



Child maltreatment and mental health across the lifespan.

Dr Charlene Rapsey

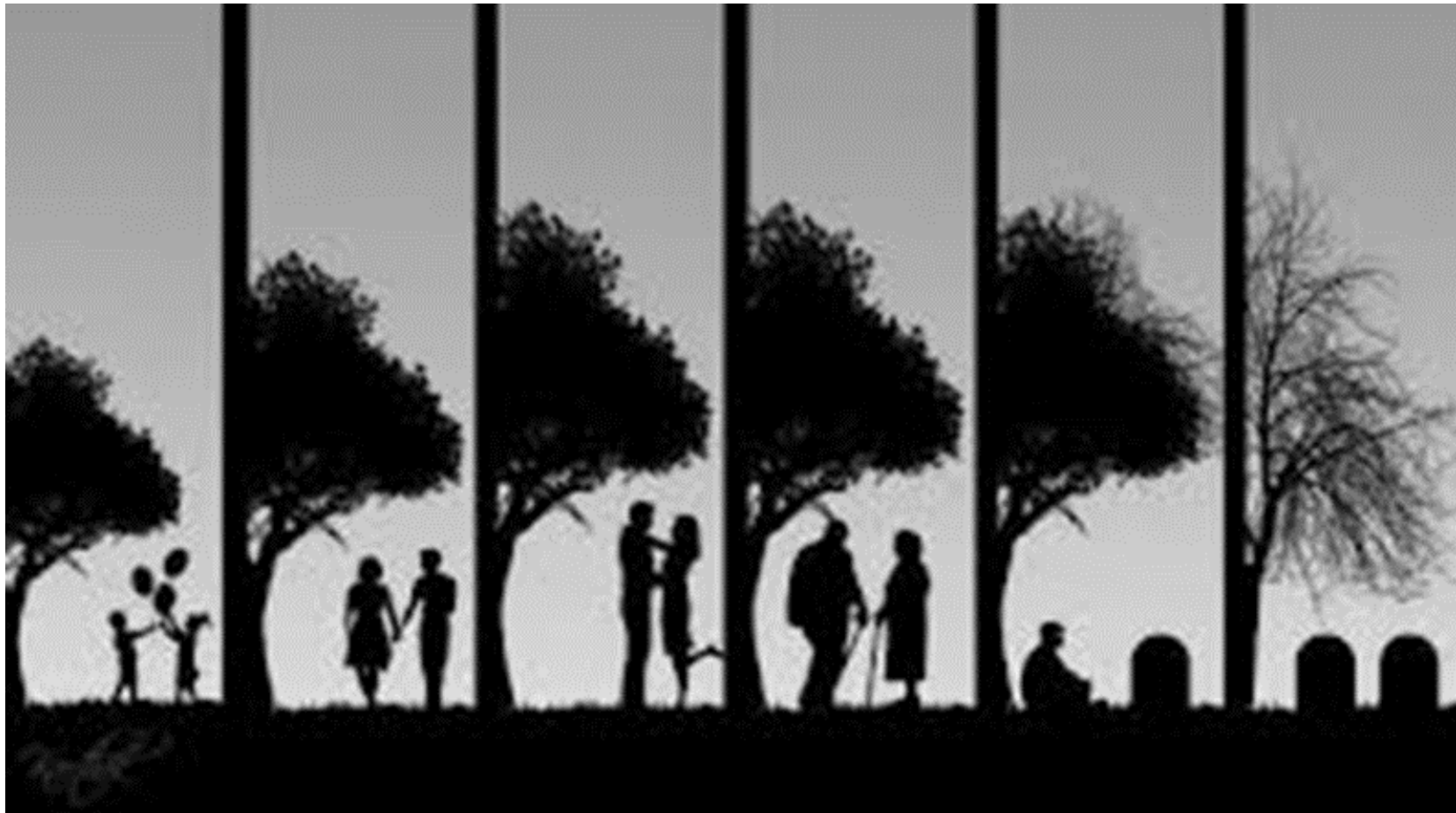
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**THE LONG-TERM IMPACT OF THE PHYSICAL,
EMOTIONAL, AND SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN
A COMMUNITY STUDY**

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Mental health across the lifespan



12-month prevalence (SE) in females, by age group, high income countries: World Mental Health Surveys

	Age groups													
	18-24		25-34		35-44		45-54		55-64		65-74		75+	
	<u>%</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>SE</u>
Any Mood	8.9	0.5	8.1	0.4	7.9	0.3	7.1	0.3	6.1	0.4	4.7	0.4	3.2	0.4
Any Anxiety	17.0	0.9	15.5	0.6	17.3	0.6	15.1	0.6	12.3	0.6	10.0	0.8	7.2	0.8
Any Disorder	23.0	1.0	21.5	0.8	22.2	0.7	19.1	0.7	15.7	0.7	13.2	0.9	9.6	0.9

Mental disorder, child maltreatment, and ageing

1. Multiple cross-sectional community surveys in high-income countries consistently observe decreasing prevalence of mental disorders with increasing age.
 2. Childhood maltreatment associated with an increased risk for depression, anxiety, and other mental disorders in adolescence and early to middle adulthood.
- Do associations between child maltreatment and mental disorder persist in older age?

The Otago Women's Health Survey: Sexual Abuse Study

- 2,250 urban Otago women < 65 years sent a postal survey: 298 reported child sexual abuse
- **Time 1: 1989/1990**
 - N = 492
- **Time 2: 1995/1996**
 - N = 354 (RR 71%)
- **Time 3: 2013/2014**
 - N = 195 (RR 39%)

Measures: (Internalising) Mental Disorder

Semi-structured interview Time 1,2,3

- Mood/Anxiety Disorders: Present State Exam (PSE)
 - ICD-8 codes
- PTSD: DSM III criteria

Measures: Child Maltreatment

Time 1:

Sexual abuse (multiple items)

Physical abuse – “beaten” and “hit”

Emotional neglect – Parental Bond Instrument

Witnessed family violence

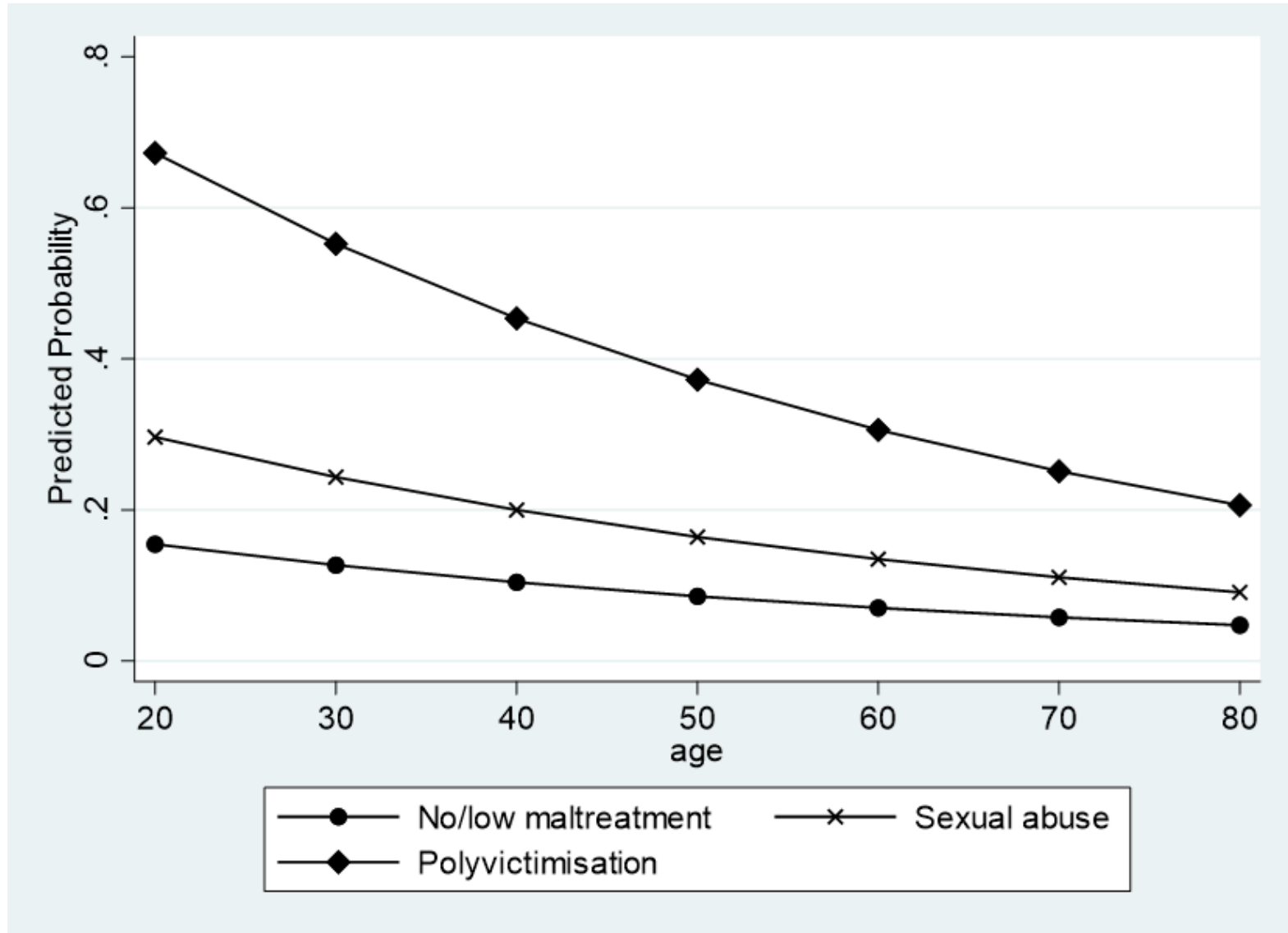
Parental mental disorder/alcoholism

Parental separation

Maltreatment class by age-group

	19-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	% (n)					
No/low maltreatment	59.0 (46)	55.6 (109)	53.7 (117)	58.9 (136)	65.2 (116)	62.1 (90)
Sexual abuse	26.9 (21)	28.1 (55)	29.4 (64)	23.8 (55)	20.8 (37)	26.21 (38)
Poly-victimisation	14.1 (11)	16.3 (32)	17.0 (37)	17.32 (40)	14.0 (25)	11.72 (17)

Predicted Probability of Mental Disorder



Predicted Probability of Mental Disorder and *P*-Values for Differences between Class 1 and Class 2 and Class 1 and Class 3 at Selected Ages

	Class 1: Low/No maltreatment	Class 2: Sexual abuse	Class 3: Poly-victimisation
		(Difference from class 1 p-value)	
20	.15	.29 (.045)	.67 (.006)
30	.13	.24 (.031)	.55 (.002)
40	.10	.20 (.024)	.45 (.001)
50	.09	.16 (.023)	.37 (.001)
60	.07	.13 (.027)	.31 (.001)
70	.06	.11 (.037)	.25 (.005)
80	.05	.09 (.056)	.20 (.016)

Limits

Attrition

Measurement of childhood maltreatment focused on sexual abuse

Difficulties in teasing apart mental, cognitive, and physical symptoms with advancing age

Conclusions

- Aging was associated with a decreasing risk of experiencing anxiety, depression, and PTSD for all women, regardless of maltreatment history.
- Associations between child maltreatment and mental disorders persist in older age.
- Sexual abuse associated with almost double the risk of a mental disorder.
- Poly-victimisation (i.e., multiple forms of maltreatment) associated with over four times the risk of a disorder.

Implications

- A focus on child maltreatment prevention is an essential element of efforts to reduce mental disorder across all life stages.

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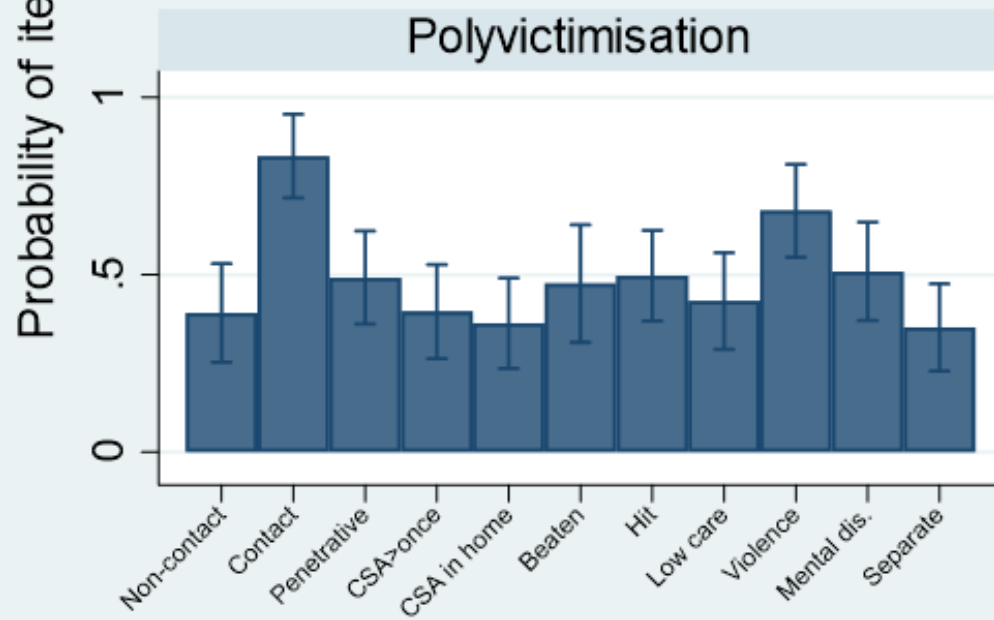
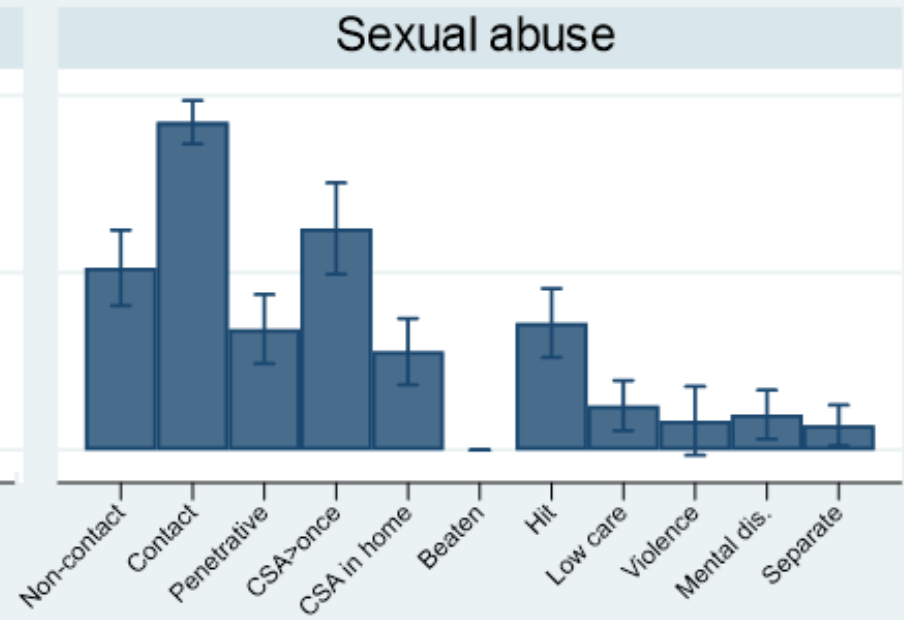
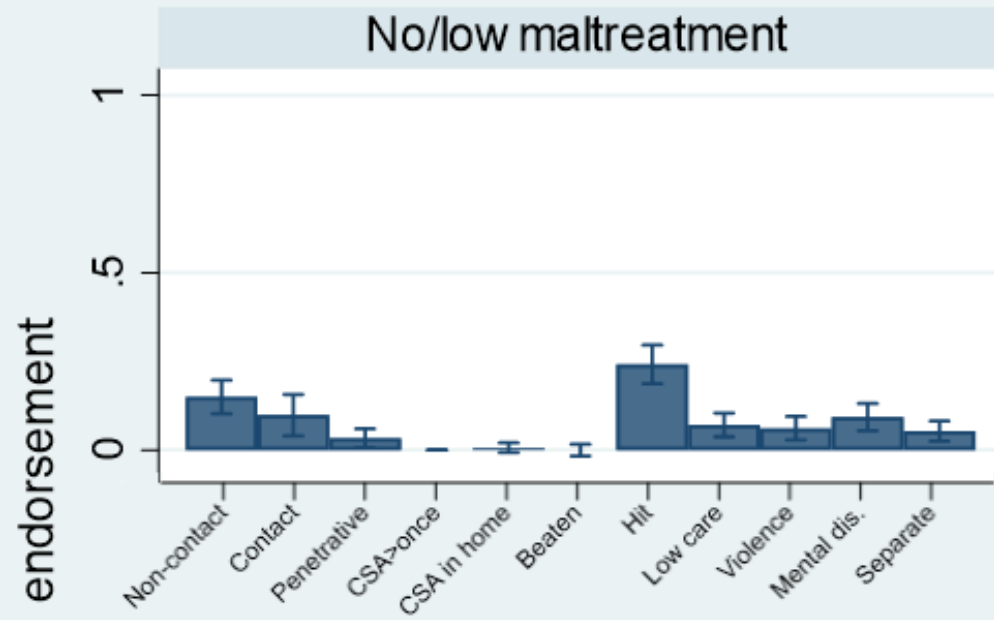
Tonya Justice

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		Low/No maltreatment	Sexual abuse	Poly-victimisation
Sample proportion:		(58.2%)	(26.8%)	(15.1%)
Item response probabilities				
Maltreatment type	Question			
Childhood sexual abuse	Non-contact	0.15	0.51	0.39
	Contact	0.10	0.92	0.83
	Penetrative	0.03	0.34	0.49
	More than once	0.00	0.62	0.40
	In the home	0.01	0.28	0.36
Physical abuse/punishment	Hit	0.24	0.36	0.50
	Beaten	0.00	0.00	0.47
Emotional maltreatment	Maternal care < 16 on PBI	0.07	0.13	0.43
	Domestic violence	0.06	0.08	0.68
Household dysfunction	Parental mental health issue/alcoholism	0.09	0.10	0.51
	Separated	0.05	0.07	0.35



Mental disorder by age-group

	19-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	% (n)					
Depression	6.4 (5)	2.6 (5)	4.1 (9)	4.8 (11)	1.7 (3)	2.1 (3)
Anxiety	2.6 (2)	4.1 (8)	3.2 (7)	4.3 (10)	3.9 (7)	4.1 (6)
Anxiety/ depression	11.5 (9)	5.1 (10)	7.3 (16)	7.8 (18)	6.2 (11)	2.1 (3)
PTSD	12.7 (9)	6.7 (13)	5.6 (12)	4.3 (10)	3.4 (6)	3.5 (5)

Pathways between child maltreatment and mental disorder

- Direct biological pathways
 - *Structural and functional brain changes*
 - *Altered HPA stress response networks*
 - *Intergeneration transmission of genetic or epigenetic risk*
- Indirect psychological and behaviour pathways
 - *Revictimisation*
 - *Reduced social and economic capital*