IMPRoving Outcomes for children exposed to domestic Violence (IMPROVE): an evidence synthesis

Record Status
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Citation

Authors' objectives
Exposure to domestic violence and abuse (DVA) during childhood and adolescence increases the risk of negative outcomes across the lifespan. The aim of this review is to synthesise evidence on the clinical effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and acceptability of interventions for children exposed to DVA, with the aim of making recommendations for further research.

Authors' conclusions
The evidence base regarding the acceptability, clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of interventions to improve outcomes for children exposed to DVA is underdeveloped. There is an urgent need for more high-quality studies, particularly trials, that are designed to produce actionable, generalisable findings that can be implemented in real-world settings and that can inform decisions about which interventions to commission and scale. We suggest that there is a need to pause the development of new interventions and to focus on the systematic evaluation of existing programmes. With regard to the UK, we have identified three types of programme that could be justifiably prioritised for further study: psycho-education delivered to mothers and children, or children alone; parent skills training in combination with advocacy; and interventions involving the abusive parent/caregiver. We also suggest that there is need for key stakeholders to come together to explicitly identify and address the structural, practical and cultural barriers that may have hampered the development of the UK evidence base to date.

Final publication URL
https://www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/phr/phr04100/#/abstract

Indexing Status
Subject indexing assigned by CRD

MeSH
Humans; Child; Child Abuse; Domestic Violence; Outcome Assessment (Health Care)

Country of organisation
England

English summary
An English language summary is available.

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AccessionNumber
Date abstract record published
14/12/2016