

People with parents who fight are more likely to have mental health problems in later life

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People with parents who were violent to each other are more likely to have mental health problems when they grow up, reveals research published in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*.

Researchers looked at what impact interparental violence had on people as children by observing their [mental health](#) outcomes in adulthood.

A child being exposed to interparental violence is a form of maltreatment with consequences for a child's development, but in some countries it is only seen as a risk factor for later problems with no specific outcomes.

The authors studied 3,023 adults in the Paris metropolitan area in 2005 by carrying out at-home face to face interviews.

People who agreed to take part were found from a population based cohort study in Paris held by the National Institute of Health and Medical Research.

The researchers measured current depression and lifetime suicide attempts, intimate partner violence, violence against children and [alcohol dependence](#).

They also asked people about childhood adversities such as parental separation, divorce, parental death or imprisonment, alcoholism and physical and/or sexual abuse, as well as asking about social level stressors

including poor parental health, housing problems, prolonged parental unemployment, and financial troubles.

Among the group of people interviewed, 16% said they had witnessed interparental violence before the age of 18 and this was far more common in certain situations. For example, it was up to eight times more likely in cases where parents had been alcoholics.

Other factors were also relevant and witnessing violence was more common in families with financial problems, serious parental diseases, housing problems or unemployment.

After adjusting for family and social level stressors, the researchers found that people who were exposed to interparental violence had a 1.4 times higher risk of having depression, were more than three times more likely to be involved in conjugal violence, were almost five times more likely to mistreat their own child and 1.75 times more likely to have a dependence on [alcohol](#).

The authors concluded: "Intensification of prevention of and screening for domestic violence including interparental [violence](#) is a public health issue for the well-being of future generations."

Source: British Medical Journal ([news](#) : [web](#))

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