

Intimate partner violence (IPV) and child maltreatment (CM) regularly co-occur and carry significant consequences for child health and development. Efforts to address co-occurring IPV and CM are typically situated within coercive systems that utilize incarceration and family separation. This approach has demonstrated limited effectiveness for reducing IPV and CM and often causes further harm to parents and children. To increase positive parenting and create safe homes where children can thrive, we need innovative, non-punitive solutions engaging all members of the family unit. My research focuses on developing, implementing, and evaluating family-centered policies and practices that promote healthy child development and well-being.

My practice-informed program of research is grounded in a critical intersectional perspective, situating individuals and families within their broader ecological context, and emphasizing the value and strength of relationships and community for healing. It has three focal areas: 1) father engagement in cases of co-occurring IPV and CM, 2) parenting supports that foster multigenerational relational health, and 3) IPV-informed policies and practices in family courts and the child welfare system. Across these three areas, I aim to develop and evaluate non-punitive violence prevention programs and policies that recognize structural factors contributing to violence within families, enlist families and communities in defining solutions, and engage directly with those responsible for harm.

### **Father engagement in cases of co-occurring IPV and CM**

This focal area is consistent with broader efforts to engage fathers as more active parental figures. Social work and government initiatives to increase father engagement – such as the National Responsible Fatherhood efforts within the Office of Family Assistance – are a burgeoning area of research and policy interest. My research recognizes the importance of fathers to their family systems and balances direct engagement of fathers with safety within the family unit. This focus is informed by my practice experience with fathers who have engaged in IPV and acknowledges the role of trauma in parenting and violence perpetration.

My next focus in this area is to map the research, policy, and practice landscape of fathering content and father-inclusive practices within programs addressing IPV and CM. This project will examine whether father engagement efforts meaningfully address violence perpetration and how fathers' experiences and needs vary according to intersecting social identities. Concurrently, to inform policy and practice I will seek funding through NICHD or the Responsible Fatherhood grants through the Office of Family Assistance to focus on systems-involved fathers to understand their needs, strengths, and barriers to engagement.

### **Parenting supports that foster multigenerational relational health**

Building parenting supports, especially for those who are vulnerable to or have engaged in violence, is a central focus of my research and goes beyond a focus on fathers. My recent work examined harsh parenting practices across different experiences of IPV and found that all forms

of IPV create a risk for harsh parenting of children among both mothers and fathers. My collaboration with Partners for Our Children (University of Washington) has focused on systems-based supports for parenting, including analyzing evidence used to design a parenting intervention for child welfare-involved families and developing training for virtual supervised family time during COVID-19. My collaboration with Dr. Rich Tolman (University of Michigan) evaluating a strengths-based intervention with first-time fathers informed my knowledge of primary prevention and intervention research. Finally, using a longitudinal dataset, two of my studies examined the relationship between CM and long-term vulnerabilities.

My research on multigenerational violence prevention aligns with interdisciplinary initiatives aimed at improving population health and is a top funding priority of various branches of the NIH. One of my immediate priorities as an early career scholar is to recruit families pursuing separation in civil court to identify and better understand needs, barriers, priorities, and solutions for supporting family relational health post-separation. This focus is a good match for pilot-project funds through institution-based population health initiatives.

### **IPV-informed practice and policy across systems interacting with families**

In addition to interpersonal interventions, my research examines the policy environment for co-occurring CM and IPV, particularly in civil courts and the child welfare system. Since 2012, I have completed several projects impacting program and policy responses in areas relating to IPV. This includes supporting IPV training efforts for police and court staff, and reforming child custody statutes with Dr. Dan Saunders (University of Michigan). I partnered on a national review examining child protection guidelines regarding substantiating child exposure to parental violence as maltreatment with Drs. Bryan Victor (Wayne State University) and Colleen Henry (CUNY). I am currently leading a study examining IPV training and resource needs among decision-makers in family court settings regarding child custody in cases of IPV.

I have applied my research by advising community and government stakeholders on program and policy reforms. Most recently, I consulted for the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts and the Washington Supreme Court's Gender and Justice Commission to improve civil protection order data collection across the state of Washington. Prior to that, I led the conceptualization and design of an evaluation of a novel assessment and response approach for court-referred perpetrators of IPV, in partnership with the Seattle Municipal Court and Seattle Mayor's Office on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

I look forward to building research-community partnerships focused on identifying needs among families with co-occurring IPV and CM. Goals of this research include improving systems' responsiveness and collaboration to mitigate harm and address needs, while simultaneously pursuing community-based solutions. One area of immediate inquiry involves understanding pathways to systems involvement for families experiencing IPV and CM and how responses to violence and outcomes for families vary between systems. These foci meet several funding priorities, including at the NIH, NIJ, and Office of Violence Against Women.