Section D

Prevalence and Consequences of Violence in the Lives of Children
Prevalence of Violence in the Lives of Children

- 60.6% of children had witnessed or experienced victimization in the past year
- 46.3% had experienced physical assault
- 10.2% had experienced child maltreatment
- 6.1% had experienced sexual victimization
- 5.5% report having been victims of aggravated assault or robbery

Source: Finkelhor et al. (2009).
A quarter of children in high-crime neighborhoods have *witnessed* a murder.

70% of children in high-crime neighborhoods have witnessed a serious assault (Burka et al., 1997).

Children average 28 hours of TV per week and by the age of 18...
- 16,000 simulated murders
- 200,000 acts of violence
- Cartoons are increasingly violent: up to 80 acts per hour
America Spanks Its Children

- 70% of US adults believe that children need “a good hard spank” and have done so for children under 8 years old in the past year

- 33% of parents spank children under 2 years old

- 21% of parents report “spanking” with an object
Child Abuse Is Common

- 6% of fathers and 3% of mothers report having physically abused their children

- 7.7% of 9th through 12th graders report ever having been raped

- 9.1 per 100,000: the homicide rate for children under 1

- 2.4 per 100,000 children 1-4 years of age are killed annually
For children under the age of 10 years, home is the primary setting for experiencing and witnessing violence: physical abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence, domestic abuse, and neglect.
What are the consequences for children experiencing and witnessing violence?
Consequences of Exposure to Violence

- Infants/toddlers
  - Excessive irritability
  - Immature behavior
  - Sleep disturbances
  - Emotional distress
  - Fear of being alone
  - Disrupts trust/exploratory behavior

- School-age children
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
  - Sleep disorders
  - Aggressive behavior
  - Attention difficulties/easy distractibility
  - PTSD

Source: J. Osofsky.
Witnessing violence affects development in five domains:

1. Physical and biologic
2. Behavior
3. Emotion
4. Cognitive
5. Social

Source: Kolko et al. (1997).
Consequences of witnessing domestic abuse/violence as a child
- Lower verbal, motor, and cognitive scores
- Insomnia
- Bed wetting
- Aggression
- Antisocial behavior
- Depression