

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force: Evidence lacking for interventions in prevention of child maltreatment

August 29 2023, by Elana Gotkine



The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) concludes that the evidence is inadequate for assessing the balance of benefits and harms of primary care interventions for preventing child maltreatment. These findings form the basis of a draft recommendation statement published online Aug. 29 by the USPSTF.

Meera Viswanathan, Ph.D., from RTI International-University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Evidence-based Practice Center in Research Triangle Park, and colleagues conducted a systematic review of the evidence on the benefits and harms of interventions provided in or referable from primary care to prevent [child maltreatment](#).

Evidence on benefits of child maltreatment interventions were provided in 24 trials with 14,025 participants. The researchers found no evidence of differences in reports to Child Protective Services within one year of intervention completion or removal of the child from the home within one to three years of follow-up. Other results could not be pooled due to heterogeneity of outcome measures; evidence demonstrated no benefit or was inconclusive for abuse, neglect, and their sequelae.

Based on these findings, the USPSTF concludes that the current evidence is insufficient to assess the balance of benefits and harms of [primary care](#) interventions for preventing child maltreatment among children and adolescents younger than 18 years without signs or symptoms of maltreatment (I recommendation).

The draft recommendation statement has been posted for public comment. Comments can be submitted from Aug. 29 to Sept. 25, 2023.

More information: [Draft Evidence Review](#)

[Draft Recommendation Statement](#)

[Comment on Recommendations](#)

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