



CHILDHOOD RISK

ACE: Witnessed Domestic Violence

INDICATOR

Percent of children witnessing domestic violence.

Numerator Number of children who experienced the ACE

Denominator Children aged 0-17

DESCRIPTION

This is a proxy measure for toxic stress and is included as an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE). This question asks parents, "Did [child's name] ever see or hear any parents, guardians, or any other adults in his/her home slap, hit, kick, punch, or beat each other up?"

IMPORTANCE

Witnessing violence has been linked to increased psychological distress, increased mental health issues (Kitzmann, 2003), and increased likelihood of the young person committing acts of violence (Howarth, 2013). Children who witness domestic abuse have outcomes similar to children who were physically abused themselves (Kitzmann, 2003).

LIMITATIONS

- The National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) is completed by the parent or caregiver who may chose not to acknowledge early negative childhood experiences.
- This question may be under-reported due to the victim's disempowerment or concern that a disclosure may compromise the family's safety. Data from other national surveys such as the National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence (NatSCEV), which uses child self-report data, find that almost a quarter of children witnessed violence in their homes, schools, or communities (Wolak, 1998).

ADDITIONAL ANALYSES

Wisconsin Analyses

Federal Poverty Level

Data not available.

National Analyses

Federal Poverty Level % of Children who Witnessed Domestic Violence

Under 100% FPL	10.3%
100-200% FPL	7.3%
200-400% FPL	4.5%
Over 400% FPL	2.5%

YEAR:

2016

WI	US	Best	Worst
5.7%	5.7%	2.8%	11.1%
		MA	NM

PAST YEAR:

2011/2012

WI	US
6.8%	7.3%

SOURCE

Kitzmann et. al. Child Witness to Domestic Violence: A Meta-Analytic Review. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 71.2 (2003).
 Howarth, E., & Feder, G. (2013). Prevalence and physical health impact of domestic violence. *Domestic violence and mental health*. London: RCPsych Publications, 1-17.
 National Survey of Children's Health. (2016). Data query from the Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative, Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health website. Retrieved from www.childhealthdata.org.
 Wolak J, et al. Jasinski, J. L., Williams, L. M., & Finkelhor, D. (Eds.). (1998). *Partner violence: A comprehensive review of 20 years of research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.