

Study finds many health care providers are ill-equipped to recognize pain in abused children

June 12 2024



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

Many health-care professionals are ill-equipped to assess pain in children who have suffered abuse, a new study by McGill researchers suggests.

This can lead to inadequate pain treatment, making the physical and emotional effects of abuse even worse.

"Our findings show a critical need for [training programs](#) for health-care providers about the effects of child maltreatment," said Matthew Baker, the study's lead author and a Ph.D. student in the School/Applied Child Psychology program at McGill.

The researchers surveyed 100 health-care providers in Canada and the United States, using an online questionnaire. They found only 13% had received training on child maltreatment and its effect on assessing pain in children with a history of abuse. Those who had received continuing education on [child maltreatment](#) were more likely to consider its impact on a child's pain reports and adapt their assessments accordingly.

"With so few providers trained, it's vital to raise awareness and improve education on how abused children present in health-care settings in order to enhance their treatment outcomes," Baker said.

The findings are [published](#) in the *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice*.

More information: Matthew Baker et al, An examination of questioning methods and the influence of child maltreatment on paediatric pain assessments: Perspectives of healthcare providers, *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice* (2023). [DOI: 10.1111/jep.13950](https://doi.org/10.1111/jep.13950)

Provided by McGill University

Citation: Study finds many health care providers are ill-equipped to recognize pain in abused children (2024, June 12) retrieved 19 June 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-06-health-ill-equipped-pain-abused.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.