

# *Domestic Violence Prevalence and Effects on Employment in Two California TANF Populations*

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*Random samples of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients eligible for welfare-to-work activities (N = 632) were surveyed in two California counties for 3 consecutive years, starting in 1999. Overall, 54% of women interviewed at all three rounds met the criteria for an estimated need for domestic violence services at some point during the 3 years, but only 8% met the criteria in all 3 years. Estimated need for services and posttraumatic stress resulting from abuse were negatively associated with working at least 32 hours a week at the time of the interviews. Estimated need for services was associated with working fewer weeks in a year, having a lower wage income, and losing jobs during the year. Approximately half the women with estimated service needs had sought help from police, courts, a domestic violence agency, a counselor, or a physician.*

**Keywords:** *domestic violence; employment; TANF*

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*Seven years after the 1996 enactment of welfare reform and the reduction of caseloads to approximately half their previous size, there is surprisingly little known about the effects of domestic violence on employment under welfare reform. The postreform*

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AUTHORS' NOTE: Funding was received from the National Institute of Justice, Violence Against Women Office, Grant No. 98-WT-VX-0009. Additional funding has been provided by California counties, the Wellness Foundation, and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. We are grateful for assistance provided by Kern and Stanislaus County officials and the California Department of Social Services and for the contributions of other members of the CalWORKs Project, particularly Pat Jordan and Sandra Naylor Goodwin. Finally, we owe our largest debt of gratitude to the women who participated in the study.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, Vol. 9 No. 10, October 2003 1191-1212

DOI: 10.1177/1077801203255861

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longitudinal research reported here provides some answers but raises many questions as well.

## PREVIOUS RESEARCH

### PREVALENCE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG WELFARE RECIPIENTS

Tolman and Raphael (2000) summarized prior research that indicated a high prevalence of domestic violence in the Aid to Families With Dependent Children population and highlighted the issues this raised for welfare reform. More recent research has attempted to document the prevalence of domestic violence in post-welfare reform populations and to specify the impacts of domestic violence on employment within the new welfare context. The Women's Employment Study of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients in Michigan revealed a 12-month prevalence of 15% for serious abuse, defined as being hit with a fist, hit with an object that could hurt, beaten, choked, threatened with or assaulted with a weapon, or forced into any sexual activity against her will (Tolman & Rosen, 2001). Barusch and Taylor (1999) studied a sample of long-term welfare recipients in Utah and reported that 12.3% in the previous 12 months had experienced "severe abuse," defined similarly. Speiglmán, Fujiwara, Norris, and Green (1999) reported that domestic violence was a potential barrier to employment for 8.4% of a random sample of Alameda County welfare recipients. A study in San Joaquin County in California by the same investigators found domestic violence in the prior year in 6.7% of the sample, with 8.1% also reporting partner control that interfered with work (Norris, Speiglmán, & Dasinger, 2002). To a large but unknown extent, the varying prevalence rates reflect different research definitions of domestic violence.

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, WELFARE TENURE, AND EMPLOYMENT

One prereform longitudinal study found that domestic violence among welfare recipients was associated with a general pattern of reduced stability of employment (Browne, Salomon, &

Bassuk, 1999). Other prereform studies, however, found abused women may be *more* likely to work and to work full-time, possibly in an effort to become financially independent and leave the abuser (Allard, Albelda, Colten, & Cosenza, 1997).

Postreform studies have documented the extent to which abuse can sabotage a partner's ability or capacity to work (Barusch & Taylor, 1999; Moore & Selkove, 1999; Norris et al., 2002; Riger, Aherns, & Blickenstaff, 2000; Tolman & Rosen, 2001). However, the actual effects of domestic violence on employment and welfare status in post-welfare reform studies are mixed and inconsistent. A study of barriers to employment in Alameda County found domestic violence significantly reduced the employment rate 15 months after baseline in bivariate analysis, but the association was not statistically significant in multivariate analysis (Dasinger, Miller, Norris, & Speiglmán, 2001). The Michigan Women's Employment Study did not find that domestic violence had significant effects on employment in multivariate analysis if domestic violence was experienced only 1 year (or prior to 1997), but it did have an effect if experienced in 2 or more years; women experiencing domestic violence were more likely to be "welfare dependent" at follow-up 1 year later and had lower wages (Danziger & Seefeldt, 2002; Tolman & Rosen, 2001). A study of Utah welfare "leavers," found "severe abuse" in twice as many women removed from welfare due to reaching their time limits as in women who left with increased income (17% vs. 8%) (Taylor & Barusch, 2002). Similarly, "sanctioned" leavers in Sonoma County, California, were more likely than other leavers to have experienced domestic violence (Mancuso & Lindler, 2001). However, the large Welfare Family and Children Three Cities Study found no difference between leavers and stayers with regard to domestic violence; rates in both groups were high (Moffitt, Cherlin, Burton, King, & Roff, 2002).

#### **USE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES BY WOMEN RECEIVING WELFARE**

The use of the Family Violence Option, which permits states to grant waivers of requirements that might jeopardize the safety of women in domestic violence situations, has been far more limited than expected (Raphael & Haennicke, 1999; Tolman & Raphael,

2000). Few welfare agencies have undertaken intensive efforts to identify and provide services to women with domestic violence issues that might be impeding their ability to become and stay employed.

The current study is designed to further clarify the relationship between domestic violence and employment in a post-welfare reform population by using multiple measures of domestic violence, multiple measures of employment, varying time periods, and information about receipt of domestic violence services. In addition, the same measures are applied in two counties. Related reports from this research are available at <http://www.cimh.org/calworks>.

## METHOD

### RESEARCH INTERVIEWS

A randomly selected group of TANF recipients from two central valley California counties, Kern and Stanislaus, was interviewed three times: at baseline, 1 year later (after welfare-to-work requirements were applied), and again 15 months later. We refer to these as the Round 1, Round 2, and Round 3 interviews. 90-minute interviews were conducted by contracted research staff. In Round 1, interviews were conducted at welfare offices in both counties, as they were in Kern in the next two rounds; in Stanislaus, Rounds 2 and 3 were conducted in a research office in a central location.

### SAMPLE ATTRITION AND REPRESENTIVITY

A random sample was selected in the two counties, which met the following criteria: aged 18 to 59, fluent in either English or Spanish, female head of household (relative caretakers and two-parent families were not eligible), and either a TANF applicant (in Stanislaus) or a recipient of cash assistance for at least 1 year (in Kern). Of the Stanislaus study's eligible applicants, 71% were interviewed (5% refusal rate), for a total of 356 interviews. In Kern, a random sample was drawn from 4,732 CalWORKs recipients who had received at least 1 year of cash assistance and were recertified during a 3-month period. Of this group, 55% percent

were interviewed (7% refusal rate), for a total of 347 interviews. Characteristics of the Stanislaus and Kern interviewees were compared with those who were eligible but did not participate in order to detect possible bias created by survey nonresponse. In Stanislaus, the groups did not differ to a statistically significant degree on any measure. In Kern, there were statistically significant but substantively unimportant differences on a few of the measures: percentage speaking Spanish as first language (more in the interviewed sample), age (interviewed sample slightly older), and time on welfare (slightly smaller percentage of interviewed sample on welfare longer than a year).

As a further test of representivity, we replicated a series of our analyses using poststratification weights for race, age, and time on welfare. The raw percentages for a number of key variables and cross-tabulations usually did not differ more than 1 percentage point from the poststratification adjusted percentages; in no case did they differ by more than 2%. Thus, we are confident that the study samples represent the welfare populations in Stanislaus and Kern.

Of the 356 in the Stanislaus sample, 32 were eligible and participating in welfare-to-work activities as applicants when interviewed but did not subsequently go on to receive cash aid. They are included here with respect to prevalence but are omitted from employment and welfare tenure analyses. In Stanislaus, 311, or 87.4%, were re-interviewed in Round 2 and 309 (87%) in Round 3. In Kern, comparisons of the sample with state eligibility data showed 71 persons to be ineligible for the welfare-to-work program, resulting in a final sample of 276. Of the 276 Kern participants, 262, or 95%, were re-interviewed in Round 2, and 243 (88%) were re-interviewed in Round 3. Overall, 84% of the welfare-to-work eligible clients interviewed in Round 1 in both counties had three interviews ( $N = 534$ ). In both counties, most of the attrition was due to the inability of interviewers to reach TANF participants by letter or phone to schedule an interview rather than refusal to continue participating in the study.

Demographic characteristics of the samples in each county are presented in Table 1. A third of the sample was younger than 25 at the first interview, and another third was between 25 and 35. Overall, 41% had less than a high school education. Respondents in Stanislaus were more likely to be White than were those in Kern

**TABLE 1**  
**Demographic Characteristics of the Samples at Round 1**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Stanislaus</i>	<i>Kern</i>
Number in sample	356	276
Mean age	30.1	31.6
Education (%)		
At least some college	21.1	26.6
High school or GED	42.8	25.1
9th to 11th grade	32.1	39.6
Less than 8th grade	3.8	8.7
Race and ethnicity (%)		
White	47.2	31.2
Hispanic	34.3	41.3
African American	9.5	21.7
Other	9.0	5.8
Partner and living situation (%)		
Partner who lives elsewhere	28.6	31.9
Live with partner/husband	11.9	17.0
No partner	59.5	51.1
Mean number of children living in household	2.1	2.5

NOTE: GED = General Equivalency Diploma.

(47% vs. 31%). Of respondents, 14% lived with a husband or other partner, and a total of 44% had a current romantic partner at baseline (Round 1).

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MEASURES

The interview included a wide range of questions about domestic violence. Physical abuse items were drawn from the Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1995). Measures of stalking, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and controlling behaviors came from a 1993 national survey in Canada (Johnson & Sacco, 1995) and the 1995 National Institute of Justice survey in the United States (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). The questions asked about acts committed by a current or past partner during the prior 12 months; in Round 1, lifetime abuse was also recorded.

The types of abuse used in analyses were the following. Physical abuse included any one of seven items (threw dangerous objects; pushed, grabbed, or shoved; slapped; kicked, bit, or hit with fist; hit with a dangerous object; beat up; choked). Work-related abuse included any one of eight items, including preventing from working, harassing at the job, and discouraging from

working. Any abuse included either of the above or stalking; verbal humiliation; any of four controlling behaviors; or threatening to kill himself or the woman if she left, threatening to hurt or abuse a child, threatening to kidnap a child or call child protective services, or threatening with a fist; or forced sexual contact.

For service planning, two additional categories of domestic violence were constructed. Serious abuse consisted of those items that were considered the most serious "objective" incidents: physical injury from physical abuse, being choked or beaten up, being stalked, forced or coerced sex, threats to kill self or woman or kidnap children or call child protective services, or actually preventing a woman from working or harassing her while on the job. Estimated need for services included those items hypothesized to negatively affect employment: (a) serious abuse as defined above; (b) other types of work interference not included in the definition of serious abuse; (c) post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) stemming from adult abuse, measured with the Composite International Diagnostic Interview (Wittchen, 1994); and (d) having received services for a domestic violence incident. Removed from the estimated need group were those women who said they had not sought services because they did not feel the abuse was serious enough or felt they could deal with the situation themselves.

## EMPLOYMENT AND OTHER MEASURES

### Other Barriers to Employment

The interview included measures of other factors that have been associated with reduced likelihood of working within a welfare population. These measures included the following: having a health problem sufficient to impair function, mental health problems (impaired functioning for at least 5 out of the prior 30 days), an estimated need for substance abuse services (a diagnosis of either alcohol or other drug dependence or abuse, showing up at the interview under the influence of a substance, having failed a drug test or lost a job because of substance use, or actually using alcohol or other drug services), very low self-esteem (lower than one standard deviation from the mean on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Rosenberg, 1979), demographic barriers (older than

35, race), situational/structural factors (being without a home, having a very young child or a disabled child at home, lacking a driver's license, child care very hard to arrange), human capital factors (three or fewer of nine work skills, not working the year before the initial interview, less than a high school education, having a learning disability, and difficulty with English), and perceived work discrimination.

#### **Employment Measures**

Employment status was assessed using two different data sources. Each interview protocol included questions on the status of current employment (whether working at all and, if working, the number of hours per week working) and questions about employment over the preceding year (whether worked at all and, if worked, the number of weeks worked). Unemployment insurance records of quarterly earnings were obtained through the California Department of Social Services.

## **RESULTS**

### **PREVALENCE, INCIDENCE, AND PERSISTENCE OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

The prevalence of domestic violence occurring in the year before each of the three interview rounds is presented in Table 2. The figures for lifetime prevalence were reported at the first interview. The lifetime prevalence of any abuse was high (80% in Kern and 83% in Stanislaus) as was the lifetime prevalence for physical abuse (nearly two thirds of the sample in each county).

In the first and second interviews, Stanislaus respondents reported statistically significant higher annual rates of abuse than did Kern respondents. Prevalence rates declined only small amounts, if any, in Rounds 2 and 3. The overall rate for PTSD related to child physical or sexual abuse or adult intimate partner abuse (13% in the Round 1 baseline year; not shown) was at least three times as high as in the general population (Kessler, Sonnega, Bromet, Hughes, & Nelson, 1995). PTSD due to adult intimate partner trauma affected 6% of the population with no differences between counties.

**TABLE 2**  
**Prevalence of Domestic Violence, Lifetime and During Prior Year, at Three Interview Rounds**

	<i>Kern</i>				<i>Stanislaus</i>			
	<i>Lifetime</i> (n = 276)	<i>1998</i> <i>to 1999</i> (n = 276)	<i>1999</i> <i>to 2000</i> (n = 262)	<i>2000</i> <i>to 2001</i> (n = 243)	<i>Lifetime</i> (n = 356)	<i>1998</i> <i>to 1999</i> (n = 356)	<i>1999</i> <i>to 2000</i> (n = 311)	<i>2000</i> <i>to 2001</i> (n = 309)
Any domestic violence	80.1	38.8	31.7	28.4	82.6	52.2***	38.3*	34.3
Physical abuse	64.9	17.4	13.7	13.2	63.8	25.0**	19.0*	17.5
Work-related abuse	25.0	9.4	6.1	4.5	36.0***	18.0***	12.9***	6.5
PTSD (adult trauma)	NA	6.9	6.5	5.4	NA	7.6	13.2***	8.1
Serious abuse	NA	19.2	14.9	13.6	NA	28.6***	20.6*	17.2
Estimated need for services	NA	25.7	17.9	26.3	NA	36.5***	25.4**	29.4

NOTE: PTSD = post-traumatic stress disorder; NA = not applicable. Chi-square tests of difference between Kern and Stanislaus during baseline year and lifetime. Symbol is shown by the county with the higher rate.

\* $p \leq .10$ . \*\* $p \leq .05$ . \*\*\* $p \leq .01$ .

Table 3 shows that more than half of the respondents (54%) interviewed at all three rounds met the criteria for the estimated need for services category at some point during the 3 years. Approximately one quarter (27.5%) met the criteria in only 1 of the 3 years, about one fifth (18.9%) in 2 of the 3 years, and only 7.7% in all 3 years. Thus, about half of those who met the criteria did so in only 1 of the 3 years.

Finally, in Round 1, 47% of women with an estimated need for domestic violence services were judged also to need mental health services, 25% to need substance abuse services, and 26% had very low self-esteem (scored lower than one standard deviation below the mean). All these rates were significantly higher than for women without domestic violence service needs.

## **ASSOCIATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WITH EMPLOYMENT**

### **The Association of Employment Measures With Type of Domestic Violence**

Table 4 shows the percentage of the two samples (by county and combined) who were working at least 32 hours a week at the time of the Round 2 and Round 3 interviews by their domestic violence status. Welfare-to-work requirements specified 32 hours per week of "work activities" by the time of the Round 2 interviews. There are two important findings shown in the table. First, in each round, several types of domestic violence were significantly associated with lower rates of working 32 hours a week or more. Adult trauma PTSD and estimated need for domestic violence services were the categories with a consistent association across interview rounds. Second, the effect occurred primarily in Kern in Round 2 and in Stanislaus in Round 3, changing with site and year. That is, the effect of domestic violence on employment varied by county over time as well as by type of abuse.

### **The Association of Estimated Need for Domestic Violence Services With Different Employment Measures**

Employment measures were classified as follows: (a) those reflecting current work status at the time of the interview and (b) those indicative of work history over the prior year. All of the

**TABLE 3**  
**New Incidence and Persistence of Domestic Violence in Total Sample (N = 534)**

	<i>At Least 1 Year (%)</i>	<i>Only 1 Year (%)</i>	<i>2 of 3 Years (%)</i>	<i>All 3 Years (%)</i>
Any abuse	65.0	30.9	21.9	12.7
Serious abuse	37.3	21.5	11.6	4.1
Need or got services	54.1	27.5	18.9	7.7

**TABLE 4**  
**Effect of Different Measures of Domestic Violence (DV)**  
**(in Prior Year) and County on Working at Least 32 Hours a Week**

<i>DV Measure</i>	<i>Combined (%)</i>		<i>Kern (%)</i>		<i>Stanislaus (%)</i>	
	<i>DV</i>	<i>No DV</i>	<i>DV</i>	<i>No DV</i>	<i>DV</i>	<i>No DV</i>
Round 2 ( <i>n</i> )	554		262		292	
Any type of abuse	28.2	34.3	19.3**	31.3	34.8	37.2
PTSD (adult trauma)	21.4	33.3	5.9**	29.0	28.2	37.6
Work interference	25.9	32.8	6.2**	28.9	34.2	36.6
Physical abuse	29.7	32.6	16.7	29.2	38.2	35.9
Serious abuse	29.0	32.8	15.4*	29.6	37.7	35.9
Need or got services	26.2	33.8	14.9**	30.2	33.3	37.3
Round 3 ( <i>n</i> )	532		243		289	
Any type of abuse	33.9	36.8	30.4	31.6	36.3	41.7
PTSD (adult trauma)	18.9**	37.2	15.4	32.2	20.8**	41.5
Work interference	27.3	36.5	16.7	32.0	33.3	40.3
Physical abuse	28.9	37.2	37.5	30.3	23.5***	43.3
Serious abuse	31.0	36.8	27.3	31.9	33.3	41.2
Need or got services	27.8***	39.1	21.9*	34.6	32.2*	43.1

NOTE: PTSD = post-traumatic stress disorder. Chi-square tests. The group with the lower percentage working at least 32 hours is designated with the symbol of statistical significance (in each case, it is the group experiencing domestic violence). Ns for domestic violence are not shown but are available in Table 2.

\* $p \leq .10$ . \*\* $p \leq .05$ . \*\*\* $p \leq .01$ .

following analyses (shown in Table 5) use the estimated need for services definition of domestic violence.

*Working at all at time of interview.* Estimated need for domestic violence services was significantly associated, in both counties combined, with lower probabilities of working at all at the time of the Round 2 (36.1% vs. 48.6%) and Round 3 interviews (38.4% vs. 48.7%). Although all of the percentages were in the direction of less work if there was domestic violence, the associations by county were only significant in Kern in Round 2 and in Stanislaus in Round 3.

**TABLE 5**  
**Impact of Estimated Need for Domestic Violence (DV) Services in Prior Year on Different Measures of Employment**

<i>Work Measure</i>	<i>Combined</i>		<i>Kern</i>		<i>Stanislaus</i>	
	<i>DV</i>	<i>No DV</i>	<i>DV</i>	<i>No DV</i>	<i>DV</i>	<i>No DV</i>
Round 2 ( <i>n</i> )	554		262		292	
At time of interview						
Percentage working at all	36.1**	48.6	19.2***	45.1	46.7	52.1
Percentage working 32 or more hours	26.2	33.8	14.9**	30.2	33.3	37.3
Mean hours worked for those working at all	39.3	37.3	38.0	37.5	39.7	37.1
During the previous 12 months						
Percentage who worked at all	66.7	72.6	55.8**	74.3	73.2	71.0
Mean weeks worked for those working at all	27.3**	32.5	24.0**	32.8	28.8	32.2
Lost a job if worked	36.8***	26.8	58.3**	32.6	26.9	20.8
Mean UI wages paid, if any, in 2000	\$6,083**	\$7,284	\$4,142***	\$6,601**	\$7,171	\$7,945
Round 3 ( <i>n</i> )	532		243		289	
At time of interview						
Percentage working at all	38.4***	48.7	35.9	46.6	40.2**	55.5
Percentage working 32 or more hours	27.8***	39.1	21.9*	34.6	32.2*	43.1
Mean hours worked for those working at all	36.6	38.3	34.0*	39.7*	38.4	37.3
During the previous 12 months						
Percentage who worked at all	71.7	75.7	69.8	69.8	73.2	80.8
Mean weeks worked for those working at all	30.8***	35.8	30.9**	36.9	30.8	35.0
Lost a job if worked	33.6*	24.3	34.1	22.5	25.6	33.3
Mean UI wages paid, if any, in 2001	\$7,328***	\$9,616	\$7,775	\$8,783	\$7,023***	\$10,270

NOTE: UI = unemployment insurance. Continuous variables tested with Wilcoxon rank sum. Percentages tested with chi-square. The group with the poorest work performance is designated with the symbol of statistical significance (in each case, it is the group experiencing domestic violence). Ns for domestic violence are not shown but are available in Table 2.

\* $p \leq .10$ . \*\* $p \leq .05$ . \*\*\* $p \leq .01$ .

*Number of hours per week worked at time of interview.* The difference in the mean number of hours per week worked, if any, was significantly associated with domestic violence only marginally, and then only in Kern in Round 3. In part, this lack of association resulted from a high percentage of women experiencing domestic violence who worked at least 40 hours per week if they worked at all.

*Working at all and job loss during the past year.* The percentage of those working at all during the year before the interview differed significantly by domestic violence status only in Kern in Round 2 (55.8% vs. 74.3%). Otherwise, the likelihood of the recipient having worked at some time during the prior year was not influenced by the presence of domestic violence. However, the proportion who lost a job during the year (if they worked) was significantly higher in both years (in the combined group) if they had an estimated need for domestic violence services (for example, in the year before Round 2, 36.8% vs. 26.8%).

*Weeks worked during the prior year.* The mean number of weeks worked, if any, was significantly lower among those with an estimated need for domestic violence services for both counties combined in Round 2 and Round 3 (Round 2, 27.3 weeks vs. 32.5 weeks; Round 3, 30.8 weeks vs. 35.8 weeks).

*Earnings, if any.* Earnings, if any, reported to the unemployment insurance system during the calendar year best corresponding to the year prior to the interview were significantly lower for both counties combined in both Rounds 2 and 3 among those with an estimated need for services than among those without this need (Round 2, \$6,083 vs. \$7,284; Round 3, \$7,328 vs. \$9,616). As with other measures, the difference was much greater in Kern in Round 2 and in Stanislaus in Round 3. This finding is important because it is based on earnings reported officially to the state and closely parallels the findings from the interviews on the self-reported weeks worked.

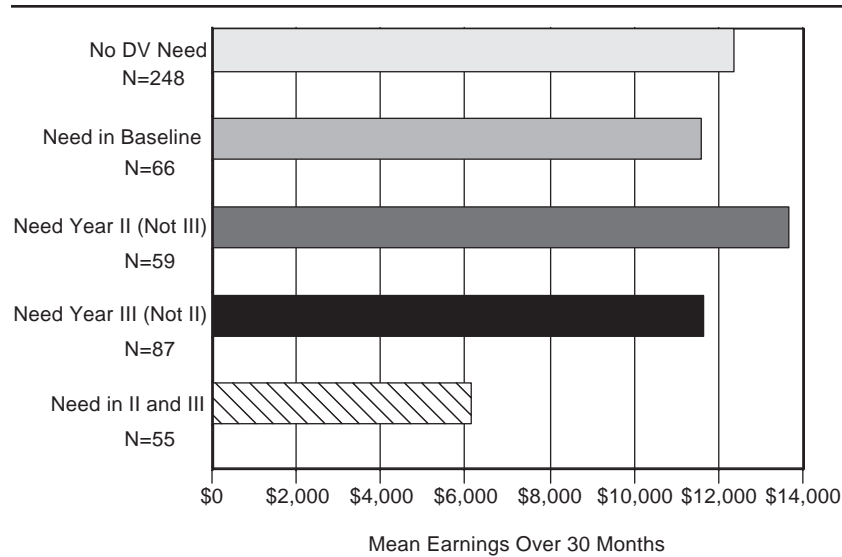
*Earnings and domestic violence over time.* Figure 1 shows the association of 30 months of earnings with the occurrence of domestic violence over time. Those with no estimated domestic violence

need in any interview round earned a mean of \$12,356 in the 30 months; women with no earnings were included in the denominator. Those with an estimated need in the Round 1 interview only (not in Rounds 2 or 3), which covered the 12-month period before the 30 months of earnings, had mean earnings of \$11,570. The group having an estimated need in Round 2 (but not in Round 3) had mean earnings of \$13,681. The group with an estimated need for services in Round 3 but not in Round 2 had mean earnings of \$11,605. The final group was made up of those having an estimated need in both Rounds 2 and 3; mean earnings were \$6,150, or about half those of any of the other groups. Note that the need for services in this group was coextensive with the period during which the income was recorded. The groups were statistically different (using the Kruskal-Wallis equality of populations rank test: chi-square with ties = 11.455 with 4 *df*,  $p < .02$ ), and there was a significant trend (Cuzick test for trend across ordered groups:  $z = -2.59$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

*Association with welfare status.* The purpose of welfare reform was to help women become self-sufficient through employment. A transitional period of reliance on both work and welfare is possible up to the total of 5 years of maximum eligibility for cash assistance. Table 6 shows that women who were estimated to need services were less likely to be in either the work only category (Round 3, 20% vs. 35%) or in the work and welfare category (Round 2, 16% vs. 29%). In both rounds, those with an estimated need for domestic violence services were more likely to be receiving welfare and not working.

*Factors predicting working at least 32 hours a week in Round 2 and Round 3.* The above findings demonstrate multiple bivariate associations of domestic violence with employment and welfare outcomes. A multivariate analysis was conducted to determine the effects of domestic violence and other predictors on working at least 32 hours a week at the time of the Round 2 and Round 3 interviews.

Table 7 presents results from multiple logistic regression analyses. Variables thought to be potential barriers to work, as outlined in the "Methods" section, included behavioral health, situational/family factors, mental health problems, demographic



**Figure 1: Mean Unemployment Insurance Earnings, Including Zeroes, Over 30 Months (4th Quarter 1999 to 1st Quarter 2002), by Interview Round and Persistence of Need for Domestic Violence Services**

NOTE: DV = domestic violence services.

variables, and human capital variables. County was also included in the regression by itself and in interaction with other variables. Initially, separate models for each round were fit using the Akaike information criteria. The few variables that were significant in one round but not the other were entered back into the models to show comparable results across rounds. In Round 2, the maximum likelihood  $R^2$  for the model was .20; in Round 3, it was .23. Fit was assessed using the Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test.

Estimated need for domestic violence services was not significant in Round 2 as a main effect, but it was significant in interaction with lack of a high school degree (odds ratio = 0.34 if domestic violence and no degree); the linear combination of the main effect and the interaction also was not significant. The adjusted probability of working at least 32 hours a week decreased by 0.16 for women with domestic violence and no high school degree compared to women with neither condition (all other values held at their mean). That is, holding all other predictors constant, the predicted rate of working 32 hours a week among women with domestic violence and no high school was 16 percentage points

**TABLE 6**  
**Association of Estimated Need for Domestic Violence (DV)**  
**Services in Prior Year With Work and Welfare Status**

	Round 2		Round 3	
	DV (n = 118)	No DV (n = 425)	DV (n = 143)	No DV (n = 366)
Work only	21.2	20.1	20.3	35.0
Work and welfare	16.1	29.2	20.3	18.0
Welfare only	48.3	39.5	39.9	29.2
No work or welfare	14.4	11.1	19.6	17.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

NOTE:  $\chi^2 = 8.63$  (3)  $p \leq .035$ ;  $\chi^2 = 11.26$  (3)  $p \leq .010$ .

lower than among women without domestic violence service needs.

In Round 3, estimated need for domestic violence services was significant as a main effect as well as in interaction with living with a spouse or other partner. The odds ratio for domestic violence need overall was 0.48. The odds ratio for domestic violence need and living with a spouse or partner was a very high 4.25; that is, women with domestic violence and living with a partner were 4 times *more* likely to work 32 hours a week than women not in this group. The adjusted probability of working at least 32 hours a week decreased by 0.14 for women with domestic violence compared to women with no domestic violence (all other values held at their mean). That is, again, the adjusted predicted rate of working 32 hours a week among women with domestic violence and no high school was 14 percentage points lower than among women without domestic violence service needs.

### HELP SEEKING

Table 8 shows, by type of abuse, the percentage of respondents who sought help for domestic violence from the police, the courts, a domestic violence agency, a counselor, or a physician. Rates are roughly comparable from year to year, but with lower rates of service use in Round 2 for three of the four types of abuse. Overall, approximately 30% of those experiencing any abuse sought domestic violence-specific help, and at least half of those experiencing serious abuse and physical abuse sought such help in Round 1 and Round 3.

**TABLE 7**  
**Predictors of Working at Least 32 Hours per Week 1 Year and 27 Months After Initiation of Welfare to Work**

<i>Working at Least 32 Hours per Week</i>	<i>Round 2 Interview (n = 549)</i>				<i>Round 3 Interview (n = 529)</i>			
	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval</i>	<i>p &gt;  z </i>	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval</i>	<i>p &gt;  z </i>
County	0.49	0.11	(0.31, 0.77)	<b>&lt; 0.01</b>	0.62	0.14	(0.40, 0.97)	<b>0.04</b>
Estimated DV need	1.48	0.54	(0.72, 3.04)	0.29	0.48	0.17	(0.24, 0.95)	<b>0.03</b>
No high school degree	1.09	0.28	(0.66, 1.82)	0.73	0.89	0.24	(0.52, 1.52)	0.67
DV and no high school degree	0.34	0.21	(0.10, 1.14)	<b>0.08</b>	0.46	0.27	(0.14, 1.47)	0.19
Live with a partner	0.58	0.15	(0.34, 0.98)	<b>0.04</b>	0.45	0.12	(0.27, 0.77)	<b>&lt; 0.01</b>
DV and live with a partner	1.12	0.72	(0.32, 3.95)	0.86	4.25	2.18	(1.55, 11.62)	<b>&lt; 0.01</b>
Mental health impairment	0.42	0.19	(0.17, 1.00)	<b>0.05</b>	0.38	0.2	(0.14, 1.07)	<b>0.07</b>
Health problems	0.54	0.14	(0.33, 0.90)	<b>0.02</b>	0.51	0.13	(0.31, 0.84)	<b>0.01</b>
Self-esteem	0.64	0.14	(0.41, 0.98)	<b>0.04</b>	0.78	0.18	(0.50, 1.21)	0.27
No driver's license	0.57	0.13	(0.37, 0.89)	<b>0.01</b>	0.37	0.09	(0.23, 0.59)	<b>&lt; 0.01</b>
No home of own	0.44	0.11	(0.27, 0.73)	<b>&lt; 0.01</b>	0.45	0.11	(0.28, 0.73)	<b>&lt; 0.01</b>
Disabled child	0.59	0.2	(0.30, 1.15)	0.12	0.55	0.19	(0.29, 1.07)	<b>0.08</b>
Low work skills	0.62	0.17	(0.36, 1.06)	<b>0.08</b>	0.4	0.12	(0.21, 0.73)	<b>&lt; 0.01</b>
Did not work year before Round 1	0.46	0.11	(0.29, 0.73)	<b>&lt; 0.01</b>	0.42	0.1	(0.26, 0.67)	<b>&lt; 0.01</b>
Need AOD	0.62	0.23	(0.30, 1.30)	0.21	1.13	0.36	(0.61, 2.11)	0.7
Child care job interference	0.48	0.16	(0.25, 0.92)	<b>0.03</b>	0.82	0.26	(0.44, 1.53)	0.53
Perceived discrimination	1.62	0.78	(0.63, 4.19)	0.32	0.21	0.18	(0.04, 1.12)	<b>0.07</b>
African American	2.24	0.69	(1.22, 4.11)	<b>0.01</b>	1.35	0.45	(0.70, 2.60)	0.37
Other race/ethnicity	1.26	0.52	(0.56, 2.85)	0.58	2.3	0.92	(1.05, 5.05)	<b>0.04</b>
Hispanic	0.99	0.24	(0.61, 1.60)	0.96	1.6	0.4	(0.98, 2.63)	<b>0.06</b>

NOTE: DV = domestic violence; AOD = alcohol or other drug services.

The higher percentage of women seeking domestic violence-specific help for serious and physical abuse than for any abuse confirms that the use of domestic violence services is related to severity of abuse (McFarlane, Soeken, Reel, Parker, & Silva, 1997). At least 50% of women in each year and with each type of abuse, reported not seeking domestic violence-specific services, although many of these had talked to family or friends, and others had discussed PTSD symptoms with a professional. Only 3 people reported receiving a Family Violence Option waiver in the 3 years.

## DISCUSSION

This study confirms previous findings that the effects of domestic violence on work vary depending on the type of domestic violence. The best predictor of a lower probability of working 32 or more hours a week at the time of the Round 2 and Round 3 interviews was the estimated need for domestic violence services, which was designed to encompass factors hypothesized most likely to affect employment. Estimated need adds to the usual objective indicators of serious abuse: (a) PTSD as a result of adult abuse and (b) seeking help for domestic violence issues even if one does not meet the criteria for serious abuse. More than half (54.1%) of the women in the study met the criteria for this level of abuse at some point during the 3 years of the study.

Estimated need for services was associated with several concurrent and longitudinal measures of employment, but not consistently. When queried at any particular point in time, women in a domestic violence situation are less likely to be currently engaged in some work activity. But if they are working at all, they are likely to be working as many hours as those without a domestic violence situation. Over a year's time, those with domestic violence are as likely to have worked at some point in time as those without domestic violence, but they work significantly fewer weeks and are more likely to report having lost a job. Thus, as other studies have suggested, an important impact is the ability of women with domestic violence to be able to sustain employment over time.

In a multivariate analysis, the estimated need for domestic violence services was significant as a main effect in the 2 years after

**TABLE 8**  
**Percentage of Women With Domestic Violence That Sought Help**  
**From Police, Courts, Domestic Violence Agency, Counselor,**  
**or Physician (Excluding Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Help)**

	<i>Round 1</i>		<i>Round 2</i>		<i>Round 3</i>	
	<i>(n = 601)</i>		<i>(n = 554)</i>		<i>(n = 532)</i>	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Any abuse	91	30.4	51	26.2	57	33.3
Estimated need for services	90	47.4	47	38.5	56	37.1
Serious abuse	74	50.0	41	41.0	50	57.5
Physical abuse	71	56.8	41	45.1	49	58.3

baseline, reducing the predicted probability of working 32 or more hours by 0.14. The odds of working 32 or more hours were greatly increased in this round if the person with an estimated need for domestic violence services was living with a spouse or partner. In the second round, 1 year after the application of welfare-to-work requirements, the predicted probability of working 32 or more hours was significantly reduced by 0.16 if there was an estimated need for domestic violence services and a lack of a high school education; there was no main effect.

Research on domestic violence and welfare and employment is hampered by lack of consistent definitions. One strong point of the research reported here is that exactly the same definitions and analyses were applied in both counties. Thus, it is important that despite findings that confirm negative impacts on employment, there remains much variability in the effect by county and over time. The factors that surround a particular woman's domestic violence situation are not easily generalized, which has implications for both policy and future research. Until we better understand what causes the differences in the impacts of domestic violence on work among women, we would be wise to have welfare policies and practices that allow substantial flexibility to accommodate the specific and unique needs of women in domestic violence situations. Future research is needed to better understand how domestic violence affects employment in all the multiple circumstances and variations in which it occurs. In particular, a more finely grained analysis of the timing of the domestic violence and the impact on work may prove productive.

The very low percentage of study participants who reported using the Family Violence Option is consistent with other studies. The number of women using the Family Violence Option is an extremely poor indicator of the number of women who could benefit from services for their domestic violence issues. Approximately half of those with an estimated need for services sought services from some domestic violence-related agency or a physician or counselor. What is clearly needed is (a) stronger linkage between these service providers and the welfare system to ensure that employment issues are being addressed and (b) improved efforts to identify the many women experiencing very serious abuse but receiving no assistance.

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