# The Impact of Child Maltreatment and Intimate Partner Violence Surveillance Initiatives

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## Abstract

Available data reveal that child maltreatment (CM) and intimate partner violence (IPV) are significant public health problems in the United States. In light of a dire need for valid CM and IPV surveillance data, the Division of Violence Prevention, specifically the Etiology and Surveillance Branch (ESB), of the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC) funded state-based CM and IPV surveillance activities in nine states. This presentation focuses on the methodology used to assess the impact of the surveillance activities and on findings regarding prevention outcomes of state systems. The information included in the presentation describes (1) the process for defining impact (positive and negative) of the funded surveillance activities on several different levels in terms of issues such as violence prevention, legislation, policy, and costs; (2) outcomes at the prevention level, including the use of surveillance data to support improved programs and policies; and (3) how information can be used to inform the development of CM and IPV surveillance plans. The approach for this project included the development of a framework for defining impact, which was informed by interviews with NCIPC staff, abstraction of information from state reports and grantee meetings notes for funded programs, and administration of a structured interview protocol to representatives from each of the nine states' surveillance initiatives. This poster describes the methodology for this impact assessment, findings regarding prevention outcomes, and implications for support and sustainability of surveillance systems.

## 1. Background

- Timely and accurate data are an essential resource for communicating the public health burden of various diseases and conditions and for guiding effective prevention efforts.
- The need for data is particularly urgent in the areas of child maltreatment (CM) and intimate partner violence (IPV).
- Approximately 2.6 million referrals for CM (including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and child neglect) concerning almost 4.5 million children were made to state and local child protective services agencies in 2002.
- An estimated 4.8 million rapes and physical assaults are committed against women by an intimate partner and 2.9 million intimate partner physical assaults are perpetrated against men each year.
- National organizations such as the National Research Council have recommended improvements in monitoring systems for both CM and IPV.
- In light of this dire need for valid CM and IPV surveillance data, the Division of Violence Prevention, specifically the Etiology and Surveillance Branch (ESB), of the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC) funded state-based CM and IPV surveillance activities in nine states.

**Table 1. Summary of ESB-Funded Surveillance Programs**

| State | CM Surveillance | IPV Surveillance |
|---|---|---|
| California | ● | |
| Kentucky | | ● |
| Massachusetts | | ● |
| Michigan | ● | ● |
| Minnesota | ● | ● |
| Missouri | ● | |
| Oklahoma | | ● |
| Oregon | | ● |
| Rhode Island | ● | ● |

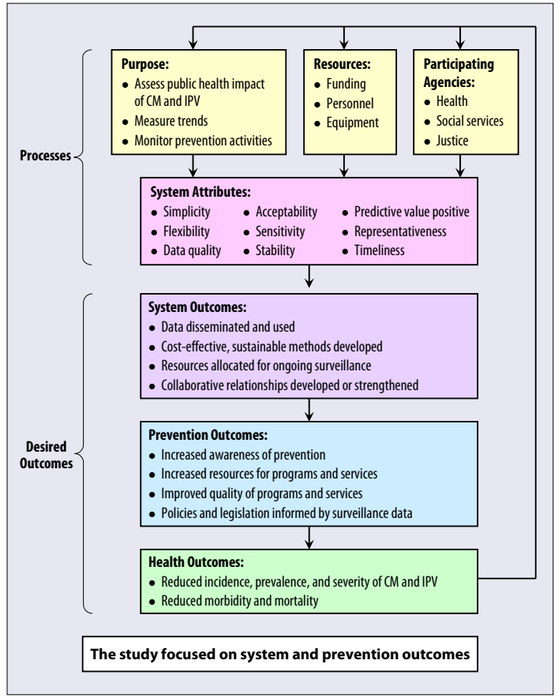
## 2. Purpose

This study

- describes the methodology used to assess the impact of the funded surveillance activities
- presents findings regarding prevention and systems outcomes from the activities

## 3. Methodology

**Figure 1. Conceptual Model for Evaluation of the Impact of CM and IPV Surveillance Systems**




The study used three approaches to collect data:

- **CDC interviews:** Interviews were conducted with three CDC staff members with knowledge and expertise in various areas related to surveillance activities at CDC to obtain their perspectives on CDC's focus on CM and IPV surveillance activities and feedback on the operating definition of *impact* developed by RTI staff.
- **Document review**: This approach included a review of program documents, such as applications for continued funding, semiannual reports, and final reports.
- **State stakeholder interviews**: A structured interview protocol was developed to gather credible evidence from state project staff's perspectives about the impact of CM and IPV surveillance initiatives, as well as issues related to program sustainability.

## 4. Analysis

- For the CDC interviews, notes were compiled and used for modifications of the model and supporting materials as needed.
- For the document review, information was abstracted from all reviewed documents and summarized across states and types of programs.
- For the state interviews, analyses were conducted using a qualitative data analysis software package (Atlas.ti™) and employing a combination of deductive and inductive analytic approaches. Analyses compared the states by analyzing frequencies of specific themes and identifying similarities and differences across programs.

## 5. Findings — Document Review

- Some distinctions among programs were apparent from a cursory review of program descriptions. Even with a common funding source, programs vary substantially in goals, methods, and products.
- CM surveillance programs are clearly described at an earlier developmental stage than IPV surveillance programs.
- The CM programs are more focused on development and less on sustainability and dissemination than the IPV programs.
- It is also clear that program products and impacts are inconsistently reported, underlining the need for this assessment.

## 6. Findings — State Interviews

- Respondents
  - Interviews were conducted with stakeholders from all nine states.
  - The majority of state stakeholders had served on the surveillance project for the duration of the project.
  - Respondents included project managers, co-investigators, epidemiologists, and project directors.
  - Respondents' responsibilities on the surveillance project included activities such as fiscal and programmatic oversight to specific epidemiological work.
- The document review and state interviews found four broad themes related to
  - Prevention and system impacts
  - Factors affecting implementation and sustainability of surveillance systems
  - Efforts to ensure sustainability of systems
  - Guidance to other states attempting to implement systems
- Prevention impacts
  - Heightened awareness of violence
    - For example, information was disseminated through various products such as journal articles, presentations, and news articles.
  - Demonstrated need for resources
    - For example, the prevalence of violence and the relationship to other public health issues were demonstrated.
  - Improvement of prevention programs
    - For example, respondents increased collaboration across agencies on cross-cutting issues such as substance abuse and IPV.
  - Informed policy and legislation
    - For example, states used data to support changes in restraining order policy.

## 6. Findings — State Interviews *(continued)*

- System impacts
  - Collaboration
    - For example, data were disseminated and groups such as legislators, domestic violence coalitions, and child welfare agencies collaborated.
  - Improved input and output data
    - For example, the created systems provided data to some states that had no data available previously.
  - Improved case finding methodology
    - For example, states integrated child death reviews with CM surveillance.
  - Institutionalization of system
    - For example, states worked with existing surveillance efforts, such as the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), to ensure sustainability.
- Factors affecting implementation and sustainability
  - Data access
  - Data quality
  - Relationship/conflicts
  - Organizational support
  - Surveillance system quality
  - Capacity to effectively use data
  - Lack of guidance on effectively implementing surveillance activities
- Efforts to insure sustainability
  - Link to other surveillance and violence prevention efforts/continuation of current surveillance activities
  - Produce data that demonstrate value of system
  - Link to funding sources other than CDC
  - Develop collaborative relationships

## 7. Guidance for Other Surveillance Systems

- Develop effective partnerships
- Disseminate data to demonstrate its usefulness
- Expand types of data used
- Educate data providers to maintain data access and quality
- Recognize cost of systems/build appropriate funding base
- Locate surveillance activities within agency to maximize support and access to resources
- Build internal capacity
- Ensure that data capture all affected populations

## 8. Discussion and Conclusion

General recommendations from state feedback regarding surveillance activities:

- States need guidance on criteria for successful surveillance systems.
- States need to secure fiscal buy-in and that all key stakeholders continue to make surveillance activities a priority.
- State agencies working with surveillance systems need to be fully aware of and in a position to build collaborations with CM/IPV stakeholders in their states and to use existing surveillance data sources.
- States need venues such as national conferences or regional meetings to learn from one another.

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