's exposure to parental intimate partner violence (IPV) and child maltreatment (CM), as well as combined exposure, to children's academic achievement and school attendance over time. In particular, we were interested in whether the type of exposure (IPV only, child maltreatment only, or IPV and CM) differentially associated with academic achievement and school attendance over time, and what combination of factors was significant in determining academic outcomes. Overall findings showed that all children those three groups performed significantly worse than the comparison group on standardized reading and math achievement tests, with the IPV only group faring consistently worse across outcome measures. Children in the IPV, CM, and IPV-CM groups also attended school at significantly lower rates than those in the comparison group.*

### Discussion on Practice Implications

1. In this study, children in families experiencing intimate partner violence fared the worst of all children studied. Why do you think this was the case? What factors may have contributed to these outcomes? Does this appear to be a systemic issue? How so?
2. How do you assess IPV exposure in your work with children and families? In what ways do you use information about IPV exposure in your practice?
3. What strategies could you (or do you) use to engage school staff and parents in supporting children with traumatic backgrounds? What additional training or support do you need to be more successful in your work?

### Discussion on Agency- & System-Level Changes

1. What services and supports are available in your community for victims of IPV? What services and supports are available for children who have been exposed to IPV? Are there gaps in service provision for children and families?
2. Often the relationship between child protection and domestic violence victim advocates can become strained because of differences in roles and policies. What strategies could your agency utilize to strengthen these relationships so that families and children are not caught in the middle?
3. Is trauma-focused training part of your agency's mandatory training? What aspects of this training, if available, are most helpful to you in your work? What additional training or support within your agency is needed?