

## Siblings of Children who have been Physically Abused

*Translating research to practice 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 dialogue about the information presented in the research brief in order to inform practice and enhance conversation surrounding meaningful issues.*

*In this issue, we explored education outcomes for children who were allegedly physically abused and who were exposed to alleged physical abuse. In particular, we were interested in the differential school attendance and achievement patterns for children who were involved with CPS due to physical abuse and children who were exposed to alleged physical abuse as compared to their peers without CPS involvement. Overall, findings indicate that the attendance and achievement of children involved with CPS decreased at significantly faster rates than those of their peers who were not involved with CPS. Further examination revealed significant differences in attendance patterns for children who were exposed to alleged maltreatment compared to their peers, and significant differences in math and reading achievement patterns of children who were alleged victims compared to their peers.*

### Discussion on Practice Implications

- 1.** This study explored the differential outcomes for children who were alleged victims of physical abuse and children who were exposed to alleged physical abuse. What are some available services in your practice that support children who have been exposed to the alleged maltreatment of another child in the household, considering the differential academic outcomes presented in this brief? Which services or resources have you used and what has been the result?
- 2.** School professionals are often unaware that children they see every day are involved with the child protection system due to privacy and confidentiality laws. What information should be shared between CPS workers and school professionals and at what point in time should it be shared? What strategies have you used to share pertinent information with the appropriate professionals to support children served by CPS and what has been the result?

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

- 1.** The authors suggest that exposure to physical abuse may translate into symptoms of depression or anxiety, leading to avoidance of the school environment. What changes are needed either through CPS or the education system to provide counseling services to children? Is this the responsibility of CPS, schools, or both?
- 2.** What changes are necessary to foster improved communication between child welfare workers and school professionals in order to provide support for children facing academic challenges, due to both exposure to maltreatment and alleged victimization?