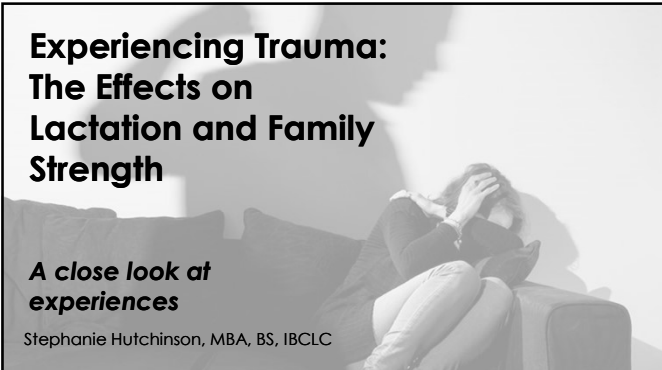


**Experiencing Trauma:
The Effects on
Lactation and Family
Strength**


*A close look at
experiences*

Stephanie Hutchinson, MBA, BS, IBCLC



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**Let's start with basic
definitions...**



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Disclaimer

This presentation can be triggering to those who have experienced any type of abuse or trauma. It is absolutely ok if you need to walk away for a few minutes during the course of this presentation.

2

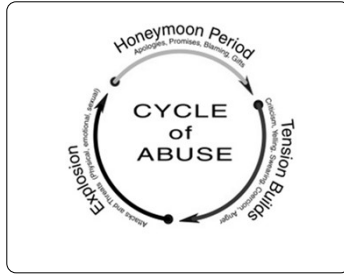
Abuse is not always violent.

Abuse can be:

- Physical,
- Sexual,
- Reproductive,
- Financial,
- Emotional, and
- Psychological.

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**The
Cycle of
Violence**



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What is domestic violence?

“Domestic violence (also called intimate partner violence (IPV), domestic abuse or relationship abuse) is a pattern of behaviors used by one partner to maintain power and control over another partner in an intimate relationship.” – The National Domestic Violence Hotline



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What is Sexual Abuse?

○ "Sexual abuse is unwanted sexual activity, with perpetrators using force, making threats or taking advantage of victims not able to give consent. Most victims and perpetrators know each other. Immediate reactions to sexual abuse include shock, fear or disbelief. Long-term symptoms include anxiety, fear or post-traumatic stress disorder. While efforts to treat sex offenders remain unpromising, psychological interventions for survivors — especially group therapy — appears effective." – American Psychological Association

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Culture

○ Culture has a profound and significant influence in the decisions and actions abused Hispanic/Latinas have to consider. "In the Latino culture women are often designated to the roles of wife and mother. It is socially unacceptable to be divorced, to marry several times, or to remain single and have children out of wedlock. For these reasons, it may take some time for battered women to consider leaving their partners."
 ○ Appalachian family values are very gendered. Women need to be the wife/mother while the men are more masculine and rough. "Boys will be boys"

https://www.dqj.state.or.us/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/women_of_color_network_facts_domestic_violence_2006.pdf

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Violence and Abuse are Culturally Affected – example Appalachia

	Appalachia		Non-Appalachian US	
	Number	Rate/100,000	Number	Rate/100,000
Total	2,645	3.09	4,740	2.71
Age				
18–34	604	2.56	1237	2.24
35–64	1147	2.53	1993	2.20
65+	894	5.34	1510	5.18
Rurality†				
Rural	1,026	3.27	565	2.60
Urban	1,619	2.98	4,175	2.72

†Based on Urban Influence Codes.
 ‡Poisson regression with Pearson scaling factor.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0184222>
<https://journal.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0184222>

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Abuse does not affect one gender.

Men account for 24% of domestic violence victims – However due to stigma these statistics are hard to find in Appalachia, hinting that it may go unreported.

<https://www.domesticshelters.org/domestic-violence/articles/information/men-can-be-abused-too>

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Violence and Abuse are Culturally Affected – This isn't new.

- "African American females experience intimate partner violence at a rate 35% higher than that of white females, and about 2.5 times the rate of women of other races. However, they are less likely than white women to use social services, battered women's programs, or go to the hospital because of domestic violence."
- A survey of immigrant Korean women found that 60% had been battered by their husbands.
- Project AWARE's (Asian Women Advocating Respect and Empowerment) 2000-2001 survey of 178 API women found that 81.1% reported experiencing at least one form of intimate partner violence in the past year."

https://www.dqj.state.or.us/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/women_of_color_network_facts_domestic_violence_2006.pdf

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Abuse can affect families of all different ages, sizes, sexes, and colors.

Marginalized groups are more susceptible to abuse.

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Being from a rural area, increases the risk for violence and isolation from that violence.



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The Effects of Abuse

- O Depression
- O Substance abuse
- O STI's
- O PTSD
- O Personality disorders

<https://www.mentalhelp.net/articles/effects-of-abuse/>

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"Cultural traditions socialize the women to be the primary caregivers for their children, thus, few women worked outside the home on a consistent basis. The women seemed to talk more of how the abusive household impacted their children or their ability to provide for their children rather than how the abuse impacted them."

-Shoaf, 2004

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The Effects of Abuse, cont'd

- O Sexual disorders
- O Experiencing pain with no "pain" present
- O Body image issues
- O Sexual promiscuity
- O Higher risk of Postpartum Mood Disorders

<https://www.mentalhelp.net/articles/effects-of-abuse/>

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One Woman's Testimony

"[I] grew up believing that's what men did...it took me a long time to get to a point where I thought I even had the right to say, hey wait, I don't deserve this."

- Shoaf, 2004

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What about breastfeeding?

Let's Look at the Research

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“According to a 2002 study, women who were sexually abused were **twice** as likely to initiate breastfeeding (chestfeeding).”

Myth: Victims won't breastfeed

<https://breastfeedingmadesimple.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/CSA.pdf>

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Duration statistics as well as initiation data are affected by abuse.

- More likely to stop breastfeeding and or reduce the amount of exclusive breastfeeding
- Highest risk when the abuser was known
- Sorbel, 2015

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Myth: Victims won't breastfeed

- Not true, but common misconception
- Actually, a higher percentage choose to breastfeed
- Prentice, JHL, September 2002
- More than twice as likely to breastfeed
- But may experience more difficulty


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Things you may hear:

- I only want to pump my breast milk and give it to my baby
- I don't think I can breastfeed
- My baby didn't give me consent
- Creativity with counseling can go a long way!

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Duration rates, however, decline quickly.



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Those who have a history of abuse...

- May experience a form of healing through breastfeeding/chestfeeding
- OR they may have triggers resurfaced
- Trauma Informed Care should be implemented in all practices, regardless of assumption

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Healing through Breastfeeding/Chestfeeding

- Learning what is normal in breastfeeding/chestfeeding management (sleep, nursing frequency, skin to skin techniques, nursing duration)
- Re-gaining control
- Empowering oneself
- Seeking self-care/referral

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How Can We Help?

- Listen
- Give creative feedback
- Work together

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