The Invisible Head Injury Epidemic

How you can improve outcomes for female survivors of partner-inflicted head injury.

Introduction
Extensive literature and resource reviews on partner-inflicted head injury (PI HI) uncovered a growing need for prevalence measurement via universal screening and a dedication of resources to build awareness among the public and professionals.\(^1,2,3,4,6,7\)

PI HI specialists estimate 1.6 million women each year receive PI HIs, through trauma and strangulation.\(^2,8\)

For every one military or football concussion, there are five women experiencing partner-inflicted head injuries.\(^2,9\)

Yet, the overwhelming majority of research dollars and other resources are directed to studies and treatments for male athletes and military personnel.\(^2,7\)

Objective
Our work began as two master’s level class projects: (1) a paper on local and national resources available to women with partner-inflicted head injury, and (2) a curriculum developed to train professionals on how to understand and meet the needs of female survivors of (PI HI).

Prevalence

The invisible epidemic.\(^2,4,8,12\)

5x more women incur PI HI than all the people who experience military and football related concussions each year.\(^2,4,8,9,10\)

Introduction

As awareness of Partner-Inflicted Head Injury (PI HI) emerges, so too does a need for both prevalence research, funding for outreach to female survivors of PI HI, and training for the professionals who serve them. Screening is the first step to supporting this underidentified, undiagnosed, and underserved population.

Authors
Meghan Chapman
Meghan.Chapman001@umb.edu

Curriculum research support from student peers and rehabilitation professionals:
- Mariellen Belanger
- Sean Downing
- Myra Pierce

References
References in additional materials.

1.6 Million PER YEAR
300,000 PER YEAR
20,500 PER YEAR

5 Opportunities

Making the invisible visible is the goal. Which of the following opportunities can your program implement?

1. Begin a pilot program in a healthcare setting to screen for survivors of PI HI among the general population. Partner with an emergency room or a community health center.\(^1,13,15\)
2. Initiate a universal screening project within your program to better identify and more fully support survivors of the violence that causes PI HI. See "Resources".\(^1,16\)
3. Collaborate with domestic violence shelters to screen for survivors of PI HI. Experts from both teams can customize our training curriculum or access "Resources".\(^1,6,12,15,17\)
4. Increase awareness of the risks and impact of PI HI among survivors, the general public, and professionals via social media, websites, partners, media outreach, conference presentations, etc.\(^2,8,13,17,18,19\)
5. Customize our PI HI training for professionals or use and share the training materials found in "Resource" and on the References page, to better prepare shelter staff, health care workers, and disability professionals.\(^20,21,22,23,24,25,26\)

Resources

CHATS Screener\(^15\)
Online Training\(^26\)
Promising Practices\(^20\)