

*California Social Work Education Center*

*C A L S W E C*

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**CHILD ABUSE:  
CHARACTERISTICS AND  
PATTERNS AMONG CAMBODIAN,  
CHINESE, KOREAN, AND  
VIETNAMESE AMERICAN FAMILIES**

**AN EMPIRICALLY BASED CURRICULUM**

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*By*

*Siyon Rhee*

*Department of Social Work*

*California State University, Los Angeles*

*Janet Chang*

*Department of Social Work*

*California State University, San Bernardino*

*2006*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>CalSWEC Preface</b>   | <b>iii</b>  |
| <b>About the Authors</b>   | <b>v</b>    |
| <b>Abstract</b>  | <b>vii</b>  |
| <b>Introduction</b>  | <b>ix</b>   |
| <b>Acknowledgements</b>  | <b>xii</b>  |
| <b>CalSWEC Curriculum Competencies</b>   | <b>xiii</b> |
| <b>Module I: Background Information on Asian Immigrant Families:<br/>Demographic Trends, Cultural Characteristics, and Childrearing<br/>and Parenting Practice</b> | <b>1</b>    |
| Note to Instructor   | 2           |
| Goals  | 2           |
| Objectives   | 2           |
| Demographic Trends   | 3           |
| Cultural Characteristics   | 7           |
| Childrearing Practice and Parenting  | 8           |
| Group Discussion   | 10          |
| Assignment Topics  | 10          |
| <b>Module II: Child Abuse in Immigrant Asian Pacific Families:<br/>Characteristics and Intervention Strategies</b>   | <b>11</b>   |
| Note to Instructor   | 12          |
| Goals  | 12          |
| Objectives   | 12          |
| Child Abuse Among Asian Pacific Families   | 13          |
| Group Discussion   | 23          |
| Assignment Topics  | 23          |
| <b>Module III: Child Abuse in Immigrant Cambodian Families:<br/>Characteristics and Intervention Strategies</b>  | <b>24</b>   |
| Note to Instructor   | 25          |
| Goals  | 25          |
| Objectives   | 25          |
| Demographic Trends   | 26          |
| Historical Background  | 26          |
| Mental Health Problems   | 29          |
| Adjustment Patterns  | 30          |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Child Abuse Among Cambodian Families  | 31        |
| Suggested Intervention Strategies   | 39        |
| Group Discussion  | 40        |
| Assignment Topics   | 40        |
| <b>Module IV: Child Abuse in Immigrant Chinese Families:<br/>Characteristics and Intervention Strategies</b>    | <b>41</b> |
| Note to Instructor  | 42        |
| Goals   | 42        |
| Objectives  | 42        |
| Chinese Americans   | 43        |
| Child Maltreatment Among Chinese Families   | 45        |
| Suggested Intervention Strategies   | 52        |
| Group Discussion  | 52        |
| Assignment Topics   | 53        |
| <b>Module V: Child Abuse in Immigrant Korean Families:<br/>Characteristics and Intervention Strategies</b>      | <b>54</b> |
| Note to Instructor  | 55        |
| Goals   | 55        |
| Objectives  | 55        |
| Korean Immigrants   | 56        |
| Child Maltreatment Among Korean Families  | 58        |
| Suggested Intervention Strategies   | 65        |
| Group Discussion  | 65        |
| Assignment Topics   | 66        |
| <b>Module VI: Child Abuse in Immigrant Vietnamese Families:<br/>Characteristics and Intervention Strategies</b> | <b>67</b> |
| Note to Instructor  | 68        |
| Goals   | 68        |
| Objectives  | 68        |
| Vietnamese Immigrants   | 69        |
| Child Maltreatment Among Vietnamese Families  | 72        |
| Suggested Intervention Strategies   | 80        |
| Group Discussion  | 81        |
| Assignment Topics   | 81        |
| <b>References</b>   | <b>82</b> |
| <b>Appendixes</b>   | <b>86</b> |

## CaISWEC PREFACE

The California Social Work Education Center (CaISWEC) is the nation's largest state coalition of social work educators and practitioners. It is a consortium of the state's 17 accredited graduate schools of social work, the 58 county departments of social services and mental health, the California Department of Social Services, and the California Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.

The primary purpose of CaISWEC is an educational one. Our central task is to provide specialized education and training for social workers that practice in the field of public child welfare. Our stated mission, in part, is "to facilitate the integration of education and practice." But this is not our ultimate goal. Our ultimate goal is to improve the lives of children and families who are the users and the purpose of the child welfare system. By educating others and ourselves, we intend a positive result for children: safety, a permanent home, and the opportunity to fulfill their developmental promise.

To achieve this challenging goal, the education and practice-related activities of CaISWEC are varied: recruitment of a diverse group of social workers, defining a continuum of education and training, engaging in research and evaluation of best practices, advocating for responsive social policy, and exploring other avenues to accomplish the CaISWEC mission. Education is a process, and necessarily an ongoing one involving interaction with a changing

world. One who hopes to practice successfully in any field does not become “educated” and then cease to observe and to learn.

To foster continuing learning and evidence-based practice within the child welfare field, CalSWEC funds a series of curriculum modules that employ applied research methods to advance the knowledge of best practices in child welfare. These modules, on varied child welfare topics, are intended to enhance curriculum for Title IV-E graduate social work education programs and for continuing education of child welfare agency staff. To increase distribution and learning throughout the state, curriculum modules are made available through the CalSWEC Child Welfare Resource Library to all participating schools and collaborating agencies.

The module that follows has been commissioned with your learning in mind. We at CalSWEC hope it serves you well.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

### ***Siyon Rhee, PhD***

Dr. Rhee is a Professor in the Department of Social Work, California State University, Los Angeles. She teaches both Statistics and Social Work Research Methods at the BASW and MSW levels, as well as Child Welfare, Social Work Practice, and Human Behavior in the Social Environment. She has many years of experience working as a researcher and practitioner in cross-cultural social work practice with Asian Pacific families and children in the Los Angeles area. She has recently completed an empirical study in an area related to another proposed investigation—Korean American clergy's perceptions and attitudes toward child abuse. A manuscript of the study has been completed for publication in a child welfare journal. Five years ago, she and colleague Dr. Neil Cohen, also from the CSULA Department of Social Work, collaborated in writing a training grant proposal, which was submitted to Los Angeles County's Department of Children and Family Services. The proposal was designed to provide intensive training at CSULA to two groups of foster parents interested in organizing neighborhood foster parent support groups to provide support and technical assistance to promote foster parent retention. The proposal was funded and the training program was implemented successfully at CSULA in July 2000. The investigator also has maintained a close relationship with the Research and Asian Pacific Units of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services as a trainer and a practitioner in the Asian community.

**Janet Chang, PhD**

Dr. Chang is an Associate Professor in the Department of Social Work, California State University, San Bernardino. She teaches Social Work Research Methods and Human Behavior and the Social Environment at the graduate level. She has extensive research and practice experience in the Asian Pacific population. Her research areas include: child abuse issues among Korean and Asian Americans, kin foster caregivers, divorced Korean women's post divorce adjustment, definition of mental health and mental disorder and mental health service-seeking behavior among immigrant Asians, and elder abuse. She worked with abused children and their parents as a social worker at the Asian Pacific Family Center in Rosemead, California. She also has experience working as a statistics consultant at UCLA's School of Social Welfare from 1994 to 1996. She and principal investigator Siyon Rhee jointly conducted a recent study of Korean American ministers' perceptions and attitudes toward child abuse.

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research study was two-fold: first, to examine types of child abuse and socio-demographic and behavioral characteristics of child abuse victims and perpetrators in four major immigrant Asian communities (Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese); and second, to identify some of the critical variables contributing to the selection of two types of placement (in-home and out-of-home) by child protective service (CPS) workers. Data were obtained by reviewing the 761 active case files (243 Cambodian, 222 Chinese, 172 Korean, and 124 Vietnamese) maintained by the Asian Pacific Unit of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (LA-DCFS) during July to September 2001.

Some of the major findings from this study are: a) immigrant Asian families are more likely to be reported to CPS for physical abuse and neglect, and far less likely to be reported for sexual abuse, in comparison with all other groups reported for abuse and neglect in the U.S. population; b) physical abuse occurred most frequently under conditions of family stress related to divorce, single parenthood or remarriage, or corporal punishment with intention to discipline their children; c) the majority of the victims were abused by their biological parents—mother (40.1%), father (28.9%), and both (15.5%); and d) The most frequent circumstance under which emotional abuse occurred among the Asian families was children's witnessing domestic violence. The researchers also learned that the characteristics of child abuse differ among some Asian subgroups. For

example, physical abuse is the most prevalent abuse type for Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese families, while child neglect is the most frequently reported abuse for Cambodians. An additional finding was that emergency status, referral source, type of abuse, and duration of abuse were statistically significant in predicting out-of-home placement in immigrant Asian families.

## INTRODUCTION

This curriculum focuses on child maltreatment issues and effective practice strategies among immigrant Asian families. Specifically, it elucidates demographic and behavioral characteristics of child abuse victims and perpetrators in four major immigrant Asian communities (Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese), factors contributing to the selection of two types of placement (in-home and out-of-home) by child protective services workers, and effective child welfare practice with immigrant Asian families.

Cross-cultural competency in child welfare practice is critical to effective service delivery to families from diverse ethnicities and cultures. As the population of ethnic minorities has doubled in the United States from 34 million in 1970 to 69.8 million in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003a), more families from these minority groups have been brought to the attention of the public child welfare system. Furthermore, a few studies have shown that these ethnic minority families are at a greater risk for child maltreatment than those in mainstream groups (Connelly & Straus, 1992; Widom, 1989). Despite the increased need for child protective services (CPS) in minority groups, the amount of research on child maltreatment within these groups is limited.

Studies have shown that empirical research on child maltreatment among Asian Pacific Islander (API) populations is especially lacking, except for some regionally specific case reports that describe Asian Pacific Islander children as victims of physical abuse more often than of sexual abuse (Ima & Hohm, 1991).

The scarcity of research on child abuse among API populations hampers practitioners from developing a culturally competent understanding of the dynamics of child maltreatment assessment, prevention, and intervention efforts.

This curriculum is intended for use by child welfare faculty in California's schools of social work/welfare who educate MSW and BSW students. It can be used in practice or in Human Behavior and the Social Environment (HBSE) classes at the graduate or undergraduate level. Students training to become child welfare workers may use this curriculum to acquire empirical knowledge and cultural competence regarding childrearing and potential child maltreatment among four Asian groups. Administrators or public child welfare workers may also use this curriculum in a workshop setting to increase cultural competency regarding Asian American families. In addition, it can be used for the establishment of culturally competent practice guidelines for child protective services workers of Asian Pacific Units in California as well as professionals serving Asian Pacific children and families nationwide.

The curriculum starts with background information about Asian Pacific immigrants and a summary of child abuse in the population overall. Then it presents the issue of child abuse in each ethnic group. The curriculum consists of six modules: a) background information about Asian Americans/Asian immigrants, b) child abuse among immigrant Asian Pacific families, c) child abuse in immigrant Cambodian families, d) child abuse in immigrant Chinese families, e) child abuse in immigrant Korean families, and f) child abuse in

immigrant Vietnamese families.

The first module examines background information on Asian Americans/immigrants including demographic trends; immigration patterns; cultural practices, values, and customs; and childrearing and parenting practices. A PowerPoint presentation that includes major findings, group discussion topics, and assignments is also provided. Each slide in the PowerPoint presentation corresponds to a text box in the curriculum.

The second module presents a summary of child abuse among Asian Pacific immigrants overall. Specifically, characteristics of victims and perpetrators, Child Protective Services' (CPS) responses to reported child maltreatment cases, and factors predicting out-of-home placement for four Asian Pacific immigrant groups altogether are presented. The PowerPoint presentation continues with key findings, group discussion topics, and assignments. Each slide corresponds to a text box in the curriculum.

The third through sixth modules present the immigration history, patterns of child abuse, and characteristics of victims and perpetrators for each group. In addition, CPS responses regarding reported child maltreatment cases and factors predicting out-of-home placement of these cases for each group are included. The continuing PowerPoint presentation includes key findings, intervention strategies, group discussion topics, and assignments for each group. Again, each slide corresponds to a textbox in the curriculum.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors are grateful to the California Social Work Education Center for their helpful comments, and to our research assistants:

Min-Hae Cho, MSW Candidate  
California State University, Los Angeles

Amy Choe, MSW  
Graduated from California State University, Los Angeles

Krystal Kim, MSW  
Graduated from California State University, Los Angeles

Glorianne Mar, MSW  
Graduated from California State University, Los Angeles

Gregory Park, MSW  
Graduated from California State University, Los Angeles

James Park, MSW Candidate  
California State University, Los Angeles

Peter Park, MSW  
Graduated from California State University, Los Angeles

Danette Wong, MSW  
Graduated from California State University, Los Angeles

Alicia Hunter, MSW Candidate  
California State University, San Bernardino

for their assistance. Without their dedication and passion for this research, this report would not have been possible.

# CALSWEC CURRICULUM COMPETENCIES

## I. Ethnic Sensitive and Multicultural Practice

- 1.1 Student demonstrates sensitivity to clients' differences in culture, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.
- 1.2 Student demonstrates the ability to conduct an ethnically and culturally sensitive assessment of a child and family and to develop an appropriate intervention plan.
- 1.3 Student understands the importance of a client's primary language and supports its use in providing child welfare assessment and intervention services.
- 1.4 Student understands the influence and value of traditional, culturally based childrearing practices and uses this knowledge in working with families.
- 1.5 Student demonstrates the ability to collaborate with individuals, groups, community-based organizations, and government agencies to advocate for equitable access to culturally sensitive resources and services.

## II. Core Child Welfare Practice

- 2.1 Student is able to identify the multiple family and social forces contributing to child abuse and neglect
- 2.2 Student demonstrates the ability to assess the interaction of factors underlying abuse and neglect and the capacity to identify strengths that act to preserve the family and protect the child
- 2.6 Student understands the dual responsibility of the child welfare caseworker to protect children and to provide services that support families as caregivers.
- 2.8 Student understands the dynamics of family violence, and can develop appropriate, culturally sensitive case plans to address these problems.

## III. Human Behavior and the Social Environment

- 3.4 Student demonstrates understanding of the influence of culture on human behavior and family dynamics.

## **V. Culturally Competent Child Welfare Practice**

- 5.1 Student demonstrates knowledge of legal, socioeconomic, and psychosocial issues facing immigrants and refugees and is able to devise sensitive and appropriate interventions.
- 5.2 Student is able to critically evaluate the relevance of intervention models to be applied with diverse ethnic and cultural populations.

## **VII. Human Behavior and the Child Welfare Environment**

- 7.5 Student demonstrates understanding of the dynamics of trauma resulting from family conflicts, divorce, and family violence.

## **VIII. Child Welfare Policy, Planning, and Administration**

- 8.9 Student demonstrates the ability to negotiate and advocate for the development of resources that children and families need to meet their goals.

## **MODULE I**

# **BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ASIAN IMMIGRANT FAMILIES: DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS, CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS, AND CHILDREARING AND PARENTING PRACTICES**

## MODULE I

### ***Note to Instructor***

This module is a combination of lecture, group discussion, and assignments. It introduces demographic trends, cultural characteristics, and child rearing and parenting practices among some Asian immigrant groups. It will take approximately 40-50 minutes to complete.

### ***Goals***

Participants will learn about immigration patterns, demographic trends, cultural characteristics, and childrearing and parenting practices among some Asian immigrant groups.

### ***Objectives***

At the completion of this module, participants will:

1. Understand current demographic trends and immigration patterns among some Asian immigrant groups.
2. Understand childrearing practices among Asian immigrant families and implications for child maltreatment and child protective services.
3. Understand parenting practices among Asian immigrant families and implications for child maltreatment and child protective services.

## ***Demographic Trends***

In 1960, there were fewer than 1 million Asians in the United States, accounting for only 0.5% of the total U.S. population. In March 2002, there were as many as 12.5 million Asians, comprising 4.4% of the population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003b). Such a phenomenal population growth was mainly due to the Immigration Act of 1965, the most liberal immigration law to date, which favored family reunification. In 2000, Asians consisted of over 25 different ethnic groups, the largest of which were non-Taiwanese Chinese (2,314,537), Filipino (1,850,314), and Asian Indian (1,678,765), followed by Vietnamese (1,122,528), Korean (1,076,872), Japanese (796,700), and Cambodian (171,937; U.S. Census Bureau, 2002).

### **DEMOGRAPHICS: ASIANS IN AMERICA**

#### **Demographic trend**

**<1 million (1960): 0.5% of U.S. population**  
**12.5 million (2000): 4.4% of U.S. population**

#### **Major Asian Groups**

- 1. Non-Taiwanese Chinese (2,314,537)**
- 2. Filipino (1,850,314)**
- 3. Asian Indian (1,678,765)**
- 4. Vietnamese (1,122,528)**
- 5. Korean (1,076,872)**
- 6. Japanese (796,700)**
- 7. Cambodian (171,937)**

**(U.S. Census Bureau, 2002)**

Module 1

Slide 1

Of the 12.5 million Asians in the United States today, 8.3 million (66.4%) are foreign-born residents, comprising one fourth of the nation's foreign-born population. About 88% of the 12.5 million Asians currently residing in the United States are either foreign born themselves or have at least one foreign-born parent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003b). Among the diverse immigrant Asian groups, Filipinos and Asian Indians are known to command the English language the most competently. For many other Asian immigrants, including Cambodians, Koreans, and Vietnamese, English remains an almost impossible language to master due to the vast linguistic differences.

In general, Asians and Pacific Islanders are more likely to live in poverty than non-Hispanic Whites. In 2001, the poverty threshold for a family of four was \$18,267. In the same year, 1.3 million Asians and Pacific Islanders (13%) lived below the poverty level, compared to 8% for non-Hispanic Whites (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003f). However, the poverty rate of Asian Pacific Islanders is lower than those of other minority groups: African Americans (24.4%) and Hispanic Americans (22.5%). Most of the Asian immigrants typically came to the United States as adults and brought their elderly parents and children with them. They settled in metropolitan areas including Los Angeles, New York, Honolulu, Houston, and Chicago, and formed their own ethnic enclaves throughout the nation. As of July 2001, nearly all Asians and Pacific Islanders (96%) lived in a metropolitan area (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003b).

According to the latest U.S. Census data, the number of Asian/Pacific

Islanders in California was around 3.8 million in 2000. In the same year, there were approximately 1.3 million Asian/Pacific Islanders in Los Angeles County alone, comprising 12.2% of the total Los Angeles County population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003d). The data reveal that over one third of the Asian/Pacific Islander population in California resides within Los Angeles County.

### **ASIAN AMERICANS IN CALIFORNIA**

- **3.8 million Asian/Pacific Islanders in California in 2000.**
- **1.3 million Asian/Pacific Islanders in Los Angeles County (12.2% of the total Los Angeles County population).**
- **Over one third of the Asian/Pacific population in California resides within Los Angeles County.**

**(U.S. Census Bureau, 2003d)**

Module 1 Slide 2

The post-1965 Asian immigrants were highly educated and many of them came from urban, middle-class backgrounds (Kitano & Nakaoka, 2001). According to the Annual Demographic Supplement to the March 2002 Current Population Survey, as of 2002, 87% of the Asians and Pacific Islanders aged 25 and older had earned at least a high school diploma (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003c). More specifically, nearly 50% of Korean immigrant males had received some college education in Korea and more than 70% of them held professional and white-collar occupations before coming to America (Hurh & Kim, 1990; Yu, Choe, & Han, 2002). Substantial differences exist among ethnic Asian subgroups

in the level of higher education attained. As of 1990, the percentage of those who had a high school or higher education varied from 31% for Hmongs to 88% for Japanese (Kitano & Nakaoka, 2001). Furthermore, according to the 2002 data, there is a significant difference at lower educational levels—Asians and Pacific Islanders were almost twice as likely to have less than a ninth grade education (7%) than non-Hispanic Whites (4%; U.S. Census Bureau, 2003c).

### **EDUCATION AMONG ASIAN AMERICANS**

- **87% of the Asians and Pacific Islanders aged 25 and older had earned at least a high school diploma (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003).**
- **Variance range among Asian subgroups with a high school or higher education**
  - 31% for Hmong (low)**
  - 88% for Japanese (high)**
- **Asian/Pacific Islanders were almost twice as likely to have less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education (7%) than non-Hispanic Whites (4%)**

Module 1

Slide 3

As of 2002, Asians were likely to be concentrated in “technical, sales, and administrative support jobs” and “managerial and professional specialty occupations” (22.9% and 41.0%, respectively; U.S. Census Bureau, 2003c). For example, after immigration about one third of Asian immigrant households nationwide engage in self-employed, labor-intensive small businesses, such as liquor stores, restaurants, and dry cleaners in inner city neighborhoods. In addition, a significant percentage of this population is employed in low-paying,

unskilled, service sector occupations. For example, Min (1998) found that 45% of Korean immigrants in Los Angeles were self-employed, and an additional 30% worked for Korean-owned businesses.

Asians, in general, and Koreans in particular, are active in religious activities. Over 70% of Korean immigrants in America attend an ethnic Korean church regularly every week where services are rendered in the Korean language.

Language difficulties and unfamiliarity with American culture are identified as the major barriers to Asian immigrants finding a job in mainstream American society that is commensurate with their educational achievements (Yu et al., 2002). Lack of work experience in America and insufficient English skills make white-collar jobs far less accessible to Asian immigrants despite their advanced educational backgrounds. This explains why Korean immigrants turn to highly competitive family-run small businesses, which require the husband and wife to work more than 12 hours a day, 7 days a week. A critical issue facing Asian immigrants, especially the male head of the household, is the high level of stress and low self-esteem that results from status inconsistency and extended working hours without having time off for vacations for many years.

### ***Cultural Characteristics***

Asian culture places great emphasis on hierarchical order within the family, respect for seniors, family obligations, filial piety, and obedience to rules and authority (Kitano & Daniels, 1995; Song, 1986). Traditional Asian families

tend to be highly male dominant and expect wives and children to be subservient to patriarchal authority. Children are expected to show unquestioning obedience to their parents' needs and wishes. The traditional values held by Asian immigrants at the time of arrival are likely to change over the years as they interact with people in the American mainstream. However, the fundamental belief system tends to remain relatively unchanged for many Asian immigrants. Consequently, foreign-born immigrant Asian parents and their American-born children experience conflicts and misunderstandings in values and behavioral norms, which could contribute to the potential risk for child maltreatment (Rhee, 1996).

### **ASIAN CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS**

- **Emphasis on hierarchical order within the family**
- **Respect for seniors**
- **Family obligations, filial piety**
- **Obedience to rules and authority**
- **Highly male dominant (expecting wives and children to be subservient to patriarchal authority)**
- **Children are expected to show unquestioning obedience to their parents' needs and wishes**

Module 1

Slide 4

### ***Childrearing Practice and Parenting***

In Asian culture, physical punishment at home and at school is generally permitted and considered necessary as a way to educate and discipline children

(Park, 2001). Many Asians believe in the saying “spare the rod and spoil the child,” in Korea referred to as “mae ga yak ida.” A recent study (Kim et al., 2000) found that 68.9% of elementary school children in Korea experienced minor to severe types of violence at home and 62% of them experienced corporal punishment by teachers in school. Furthermore, child maltreatment is not viewed as a serious social issue and no well-defined statute exists to prevent or intervene in child maltreatment in Korea. Similarly, Asian immigrants tend to define only extremely harmful physical punishment as child abuse, such as skull fractures and severe burn cases that could easily attract media attention (Song, 1986). Many Asians believe that the physical punishment of their children for a disciplinary purpose could not constitute a child abuse case. The concepts of child abuse within the family and public intervention in private family matters for the sake of child protection are rather foreign and unacceptable to many immigrant Asian families.

## **PARENTING PRACTICE AMONG IMMIGRANT ASIANS**

- **Physical punishment at home and at school is generally permitted and considered necessary as a way of disciplining children.**
- **Child maltreatment is not viewed as a serious social issue and no well-defined statute exists to prevent or intervene in child maltreatment in most countries of origin.**
- **Asian immigrants tend to define only an extremely harmful physical punishment such as skull fractures and severe burn cases as child abuse (Song, 1986).**
- **Many Asians believe that physical punishment of their children for a disciplinary purpose could not constitute a child abuse case.**
- **The concepts of child abuse within the family and public intervention in private family matters for the sake of child protection are rather foreign and unacceptable to many immigrant Asian families.**

Module 1 Slide 5 and Module 1 Slide 6

### ***Group Discussion***

- Discuss current demographic trends and immigration patterns among Asian immigrants.
- Discuss major cultural norms and values among Asian Americans and how these norms and values are similar or different between various Asian groups.
- Discuss how childrearing and parenting practices are similar to or different from those of other Americans.
- Discuss whether and to what extent Asians' views on child abuse are different from those of Americans in the mainstream.

### ***Assignment Topics***

- What are your personal views on Asian immigrants' concept of physical punishment and their child rearing practices?
- If your personal views on physical punishment are different from those of immigrant Asians, how would you resolve it?
- If you would encounter Asian parents who don't understand your child protective work or show hostility toward you, how would you respond?

## **MODULE II**

### **CHILD ABUSE IN IMMIGRANT ASIAN PACIFIC FAMILIES: PATTERNS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

## MODULE II

### ***Note to Instructor***

This module is a combination of lecture, group discussions, and exercises. It introduces patterns of child maltreatment and characteristics of victims and perpetrators among Asian Pacific immigrant families. It will take approximately 40 to 50 minutes to complete.

### ***Goals***

Participants will learn the demographic and behavioral characteristics of child maltreatment victims and perpetrators among Asian Pacific immigrants, and factors contributing to placement decisions by child protective workers.

### ***Objectives***

At the completion of this module, participants will:

1. Understand types of child abuse and the socio-demographic and behavioral characteristics of victims and perpetrators.
2. Understand variables contributing to the type of placement made by the child protective system and to effective child welfare practice with Asian Pacific immigrant families.

### ***Child Abuse Among Asian Pacific Families***

The investigators reviewed 761 active case files maintained by the Asian Pacific Unit of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (LA-DCFS) from July through September 2001. The 761 child victims were reported to have experienced 953 incidences of maltreatment. Of these, 569 (74.8%) were reported to have experienced a single type of maltreatment, while 192 (25.2%) were reported to have suffered more than one type of maltreatment. The most prevalent type of maltreatment was physical abuse (39.9%), followed by neglect (28.0%), emotional abuse (10.9%), substantial risk for abuse (16.8%), and sexual abuse (4.3%). Among the 192 victims who experienced two types of abuse, 41.7% suffered a combination of physical abuse and emotional abuse; 20.3% physical abuse and neglect; 5.7% sexual abuse and neglect; another 5.7% emotional abuse and neglect; and the remainder, other combinations of abuse. The gender of the maltreatment victims was fairly equally distributed: 48.6% male and 51.4% female. The age ranged from 1 day to 18 years with an average of 9.5 years. About half of the victims spoke an Asian language more frequently than English.

### Some Characteristics of Asian Child Maltreatment Victims

|                            |                |                                 |
|----------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Type of abuse</b>       | <b>N = 761</b> |                                 |
| Physical abuse             |                | <b>304 (39.9%)</b>              |
| Neglect                    |                | <b>213 (28.0%)</b>              |
| Emotional abuse            |                | <b>83 (10.9%)</b>               |
| Sexual abuse               |                | <b>33 ( 4.3%)</b>               |
| Substantial risk for abuse |                | <b>128 (16.8%)</b>              |
| <b>Gender</b>              | <b>N = 760</b> |                                 |
| Male                       |                | <b>369 (48.6%)</b>              |
| Female                     |                | <b>391 (51.4%)</b>              |
| <b>Age</b>                 | <b>N = 754</b> | <b>Mean= 9.5 Years (SD=6.5)</b> |
| 1- 5 years                 |                | <b>186 (24.4%)</b>              |
| 6 -10 years                |                | <b>252 (33.1%)</b>              |
| 11-15 years                |                | <b>238 (31.3%)</b>              |
| 16-18 years                |                | <b>78 (10.2%)</b>               |

Module 2 Slide 1

The majority of the victims (64%) were reported to have experienced moderate to severe rather than mild levels of maltreatment. With regard to chronicity of abuse, over half of the victims (51%) reportedly experienced repeated/persistent maltreatment, 24.4% isolated, and 24.3% sporadic. Nearly half of the victims (48.5%) lived with their biological parents, with or without siblings, when referral was made to DCFS. Over one third of them lived with either a single parent (27.7%) or a stepparent (8.0%). The great majority of victims (79.2%) in the sample did not have any behavioral problems at the time an abuse report was filed.

**Table 2.1**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Asian Child Maltreatment Victims**

| Variable                                     | Total N | n (%)            |
|--|---------|------------------|
| Gender                                       | N = 760 |                  |
| Male   |         | 369 (48.6%)      |
| Female                                       |         | 391 (51.4%)      |
| Age  | N = 754 | Mean = 9.5 Years |
| 1-5 years                                    |         | 186 (24.4%)      |
| 6-10 years                                   |         | 252 (33.1%)      |
| 11-15 years                                  |         | 238 (31.3%)      |
| 16-18 years                                  |         | 78 (10.2%)       |
| Ethnicity                                    | N = 761 |                  |
| Cambodian                                    |         | 243 (31.9%)      |
| Chinese                                      |         | 221 (29.0%)      |
| Korean                                       |         | 170 (22.3%)      |
| Vietnamese                                   |         | 122 (16.0%)      |
| Mixed Asian                                  |         | 5 ( 0.8%)        |
| Language Preference of Child                 | N = 761 |                  |
| Asian  |         | 414 (54.5%)      |
| English                                      |         | 334 (43.9%)      |
| Preverbal                                    |         | 13 ( 1.7%)       |
| Type of Abuse                                | N = 761 |                  |
| Physical abuse                               |         | 304 (40.0%)      |
| Neglect                                      |         | 213 (28.0%)      |
| Emotional abuse                              |         | 83 (10.9%)       |
| Sexual abuse                                 |         | 33 ( 4.3%)       |
| Substantial risk for abuse                   |         | 128 (16.8%)      |
| Severity of Abuse                            | N = 759 |                  |
| Mild   |         | 272 (35.7%)      |
| Moderate                                     |         | 278 (36.5%)      |
| Severe                                       |         | 209 (27.5%)      |
| Chronicity of Abuse                          | N = 759 |                  |
| Isolated                                     |         | 186 (24.4%)      |
| Sporadic                                     |         | 185 (24.3%)      |
| Repeated/persistent                          |         | 388 (51.0%)      |
| Children's behavioral problem                | N = 761 |                  |
| Yes  |         | 158 (20.8%)      |
| No   |         | 603 (79.2%)      |
| Living Arrangement                           | N = 761 |                  |
| Live with biological parents                 |         | 369 (48.5%)      |
| Live with single parent                      |         | 211 (27.7%)      |
| Live with parents & extended family members  |         | 82 (10.8%)       |
| Live with stepparents                        |         | 61 ( 8.0%)       |
| Live with grandparents                       |         | 15 ( 2.0%)       |
| Live with relatives                          |         | 6 ( 0.8%)        |
| Other living arrangement (e.g., foster home) |         | 17 ( 2.2%)       |

Victims were abused by the biological mother in 40.1% of the cases, by the biological father in 28.9% of the cases, and by both parents in 17.1% of the cases. Perpetrator age ranged from 8-74 years (*Mean age = 39.0*). Nearly one third of the perpetrators (30%) had completed less than middle school; 27.5% had completed high school; 16.2% had graduated from college. Only 2.5% had completed graduate or professional school. The great majority of the perpetrators had not received any education in the U.S. (78.3%). About 60% of the perpetrators were married when they were referred to DCFS, 17.7% were divorced or separated, 12.4% were single, 3.4% were widowed, and 4.1% were cohabitating. Significant circumstances associated with the maltreatment included excessive discipline involving corporal punishment (15.2%), family problems related to divorce or separation (21.8%), incapacity to provide care (14.1%), and witnessing spousal domestic violence (13.9%).

**Table 2.2**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Asian Child Maltreatment Perpetrators**

| Variable              | Total N | <i>n</i> (%)      |
|-----------------------|---------|-------------------|
| Gender of Perpetrator | N = 756 |                   |
| Male                  |         | 359 (47.2%)       |
| Female                |         | 397 (52.2%)       |
| Age of Perpetrator    | N = 726 | Mean = 39.0 Years |
| Younger than 20 years |         | 25 ( 3.3%)        |
| 21-30 years           |         | 71 ( 9.3%)        |
| 31-40 years           |         | 317 (41.7%)       |
| 41-50 years           |         | 271 (35.6%)       |
| Older than 50 years   |         | 42 ( 5.6%)        |
| Ethnicity             | N = 756 |                   |
| Cambodian             |         | 238 (31.3%)       |
| Chinese               |         | 218 (28.6%)       |
| Korean                |         | 175 (23.0%)       |
| Vietnamese            |         | 112 (14.7%)       |
| Other                 |         | 13 ( 1.8%)        |

**Table 2.2**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Asian Child Maltreatment Perpetrators**  
**(cont'd)**

| Variable                        | Total N | n (%)             |
|---------------------------------|---------|-------------------|
| Relationship to Victim          | N = 757 |                   |
| Father                          |         | 220 (28.9%)       |
| Mother                          |         | 305 (40.1%)       |
| Both parents                    |         | 130 (17.1%)       |
| Stepparents                     |         | 63 ( 8.3%)        |
| Relatives                       |         | 33 ( 4.3%)        |
| Other                           |         | 6 ( 0.8%)         |
| Occupation                      | N = 756 |                   |
| Unskilled worker                |         | 100 (13.1%)       |
| Skilled worker                  |         | 97 (12.7%)        |
| Clerk                           |         | 35 ( 4.6%)        |
| Professional                    |         | 83 (10.9%)        |
| Self-employed                   |         | 55 ( 7.2%)        |
| Unemployed                      |         | 291 (38.3%)       |
| Housewife                       |         | 36 ( 4.7%)        |
| Unknown                         |         | 59 ( 7.8%)        |
| Length in the U.S.              | N = 756 | Mean = 13.3 Years |
| 1-10 years                      |         | 249 (32.7%)       |
| 11-20 years                     |         | 389 (51.1%)       |
| 21-30 years                     |         | 34 ( 4.5%)        |
| Over 30 years                   |         | 84 (11.0%)        |
| Educational Level               | N = 761 | Mean = 9.0 Years  |
| Less than elementary school     |         | 205 (26.9%)       |
| Middle school                   |         | 22 ( 2.9%)        |
| High school                     |         | 209 (27.5%)       |
| College                         |         | 123 (16.2%)       |
| Graduate or professional school |         | 19 ( 2.5%)        |
| Unknown                         |         | 183 (24.0%)       |
| Education in the U.S.           | N = 498 |                   |
| Yes                             |         | 108 (21.7%)       |
| No                              |         | 390 (78.3%)       |
| Marital Status                  | N = 752 |                   |
| Married                         |         | 459 (60.3%)       |
| Separated/divorced              |         | 135 (17.7%)       |
| Single                          |         | 90 (12.4%)        |
| Widowed                         |         | 26 ( 3.4%)        |
| Cohabitation                    |         | 31 ( 4.1%)        |
| Unknown                         |         | 11 ( 1.4%)        |

**Table 2.2**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Asian Child Maltreatment Perpetrators**  
**(cont'd)**

| Variable                                  | Total N | n (%)       |
|---|---------|-------------|
| Circumstances and Family Problems         | N = 741 |             |
| Excessive discipline                      |         | 192 (25.2%) |
| Divorce/separation related family problem |         | 166 (21.8%) |
| Incapable to provide care                 |         | 107 (14.1%) |
| Domestic violence                         |         | 106 (13.9%) |
| Poor parenting skills                     |         | 74 ( 9.7%)  |
| Unemployment/financial problems           |         | 50 ( 7.9%)  |
| Parents substance abuse/gambling          |         | 24 ( 3.2%)  |
| Parent(s) mental illness                  |         | 16 ( 2.1%)  |
| Other                                     |         | 6 ( 0.8%)   |

Case referrals came from schools (44.3%), police (20.5%), a therapist or counselor (7.8%), a neighbor (6%), doctors or nurses (5.5%), and other sources including relatives and friends (15.9%). As to the DCFS disposition upon completion of the alleged child abuse investigation, 74.5% of the cases were assigned to family maintenance (victims continue to live in their own homes while perpetrators are removed from their homes or ordered to receive treatment), 19.3% to family reunification (victims are removed from their homes and placed in others' homes), and 6.2% to permanency planning (after failures of an 18-month-long family reunification effort, victims are assigned to permanency planning which includes legal guardianship, long-term foster care, or adoption).

### Asian Perpetrators of Child Maltreatment

|  |                |                       |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Relationship to Victim</b>                    | <b>N = 757</b> |                       |
| <b>Father</b>                                    |                | <b>220 (28.9%)</b>    |
| <b>Mother</b>                                    |                | <b>305 (40.1%)</b>    |
| <b>Both parents</b>                              |                | <b>130 (17.1%)</b>    |
| <b>Stepparents</b>                               |                | <b>63 ( 8.3%)</b>     |
| <b>Relatives</b>                                 |                | <b>33 ( 4.3%)</b>     |
| <b>Other</b>                                     |                | <b>6 ( 0.8%)</b>      |
| <br>   |                |                       |
| <b>Educational Level</b>                         | <b>N = 761</b> | <b>Mean=9.0 Years</b> |
| <b>Less than elementary school</b>               |                | <b>205 (26.9%)</b>    |
| <b>Middle school</b>                             |                | <b>22 ( 2.9%)</b>     |
| <b>High school</b>                               |                | <b>209 (27.5%)</b>    |
| <b>College</b>                                   |                | <b>123 (16.2%)</b>    |
| <b>Graduate or professional school</b>           |                | <b>19 ( 2.5%)</b>     |
| <b>Unknown</b>                                   |                | <b>183 (24.0%)</b>    |
| <br>   |                |                       |
| <b>Circumstances and Family Problems</b>         | <b>N = 741</b> |                       |
| <b>Excessive discipline</b>                      |                | <b>192 (25.2%)</b>    |
| <b>Divorce/separation related family problem</b> |                | <b>166 (21.8%)</b>    |
| <b>Incapable of providing care</b>               |                | <b>107 (14.1%)</b>    |
| <b>Domestic violence</b>                         |                | <b>106 (13.9%)</b>    |
| <b>Poor parenting skills</b>                     |                | <b>74 ( 9.7%)</b>     |
| <b>Unemployment/financial problems</b>           |                | <b>50 ( 7.9%)</b>     |
| <b>Parent(s) substance abuse/gambling</b>        |                | <b>24 ( 3.2%)</b>     |
| <b>Parent(s) mental illness</b>                  |                | <b>16 ( 2.1%)</b>     |
| <b>Other</b>                                     |                | <b>6 ( 0.8%)</b>      |

Module 2 Slide 2 and Module 2 Slide 3

Of those who were placed out of home (n = 202), 45% were placed in their relative's home (kinship care); 41.1% were placed in a non-Asian foster home; and 9.9% were placed in an Asian foster home. DCFS' decision to remove the child from the home was found to be associated with severity of maltreatment, chronicity of maltreatment, type of abuse, emergency response status, and referral source. The more severe and persistent the maltreatment, the more likely the child was to be placed out of home. The child with an

immediate response status was more likely to be removed from the home than children with other types of response status. A child was more likely to be kept out of the home when he or she was physically abused or neglected. A child who was referred by the police or a counselor/therapist was more likely to be removed from the home than children referred to DCFS by teachers.

**Table 2.3**  
**DCFS Activities for Asian Pacific Children**

| Variable                  | Total N | n (%)       |
|---------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Referral Source           | N = 761 |             |
| School                    |         | 337 (44.3%) |
| Police                    |         | 156 (20.5%) |
| Therapist/counselor       |         | 59 ( 7.8%)  |
| Neighbor                  |         | 46 ( 6.0%)  |
| Doctors or nurse          |         | 42 ( 5.5%)  |
| Other                     |         | 121 (15.9%) |
| Emergency Response Status | N = 761 |             |
| Immediate response        |         | 489 (64.3%) |
| 5-day                     |         | 263 (34.6%) |
| Other                     |         | 9 ( 1.2%)   |
| Disposition               | N = 761 |             |
| Family maintenance        |         | 567 (74.5%) |
| Family reunification      |         | 147 (19.3%) |
| Permanency planning       |         | 47 ( 6.2%)  |
| Out of Home Placement     | N = 202 |             |
| Kinship care              |         | 91 (45.0%)  |
| Non-Asian foster home     |         | 83 (41.1%)  |
| Asian foster home         |         | 20 ( 9.9%)  |
| Emergency shelter         |         | 3 ( 1.5%)   |
| Unknown                   |         | 5 ( 2.5%)   |

A logistic regression analysis was conducted to determine which independent variables (gender, age, presence of behavioral problem, presence of disability, type of abuse, severity of abuse, chronicity of abuse, emergency response

status, and referral source) were predictors of DCFS' decision to remove the child from the home, when controlling for the other independent variables. Logistic regression analysis was most appropriate for examining the odds of children being kept in or removed from the home since the dependent variable was categorical with two categories (two types of placement) and multiple independent variables were used.

As shown in Table 2.4 (see Appendixes), *emergency response status*, *referral source*, *type of abuse*, and *chronicity* were statistically significant in predicting out-of-home placement, while gender, age, presence of behavioral problems and disability, and severity of abuse, did not significantly contribute to the model. For example, children with an immediate response status were two times more likely to be placed out of home than those with a 5-day response. The children who were referred by the police were six times more likely to be removed from the home compared to those referred by teachers. The children who suffered from physical abuse were two times more likely to be removed from home compared to those who suffered from emotional abuse. The children who were reported to DCFS more than three times (repeated/persistent abuse) were two times more likely to be placed out of the home than those who experienced first-time/isolated abuse in the sample. The children who were reported to have a disability were two times more likely to be removed from the home, when compared to those who did not have a disability.

In summary, some of the major findings from this study include:

- Immigrant Asian families are more likely to be charged with physical abuse and neglect, and far less likely to be charged with sexual abuse in comparison with all other groups charged with abuse and neglect in the U.S. population.
- Biological parents abused the vast majority of victims: mothers (40.1%), fathers (28.9%), or both (17.1%).
- The circumstances under which physical abuse occurred most frequently were: a) corporal punishment used by Asian parents intending to discipline their children, and b) stressful family situations attributable to divorce, single parenthood, and remarriage.
- Child neglect and emotional abuse are other prevalent types of child abuse in this study.
- The most frequent circumstance under which emotional abuse occurred among the Asian families was the children's witnessing of domestic violence.
- There are some differences among various Asian subgroups in characteristics of child abuse (e.g., physical abuse is the most prevalent abuse type for Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese families, while child neglect is the most frequently reported abuse for Cambodians).
- Emergency status, referral source, type of abuse, and chronicity of abuse were statistically significant in predicting out-of-home placement.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF ASIAN PACIFIC CHILD MALTREATMENT**

- **Immigrant Asian families are more likely to be charged with physical abuse and neglect, and far less likely to be charged with sexual abuse in comparison with all other groups charged with abuse and neglect in the U.S. population.**
- **Biological parents abused the majority of victims--mothers (40.1%), fathers (28.9%), and both parents (17.1%).**
- **Circumstances under which physical abuse occurred most frequently were corporal punishment used by Asian parents with an intention to discipline their children and stressful family situations attributable to divorce, single parenthood, and remarriage.**

Module 2 Slide 4

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF ASIAN PACIFIC CHILD MALTREATMENT (cont'd)**

- **Child neglect and emotional abuse is another prevalent type of child abuse in this study: the most frequent circumstance under which emotional abuse occurred among the Asian families, was children's witnessing domestic violence.**
- **There are slight differences among various Asian subgroups in characteristics of child abuse. For example, physical abuse is the most prevalent abuse type for Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese families, while child neglect is the most frequently reported abuse for Cambodians.**
- **Emergency status, referral source, type of abuse, and chronicity of abuse were statistically significant in predicting out of home placement.**

Module 2 Slide 5

### ***Group Discussion***

- Discuss the most prevalent types of child maltreatment and characteristics of Asian Pacific child maltreatment victims and perpetrators.
- Discuss how patterns of child maltreatment among Asian immigrants differ from those of other racial/ethnic groups.
- Discuss prevention and intervention strategies to decrease child neglect and abuse among Asian immigrants.

### ***Assignment Topics***

- How are the types of child maltreatment and characteristics of victims and perpetrators different from and/or similar to other racial/ethnic groups?
- What are the major circumstances under which physical abuse occurs among Asian Pacific families?
- What are the major circumstances under which emotional abuse occurs among Asian families?
- Are there any variations in the patterns of child abuse among various Asian groups and how so?
- What are the significant factors predicting out-of-home decisions among Asian child maltreatment cases by child protective workers?

## **MODULE III**

### **CHILD ABUSE IN IMMIGRANT CAMBODIAN FAMILIES: CHARACTERISTICS AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

## MODULE III

### ***Note to Instructor***

This module is a combination of lecture, group discussions, and assignments. It introduces immigration history, characteristics and patterns of child maltreatment, and characteristics of victims and perpetrators among Cambodian immigrants. It will take approximately 40-50 minutes to complete.

### ***Goals***

Participants will learn the immigration patterns, adjustment problems, demographic and behavioral characteristics of child maltreatment victims and perpetrators among Cambodian immigrants, and factors contributing to placement decisions by child protective workers.

### ***Objectives***

At the completion of this module, participants will:

1. Understand the immigration history, adjustment patterns in the U.S., and prevalent mental health and family problems among Cambodian immigrants.
2. Understand types of child abuse, socio-demographic, and behavioral characteristics of victims and perpetrators.
3. Understand variables contributing to the type of placement made by the child protective system and effective child welfare practice with Cambodian immigrant families.

## ***Demographic Trends***

Unlike other Asian groups (e.g., Chinese, Filipinos, Koreans) who voluntarily immigrated to the United States with the goals of economic success for themselves and better education for their children, many Cambodians were forced to leave their homeland in the mid-1970s and subsequently arrived in the U.S. as political refugees. According to the Census Bureau (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a), there were 171,937 Cambodians in the United States in 2000. Just over 40% (70,232) of this population was concentrated in California, and over half of the California Cambodian population (36,233) was found in Los Angeles, Riverside, and Orange counties. In other words, nearly one fourth of the U.S. Cambodian population was concentrated in Southern California. As of 2000, among California's Cambodians, there were slightly more females than males (52% and 48% respectively), and 41% were minor children under the age of 18 years.

### **Cambodian Americans**

- **171,937 Cambodians in the United States in 2000.**
- **70,232 (just over 40% of all U.S. Cambodians) live in California.**
- **36,233 live in Los Angeles, Riverside, and Orange counties.**

Module 3 Slide 1

## ***Historical Background***

Cambodia, also known as Kampuchea, was under French administrative control between 1863 and 1953. The French established a protectorate over

Cambodia as part of their colonial expansion policy in Indochina (Tenhula, 1991). In 1953, France transferred powers to a fully independent Cambodia. The country has gone through many changes of government since it gained independence from France. In 1955, King Sihanouk announced his abdication in favor of his father, Norodom Suramarit, and played a direct political role through the Popular Socialist Community. His father became king and Sihanouk became prime minister. In 1965, Sihanouk broke off relations with the U.S. and allowed North Vietnamese guerrillas to set up bases in Cambodia to further their campaign against the U.S.-backed government in South Vietnam. In 1970, during his absence overseas, Sihanouk was deposed as head of state by Lon Nol in a pro-U.S. military coup (Jarvis, 1997). Subsequently, Cambodia renamed itself the Khmer Republic. Lon Nol was selected as its president. Since the rule of King Sihanouk, Cambodia has experienced many challenges, ranging from economic difficulties, corruption, growing alienation between the people and government, the growth of militant communists, and conflicts in neighboring Vietnam (Hopkins, 1996).

The U.S.-supported Nol administration failed to combat the Chinese-trained Cambodian communists supported by King Sihanouk. In 1970, U.S.-South Vietnamese forces launched an invasion of Cambodia to gain control of the countryside. Between 1972 and 1973, Cambodia underwent a period of massive U.S. bombing, during which over half a million tons were dropped. By early 1975, approximately two million refugees had fled to Phnom Penh seeking

safety from the bombing and the fighting (Jarvis, 1997). King Sihanouk's communist regime in exile regained control of Cambodia's economy and infrastructure in 1975. The countryside was devastated through the battles between the Republic and the communist groups. Although the U.S. bombs were intended to destroy the communist enclaves within Cambodia, many civilian lives were sacrificed (Hopkins, 1996).

From 1975 through 1979, the Khmer Rouge took power; this communist regime was brutal in its attempts to totally change society and restore the agricultural base (Tenhula, 1991). The Khmer Rouge used torture techniques such as poking chopsticks in the ears, beatings with bamboo sticks, cutting off fingertips, burning, isolation, starvation, rape, assault, hanging by the feet, swinging children by the feet and smashing them against trees, and forcing family members to witness beatings or killing of parents or loved ones. Some were forced to commit the atrocities on their family members (Hopkins, 1996). During the four years of Khmer Rouge rule, estimates of those killed range from 1-3 million people (Tenhula, 1991). Few escaped those years of horror and oppression. Broken families and loss of human dignity became a central legacy of the Cambodian people's tragic past.

The Cambodian refugees fled to refugee camps in Thailand that had been established in 1975. These journeys were dangerous, as those fleeing had to go through jungles filled with snakes, river leeches, and land mines. They were frequently robbed and raped by those hired to lead them to camps. Many died of

malnutrition, starvation, and exposure to diseases. Because of their horrific experiences both during the war and their flight from Cambodia, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and survival guilt are some of the major psychological symptoms suffered by Cambodian refugees (Hopkins, 1996).

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- **Independence from France in 1953 (under French administrative control between 1863 and 1953).**
- **In 1955, King Sihanouk played a direct political role through the Popular Socialist Community.**
- **In 1970, during his absence overseas, Sihanouk was overthrown by Lon Nol in a pro-U.S. military coup.**
- **Between 1972 and 1973, Cambodia underwent a period of massive U.S. bombing in which over half a million tons were dropped.**
- **From 1975 through 1979 the Khmer Rouge took power; this communist regime was brutal in their attempts to totally change society and restore the agricultural base—1-3 million people were estimated killed—“Killing Fields”.**
- **Cambodian refugees fled to refugee camps in Thailand that had been established in 1975.**
- **During the process, many died of malnutrition, starvation, and exposure to many diseases. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and survival guilt are some of the major psychological symptoms experienced by Cambodian refugees.**

Module 3 Slide 2 and Module 3 Slide 3

### ***Mental Health Problems***

Studies report that, despite living in the U.S. for many years, PTSD and major depression are still significant mental health issues among the Cambodian immigrant refugee population. Carlson and Rosser-Hogan (1993) conducted a study that involved randomly selected Cambodian refugees who had resettled in

the United States for some years, and investigated traumatic experiences, post-traumatic stress, dissociation, and depression. They found many Cambodians experienced multiple and severe traumas and showed high levels of all symptoms measured. The study also revealed that 86% of the Cambodians in the sample met the modified criteria of the DSM III-R for PTSD, 96% had high dissociation scores, and 80% could be classified as meeting the criteria for clinical depression. Traumas experienced by these refugees during the Khmer Rouge regime and in refugee camps were found to be associated with the high rates of PTSD and major depression (Blair, 2000).

#### **MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AMONG CAMBODIAN REFUGEES**

- **86% of the Cambodians in the sample met the modified criteria of the DSM III-R for PTSD.**
- **96% had high dissociation scores.**
- **80% could be classified as meeting the criteria for clinical depression.**

Module 3 Slide 4

#### ***Adjustment Patterns***

In comparison to other immigrant groups, Cambodian families faced multiple adjustment problems because of their history of trauma and involuntary departure from their country, in addition to dealing with adjusting to a new life in the United States (Carlson & Rosser-Hogan, 1993). Studies have shown that abusive and neglectful families were reported to have experienced more stressful life events than non-abusive and non-neglectful families (Tower, 1999).

Since most Cambodian refugees were forced to migrate from rural to urban areas, the majority had little or no education. Therefore, many refugees struggled to find employment. According to various Congressional reports, nearly all Cambodians receive public assistance during their first 12 months as refugees in the United States. In 1999, over 40% of the Cambodian households received public assistance and the same proportion of the population lived below the poverty line in Los Angeles County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a). The risk of abuse and neglect is higher in families who are under social stress. An unstable job or employment, inadequate housing, and other stressful life conditions such as a new baby in the family, illness, death of a loved one, or caring for persons with special needs were found to be associated with an increase in abuse and neglect (Tower, 1999).

#### **ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS AMONG CAMBODIAN AMERICANS**

- **Many refugees struggled to find employment.**
- **Nearly all Cambodians receive public assistance during their first 12 months as refugees in the United States.**
- **In 1999, 40% of Cambodians received public assistance and the same proportion of the population lived below the poverty line in Los Angeles County.**
- **Families at greater risk for child abuse and neglect due to unstable job or employment, inadequate housing, and other stressful life conditions.**

Module 3 Slide 5

#### ***Child Abuse Among Cambodian Families***

Data were obtained by reviewing and analyzing 243 active Cambodian

case files maintained by the Asian Pacific Unit of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (LA-DCFS) from July through September 2001. The 243 child maltreatment victims came from 71 families with an average of 3.4 children from each family. Of these, 81.9% were reported to have experienced a single type of maltreatment, and 18.9% were reported to have suffered more than one type of maltreatment. The most prevalent type of maltreatment was neglect (31.3%), followed by substantial risk due to other children abused in the home (24.3%), physical abuse (22.2%), caretaker incapacity/absence (9.5%), emotional abuse (7.0%), sexual abuse (4.9%), and abuse by sibling (0.4%).

Among the 44 victims who experienced two types of abuse, 31.8% suffered a combination of physical and emotional abuse; 20.5% physical abuse and neglect; 20.5% neglect and caretaker incapacity/absence; 9.1% neglect and sexual abuse; and the remainder, other combinations of abuse types. The gender of the victims was fairly equally distributed: 48% male and 52% female. The age of the children ranged from several months to 17 years, with an average age of 9.9 years. A little over half of the victims (55.6%) chose the Cambodian language as their language of preference, followed by English (37.4%), being preverbal (6.6%), and a preference to speak Chinese (0.4%).

**Table 3.1**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Cambodian Child Maltreatment Victims**

| Variable   | Total N | n (%)           |
|--|---------|-----------------|
| Gender   | N = 243 |                 |
| Male   |         | 117 (48.1%)     |
| Female   |         | 126 (51.9%)     |
| Age  | N = 241 | Mean= 9.9 years |
| 1-5 years  |         | 54 (22.4%)      |
| 6-10 years                                       |         | 68 (28.4%)      |
| 11-15 years                                      |         | 91 (37.8%)      |
| 16-18 years                                      |         | 28 (11.6%)      |
| Abuse type                                       | N = 242 |                 |
| Physical abuse                                   |         | 54 (22.2%)      |
| Emotional abuse                                  |         | 17 ( 7.0%)      |
| Neglect  |         | 76 (31.3%)      |
| Caretaker incapacity/absence                     |         | 23 ( 9.5%)      |
| Sexual abuse                                     |         | 12 ( 4.9%)      |
| Substantial risk for abuse                       |         | 59 (24.3%)      |
| Sibling abuse                                    |         | 1 ( 0.4%)       |
| Severity of abuse                                | N = 241 |                 |
| Mild   |         | 81 (33.6%)      |
| Moderate   |         | 85 (35.3%)      |
| Severe   |         | 75 (31.1%)      |
| Chronicity of Abuse                              | N = 241 |                 |
| Isolated   |         | 29 (12.0%)      |
| Sporadic   |         | 43 (17.8%)      |
| Repeated/persistent                              |         | 169 (70.1%)     |
| Language preference of child                     | N = 207 |                 |
| Cambodian  |         | 135 (55.6%)     |
| English  |         | 55 (37.4%)      |
| Preverbal  |         | 16 ( 6.6%)      |
| Chinese  |         | 1 ( 0.4%)       |
| Children's behavioral problem                    | N = 243 |                 |
| Yes  |         | 37 (15.2%)      |
| No   |         | 206 (84.8%)     |
| Disability                                       | N = 243 |                 |
| Yes  |         | 30 (12.3%)      |
| No   |         | 213 (87.7%)     |
| Living arrangement                               | N = 243 |                 |
| Live with biological parents                     |         | 124 (51.0%)     |
| Live with single parent                          |         | 86 (35.4%)      |
| Live with stepfamily                             |         | 23 ( 9.5%)      |
| Live with others (grandparents, relatives, etc.) |         | 10 ( 4.1%)      |

The great majority of the victims in the sample did not have any behavioral problems (84.8%) or disabilities (87.7%) at the time their abuse report was filed. Regarding severity of abuse, the majority of victims were reported to have experienced moderate to severe maltreatment (35.3% and 31.1% respectively) and the rest were found to have suffered mild levels of abuse (33.6%). With regard to the chronicity of abuse, most of the victims reportedly experienced repeated/persistent maltreatment (70.1%), as compared to isolated (12.0%) and sporadic (17.8%), with the average duration of abuse being 2.58 years. Most of the abuse took place at home. Slightly over half of the victims had a prior history of abuse. Slightly over half (51.0%) lived with their biological parents at the time of DCFS referral. Over one third lived with a single parent (35.4%) and 9.5% lived with stepparents.

In terms of the victim's relationship to the perpetrator(s), approximately half were abused by biological mothers (47.7%), 21.2% by biological fathers, and 11.1% by both parents. The mothers were reported as the perpetrator in 116 cases, with neglect as the most common abuse type. The fathers were reported as the perpetrator in 52 cases with physical abuse as the most common abuse type. The age of the perpetrators ranged from 19-59 years (*Mean Age = 37.52*). The victims were more likely to be abused by females (61.2%). Approximately two thirds (64%) of the perpetrators were unemployed. The perpetrators had a low mean educational level of 5.2 years with an even lower mean level of education in the U.S. of 2.14 years. The overwhelming majority of the

perpetrators (92%) chose Cambodian over English as their language of preference. The average length of residency in the U.S. among the perpetrators was 16.4 years.

Over half of the perpetrators (56.2%) were either married or cohabitating when they were referred to DCFS. The rest were either single (14.0%), separated (13.2%), divorced (5.0%), widowed (8.3%), or unknown (3.3%). The average number of children in the households was 4.67. In terms of religion, the largest group identified themselves as Buddhist (42.6%). The majority of perpetrators were receiving public assistance when they were reported to DCFS. Domestic violence was one of the leading special circumstances. With regard to the educational background of the perpetrators, as many as 58.8% had attained less than an elementary school education, 5.2% had completed middle school, 30.9% had completed high school, and only 5.2% had had some graduate or professional school experience. The great majority of the perpetrators had not received any education in the U.S. (75.9%). Over half of the perpetrators (56.4%) reported having experienced special circumstances that appeared to be connected to child maltreatment. Some of the most significant circumstances included gambling, alcoholism, and substance abuse problems (25.9%); parents' mental illness (24.4%); incapacity to provide care due to a variety of reasons such as physical disabilities, etc. (15.6%); domestic violence and family disruption (4.5%); language and cultural barriers (3.7%); and other miscellaneous reasons including financial distress (25.9%).

**Table 3.2**  
**Demographic Characteristics of**  
**Cambodian Child Maltreatment Perpetrators**

| Variable                             | Total N | n (%)                      |
|--------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------|
| Gender of Perpetrator                | N = 242 |                            |
| Male                                 |         | 94 (38.7%)                 |
| Female                               |         | 148 (61.2%)                |
| Age of Perpetrator                   | N = 233 | Mean=37.5 years (SD = 8.8) |
| younger than 20 years                |         | 8 ( 3.4%)                  |
| 20-30 years                          |         | 39 (16.7%)                 |
| 31-40 years                          |         | 111 (47.6%)                |
| 41-50 years                          |         | 58 (24.9%)                 |
| Older than 50 years                  |         | 17 ( 7.3%)                 |
| Victim's Relationship to Perpetrator | N = 245 |                            |
| Father                               |         | 52 (21.4%)                 |
| Mother                               |         | 116 (47.7%)                |
| Both parents                         |         | 27 (11.1%)                 |
| Stepparents                          |         | 38 (15.7%)                 |
| Sibling                              |         | 7 ( 2.1%)                  |
| Other                                |         | 5 ( 2.1%)                  |
| Occupation of Perpetrator            | N = 242 |                            |
| Unskilled Laborer                    |         | 21 ( 8.7%)                 |
| Skilled Laborer                      |         | 28 (11.6%)                 |
| Clerk                                |         | 18 ( 7.4%)                 |
| Professional                         |         | 4 ( 1.7%)                  |
| Unemployed                           |         | 155 (64.0%)                |
| Unknown                              |         | 16 ( 6.6%)                 |
| Length of Time in the U.S.           | N = 217 | Median=16.4 years          |
| 1-10 years                           |         | 19 ( 8.8%)                 |
| 11-20 years                          |         | 191 (88.0%)                |
| 21-30 years                          |         | 7 ( 3.2%)                  |
| Education level of perpetrator       | N = 194 | Mean=5.2 years             |
| Less than elementary school          |         | 114 (58.8%)                |
| Middle school                        |         | 10 ( 5.2%)                 |
| High school                          |         | 60 (30.9%)                 |
| College                              |         | 10 ( 5.2%)                 |
| Education in U.S.                    | N = 162 |                            |
| Yes                                  |         | 39 (24.1%)                 |
| No                                   |         | 123 (75.9%)                |
| Marital status                       | N = 242 |                            |
| Single                               |         | 34 (14.0%)                 |
| Married                              |         | 116 (47.9%)                |
| Separated/divorced                   |         | 44 (18.2%)                 |
| Widowed                              |         | 20 ( 8.3%)                 |
| Cohabitation                         |         | 20 ( 8.3%)                 |
| Unknown                              |         | 8 ( 3.3%)                  |

**Table 3.2**  
**Demographic Characteristics of**  
**Cambodian Child Maltreatment Perpetrators (cont'd)**

| Variable                                     | Total N | n (%)      |
|--|---------|------------|
| Circumstances leading to maltreatment        | N = 135 |            |
| Gambling/alcoholism/substance abuse          |         | 35 (25.9%) |
| Domestic violence                            |         | 4 ( 3.0%)  |
| Divorce/separation related family problem    |         | 2 ( 1.5%)  |
| New immigrant (culture, language difficulty) |         | 5 ( 3.7%)  |
| Incapable of providing care                  |         | 21 (15.6%) |
| Parent(s) mental illness                     |         | 33 (24.4%) |
| Other  |         | 35 (25.9%) |

Schools referred over half of the cases (55.6%), followed by neighbor (14%), police (12.8%), and medical doctors or nurses (8.2%). The great majority of cases (65.4%) received an immediate response status when reported to DCFS. As to the status of the DCFS disposition at the time of the study, 79% of the cases were in the category of family maintenance (victims continue to live in their own homes while perpetrators are removed from their homes or ordered to receive treatment); 16.9% were in family reunification (victims are removed from their homes and placed in others' home); and 4.1% were in permanency planning (after failure of an 18-month-long family reunification effort, victims are assigned to permanency planning, which includes legal guardianship, long term foster care, or adoption). The data show an even distribution of abuse between mild, moderate, and severe. However, the data reveal that the rate of severe abuse by fathers is 42%, compared to 35% by mothers.

DCFS' decision to remove the child from the home was associated with the abused child's relationship with the perpetrator, emergency response status,

and referral source. A child with an immediate response status was more likely to be removed from the home. The maltreated child was more likely to be kept out of the home when the perpetrator was his/her stepfather (or mother's boyfriend), or relative, when compared to children whose perpetrators were their biological father or both parents. A child who was referred by the police or medical doctors/nurses was more likely to be removed from the home than children referred to DCFS by teachers.

**Table 3.3**  
**DCFS Activities for Cambodian Child Maltreatment Victims**

| Variable                  | Total N | n (%)       |
|---------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Referral Source           | N = 243 |             |
| School                    |         | 135 (55.6%) |
| Neighbor                  |         | 34 (14.0%)  |
| Police                    |         | 31 (12.8%)  |
| Doctors or nurse          |         | 20 ( 8.2%)  |
| Therapist/counselor       |         | 8 ( 3.3%)   |
| Other                     |         | 15 ( 6.1%)  |
| Emergency Response Status | N = 243 |             |
| Immediate response        |         | 159 (65.4%) |
| 5-day                     |         | 84 (34.6%)  |
| Disposition               | N = 243 |             |
| Family maintenance        |         | 192 (79.0%) |
| Family reunion            |         | 41 (16.9%)  |
| Permanency planning       |         | 10 ( 4.1%)  |
| Placement Type            | N = 243 |             |
| Home with parents         |         | 182 (74.9%) |
| Kinship                   |         | 40 (16.5%)  |
| Non-Asian foster home     |         | 18 ( 7.4%)  |
| Asian foster home         |         | 1 ( 0.4%)   |
| Group home                |         | 2 ( 0.8%)   |

A logistic regression analysis was conducted to determine whether some selected variables, including gender, age, type of abuse, severity of abuse,

chronicity of abuse, emergency response status, and referral source were significant in predicting DCFS' decision to remove the child from the home. Logistic regression analysis was most appropriate for examining the odds of children being kept in or removed from the home since the dependent variable was categorical with two categories (two types of placement) and multiple independent variables were used.

As shown in Table 3.4 (see Appendixes), regression results revealed that *emergency status* and *referral source* were statistically significant in predicting out-of-home placement, while demographic variables such as gender and age, severity of abuse, and chronicity of abuse did not significantly contribute to the model. For example, the children who were referred by medical doctors or nurses were nine times more likely to be placed out of home compared to those referred by teachers. Although the type of abuse was not statistically significant in predicting out-of-home placement, the regression results indicated that the children who suffered from physical abuse were three times more likely to be removed from home compared to those who suffered from emotional abuse.

### ***Suggested Intervention Strategies***

- Bilingual and bicultural child protective workers (92% of the perpetrators speak Cambodian).
- Extensive case management services—families with multiple needs (linking families to social and community resources, substance abuse treatment, counseling for gambling, etc.).
- Collaborated services of community-based wife abuse prevention/intervention programs and child protective service agencies to provide more holistic family services.

- Ongoing community education targeting the Cambodian population at risk for child maltreatment.

### ***Group Discussion***

- Discuss how the historical events over the past years affected various aspects of Cambodians' lives including their mental health
- Discuss how patterns of child maltreatment among Cambodian immigrants differ from those of other Asian immigrant groups.
- Discuss prevention and intervention strategies toward child neglect and abuse among Cambodian immigrants.

### ***Assignment Topics***

- What are major mental health problems that Cambodian immigrants experience?
- How do you think the life experiences of Cambodian immigrants in their country of origin affect their adjustment process in the U.S. and particularly, child abuse and neglect among Cambodian immigrant families?
- What do you think are the most effective prevention and intervention strategies when you are working with Cambodian families in situations involving child neglect?

## **MODULE IV**

### **CHILD ABUSE IN IMMIGRANT CHINESE FAMILIES: CHARACTERISTICS AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

## MODULE IV

### ***Note to Instructor***

This module is a combination of lecture, group discussions, and assignments. It introduces immigration history, characteristics and patterns of child maltreatment, and characteristics of victims and perpetrators among Chinese immigrants. This module will take approximately 40 to 50 minutes to complete.

### ***Goals***

Participants will learn about the immigration patterns, adjustment problems, demographic and behavioral characteristics of child maltreatment victims and perpetrators among Chinese immigrants, and factors contributing to placement decisions by child protection workers.

### ***Objectives***

At the completion of this module, participants will:

1. Understand the immigration history, adjustment patterns in the U.S., and prevalent mental health and family problems among Chinese immigrants.
2. Understand types of child abuse and socio-demographic and behavioral characteristics of victims and perpetrators.
3. Understand variables contributing to the type of placement made by the child protective system and effective child welfare practice with Chinese immigrant families.

## **Chinese Americans**

The 2000 U.S. Census revealed that Chinese Americans are the fastest growing Asian ethnic group in the United States. Among diverse Asian groups, the Chinese were the first to immigrate to the United States. The discovery of gold in California in 1848 initiated a massive influx of Chinese immigrants. In the next three decades, over 225,000 Chinese, predominantly male workers, immigrated to the United States. Chinese male workers were recruited from their homelands with promises of instant wealth. The poor economic and social conditions in China due to warfare, drought, and overcrowding, and the appeal of instant wealth in America provided lures for many Chinese to seek their fortune in the United States (Min, 1998). The majority of these first immigrants could not build families because of the bar against women—a discriminatory policy designed by the U.S. government to keep Chinese workers from establishing roots (Huang, 1991). As a result, the male-female ratio in 1860 was 15 to 1. Discrimination, anti-miscegenation attitudes, and hate crimes continued through the turn of the century, as a backdrop of the notorious exclusionist Immigration Act of 1924. This Act limited the number of immigrants being admitted annually to 2% of the foreign-born individuals of each nationality residing in the United States in 1890 (Takaki, 1989).

As with other Asian immigrant groups, the Chinese influx into the United States occurred in two waves. The first wave of Chinese immigrants was characterized as mostly poor, single males employed as cheap labor. Racist

legislation that banned Chinese immigration curbed the presence of families and second/third generations from American soil for the next 100 years (Wong, 1995). The Hart-Cellar (Immigration) Act of 1965 allowed a second wave of Chinese immigrants to enter the United States. Propelled by the 1965 Immigration Act, the second wave brought families and parents from East Asia to the United States for a variety of reasons—from escaping political chaos to giving their children better futures. Many Chinese immigrants saw immigration as a new opportunity for themselves and their children. Contrary to first wave immigrants, the second wave reflected much more within-group diversity. Many of the second group had completed a college education before coming to the U.S. and had held managerial and professional occupations, while others were fleeing from war-ravaged Southeast Asian countries. These ethnic Chinese fleeing Vietnam had often received minimal to no education. Still others were working class folk who aspired to break into the middle class through investing in an American education for their children (Zhou, 1999).

### **CHINESE AMERICANS**

- **First Asian group to immigrate to the United States**
- **Largest Asian group (2,314,537 non-Taiwanese Chinese)**
- **Fastest growing ethnic group among various Asian groups**

**(U.S. Bureau of Census, 2002)**

Module 4 Slide 1

## CHINESE IMMIGRATION HISTORY

### First-wave immigration:

- **Discovery of gold in California in 1848 initiated a massive influx of Chinese immigrants (over 225,000 Chinese over the next three decades)**
- **Mostly poor, single males employed as cheap labor**
- **Racist legislation nearly extinguished the presence of families and second/third generations from American soil for the next 100 years**

### Second-wave immigration:

- **Brought families and parents, propelled by the 1965 Immigration Act**
- **Much more within-group diversity (e.g., many college educated, white collar jobs, and Chinese with minimal to no education from Southeast Asian countries)**

Module 4 Slide 2 and Module 4 Slide 3

Despite the broad ranges of opportunity and civil rights, racial discrimination, poverty (especially for Chinese-Vietnamese refugees), and culture shock characterized the adaptation process into American society. New immigrant Chinese families often retreated to ethnic enclaves due to language and cultural barriers. It is also quite possible that the lack of inter-group interaction between Chinese immigrants and the host society may have resulted from discrimination and rejection by mainstream groups.

### ***Child Maltreatment Among Chinese Families***

Data were obtained by reviewing and analyzing 221 active Chinese case files maintained by the Asian Pacific Unit of the Los Angeles County Department

of Children and Family Services (LA-DCFS) from July through September 2001. The 221 maltreatment victims were reported to have experienced a total of 278 abuse incidents. Of the 278 incidents, physical abuse was the most prevalent at 35.3%, followed by neglect (22.3%), emotional abuse (20.5%), substantial risk for abuse (6.8%), caretaker incapacity (5%), sexual abuse (4%), and other (2.2%). Fifty-seven victims had experienced two types of child maltreatment. Of these, 28 victims experienced a combination of physical and emotional abuse, 10 experienced physical abuse and neglect, 5 experienced emotional abuse and neglect, and the rest (14) experienced other combinations of abuse. The gender of the victims was fairly equally distributed: 48.2% male and 51.8 % female. The ages of the children ranged from 1 month to 17 years, with an average of 9.1 years. Slightly over half of the maltreated children preferred English to Chinese, while nearly half chose Chinese as their preferred language.

Approximately half of the victims (50.7%) reportedly suffered moderate, 26.7% experienced mild, and 22.6% experienced severe levels of abuse. With regard to the chronicity of abuse, 36.7% of the victims reportedly experienced repeated/persistent maltreatment, 28.5% an isolated or single episode, and 34.8% sporadic maltreatment. Nearly two thirds of the victims (63.3%) lived with their biological parents at the time of their referral to DCFS. About one third of them lived with either a single parent (25.3%) or a stepparent (8.6%). The great majority of the victims (79.5%) did not have any behavioral problems at the time an abuse report was filed.

**Table 4.1**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Chinese Child Maltreatment Victims**

| Variable   |         | n (%)       |
|--|---------|-------------|
| Gender   | N = 220 |             |
| Male   |         | 106 (48.2%) |
| Female   |         | 114 (51.6%) |
| Age  | N = 219 | Mean = 9.1  |
| 1- 5 years   |         | 56 (25.6%)  |
| 6-10 years   |         | 75 (34.2%)  |
| 11-15 years  |         | 70 (32.0%)  |
| 15-18 years  |         | 18 ( 8.2%)  |
| Type of abuse  | N = 278 |             |
| Physical abuse   |         | 98 (35.3%)  |
| Sexual abuse   |         | 11 ( 3.9%)  |
| Emotional abuse  |         | 57 (20.5%)  |
| Neglect  |         | 62 (22.3%)  |
| Caretaker incapacity   |         | 14 ( 5.0%)  |
| Substantial risk   |         | 30 ( 6.8%)  |
| Other  |         | 6 ( 2.2%)   |
| Severity of abuse  | N = 221 |             |
| Mild   |         | 59 (26.7%)  |
| Moderate   |         | 112 (50.7%) |
| Severe   |         | 50 (22.6%)  |
| Chronicity of abuse  | N = 221 |             |
| Isolated   |         | 63 (28.5%)  |
| Sporadic   |         | 77 (34.8%)  |
| Repeated/persistent  |         | 81 (36.7%)  |
| Language preference  | N = 219 |             |
| Chinese  |         | 98 (44.7%)  |
| English  |         | 117 (53.4%) |
| Preverbal  |         | 4 ( 2.0%)   |
| Children's behavioral problem                                | N = 221 |             |
| Yes  |         | 52 (23.5%)  |
| No   |         | 169 (76.5%) |
| Disability   | N = 221 |             |
| Yes  |         | 44 (19.9%)  |
| No   |         | 177 (80.1%) |
| Living arrangement   | N = 221 |             |
| Live with biological parents                                 |         | 140 (63.3%) |
| Live with single parent                                      |         | 56 (25.3%)  |
| Live with stepfamily   |         | 19 ( 8.6%)  |
| Live with others (e.g., grandparents, relatives, or friends) |         | 6 ( 2.7%)   |

Regarding the victim's relationship to the perpetrator, 40.5% were abused by the biological mother, 30% by the biological father, 16.4% by both biological parents, 6.8% by a sibling, 4.5% by a stepparent, and 1.8% by grandparents. The great majority of the perpetrators (70%) were married, 15% were either separated or divorced, 10.9% were never married, 1.4% were widowed, and 1.8% were cohabitating. The age of the perpetrators ranged from 11-73 years with an average of 39.7 years. The great majority (88.6%) preferred speaking Chinese versus English. In regards to occupational status, slightly over a quarter were unskilled or skilled laborers (26.8%), 24.1% were unemployed, 15.8% were professionals, 13.2% were self-employed, 7.3% were housewives/homemakers, and 7.2% were students. Over half of the perpetrators (54.6%) had lived in the United States for less than 10 years, with an average of 11.5 years.

Nearly 40% of the perpetrators attended or graduated from high school, 30.7% received some college education or graduated from college, 21.7% attended or completed elementary school, and 4.8% had post-baccalaureate education. Over half of the perpetrators received no education in the United States (54.1%) and 15.4% received some education in this country. Education status was unknown for 29.5% of perpetrators. Significant circumstances leading to the child maltreatment incidences included perpetrator's mental illness (24 cases), unemployment (15 cases), poor anger management (14 cases), substance abuse (8 cases), health problems (4 cases), gambling (3 cases), and stress (3 cases).

**Table 4.2**  
**Characteristics of Chinese Child Maltreatment Perpetrators**

| Variable   | Total N | n (%)       |
|--|---------|-------------|
| Perpetrator's relationship to child                | N = 220 |             |
| Father   |         | 66 (30.0%)  |
| Mother   |         | 89 (40.5%)  |
| Both parents                                       |         | 36 (16.4%)  |
| Stepparent   |         | 10 ( 4.5%)  |
| Sibling  |         | 15 ( 6.8%)  |
| Grandparents                                       |         | 4 ( 1.8%)   |
| Age of perpetrator                                 | N = 218 |             |
| 11-20 years  |         | 8 ( 3.6%)   |
| 21-30 years  |         | 10 ( 4.6%)  |
| 31-40 years  |         | 98 (45.0%)  |
| 41-50 years  |         | 87 (39.4%)  |
| 51-60 years  |         | 11 ( 5.0%)  |
| 61 years or older                                  |         | 4 ( 1.8%)   |
| Language preference of perpetrators                | N = 220 |             |
| Chinese  |         | 195 (88.6%) |
| English  |         | 16 ( 7.3%)  |
| Other  |         | 8 ( 4.1%)   |
| Occupation of perpetrators                         | N = 220 |             |
| Skilled or unskilled labor                         |         | 59 (26.8%)  |
| Unemployed   |         | 53 (24.1%)  |
| Professional                                       |         | 35 (15.8%)  |
| Self-employed                                      |         | 29 (13.2%)  |
| Housewife  |         | 16 ( 7.3%)  |
| Student  |         | 7 ( 3.2%)   |
| Other  |         | 21 ( 9.5%)  |
| Length of Residence in the U.S.                    | N = 207 |             |
| 1-10 years   |         | 103 (54.6%) |
| 11-20 years  |         | 85 (41.1%)  |
| 21-30 years  |         | 9 ( 3.4%)   |
| Education of Perpetrators                          | N = 189 |             |
| Elementary school (0-6 years)                      |         | 41 (21.7%)  |
| Middle school (7-9 years)                          |         | 6 ( 3.2%)   |
| High school (10-12 years)                          |         | 75 (39.7%)  |
| College (13-16 years)                              |         | 58 (30.7%)  |
| Graduate or professional school (17 or more years) |         | 9 ( 4.8%)   |
| Education in the U.S.                              | N = 221 |             |
| Yes  |         | 36 (15.4%)  |
| No   |         | 119 (54.1%) |
| Unknown  |         | 67 (29.5%)  |

**Table 4.2**  
**Characteristics of Chinese Child Maltreatment Perpetrators (cont'd)**

| Variable                       | Total N | n (%)       |
|--------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Marital status                 | N = 218 |             |
| Single                         |         | 24 (10.9%)  |
| Married                        |         | 154 (70.0%) |
| Separated or divorced          |         | 33 (15.0%)  |
| Widowed                        |         | 3 ( 1.4%)   |
| Cohabitation                   |         | 4 ( 1.8%)   |
| Circumstances leading to abuse | N = 71  |             |
| Mental illness                 |         | 24 (33.8%)  |
| Unemployment                   |         | 15 (21.1%)  |
| Poor anger management          |         | 14 (19.7%)  |
| Substance abuse                |         | 8 (11.3%)   |
| Health problem                 |         | 4 ( 5.6%)   |
| Gambling                       |         | 3 ( 4.2%)   |
| Stress                         |         | 3 ( 4.3%)   |

Upon report of 221 cases of alleged child maltreatment to DCFS, 152 (68.8%) were classified for an immediate response, 65 (29.4%) were categorized for a 5-day response, and the remaining 4 (1.8%) were categorized as other response. Regarding DCFS disposition following investigation, 73.7% of cases were assigned to family maintenance (victims continue to live in their own homes while perpetrators are removed from their homes or ordered to receive treatment), 17.2% to family reunification (victims are removed from their homes and placed in others' homes), and 9.1% to permanency planning (after failure of an 18-month-long family reunification effort, victims are assigned to permanency planning which includes legal guardianship, long-term foster care, or adoption). The great majority of the children whose abuse allegations were substantiated continued to stay in their parents' homes (73.3%). Of those who were placed out of home, 36.2% were placed in a relative's home (kinship care), 43.1% were

placed in a non-Asian foster home, 15.5% were placed in an Asian foster home, and 1.4% were placed in a group home.

DCFS' decision to place the victims out of home was found to be associated with response status, referral source, and the victim's language preference. Cases with immediate response status were more likely to have out-of-home placement than those with 5-day response status. Children referred to DCFS by the police were more likely to be removed from the home than children referred by teachers. English-speaking victims were more likely to be placed out of home than Chinese-speaking ones. Interestingly, other variables such as type of abuse, severity of the abuse, or chronicity of abuse were not found to be associated with out-of home placement among victims.

**Table 4.3**  
**DCFS Activities for Chinese Children**

| Variable                  | Total N | n (%)       |
|---------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Emergency response status | N = 221 |             |
| Immediate                 |         | 152 (68.8%) |
| 5-day                     |         | 65 (29.4%)  |
| Other                     |         | 4 ( 1.8%)   |
| Disposition               | N = 221 |             |
| Family maintenance        |         | 163 (73.7%) |
| Family reunion            |         | 38 (17.2%)  |
| Permanency planning       |         | 20 ( 9.1%)  |
| Placement type            | N = 220 |             |
| Home with parents         |         | 162 (73.3%) |
| Kinship care              |         | 21 ( 9.5%)  |
| Non-Asian foster care     |         | 25 (11.3%)  |
| Asian foster care         |         | 9 ( 4.1%)   |
| Group home                |         | 3 ( 1.4%)   |

A logistic regression analysis was conducted to determine whether some

selected variables, including gender, age, type of abuse, severity of abuse, chronicity of abuse, emergency response status, and referral source, were significant in predicting DCFS' decision to remove the child from the home. Logistic regression analysis was most appropriate for examining the odds of children being kept in or removed from the home since the dependent variable was categorical with two categories (two types of placement) and multiple independent variables were used.

As shown in Table 4.4 (see Appendixes), regression results revealed that the victim's age and referral source were statistically significant in predicting out-of-home placement, while gender, severity of abuse, and chronicity of abuse did not significantly contribute to the model. Children who were referred by the police were seven times more likely to be placed out of home than those who were referred by teachers.

### ***Suggested Intervention Strategies***

- Bilingual and bicultural Child Protective Services workers
- Extensive case management services—linking families to job assistance programs
- Parenting classes, substance abuse treatment
- Ongoing coordinated services of CPS with mental health services, when perpetrators are mentally ill
- Community education of Chinese families at risk for child maltreatment by ethnic media, CPS, and ethnic community agencies

### ***Group Discussion***

- Discuss how Chinese immigration history differs from other Asian groups.

- Discuss types of abuse and major characteristics of Chinese child maltreatment victims and perpetrators.
- Discuss how patterns of child maltreatment among Chinese immigrants differ from those of other Asian immigrant groups.
- Discuss prevention and intervention strategies toward child neglect and abuse among Chinese immigrants.

### ***Assignment Topics***

- What do you think are significant cultural factors affecting child abuse and neglect among Chinese immigrant families?
- What do you think are significant socio-ecological factors affecting child abuse and neglect among Chinese immigrant families?
- What factors do you think you should consider in providing culturally competent services to Chinese immigrant families involving child abuse and neglect?

## **MODULE V**

### **CHILD ABUSE IN IMMIGRANT KOREAN FAMILIES: CHARACTERISTICS AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

## MODULE V

### ***Note to Instructor***

This module is a combination of lecture, group discussions, and assignments. It introduces immigration history, characteristics and patterns of child maltreatment, and characteristics of victims and perpetrators among Korean immigrants. This module takes approximately 40-50 minutes to complete.

### ***Goals***

Participants will learn about the immigration patterns, adjustment problems, demographic and behavioral characteristics of child maltreatment victims and perpetrators among Korean immigrants, and factors contributing to placement decisions by child protective workers.

### ***Objectives***

At the completion of this module, participants will:

1. Understand the immigration history, adjustment patterns in the U.S., and prevalent mental health and family problems among Korean immigrants.
2. Understand types of child abuse, and socio-demographic and behavioral characteristics of victims and perpetrators.
3. Understand variables contributing to the type of placement made by the child protective system and effective child welfare practice with Korean immigrant families.

## ***Korean Immigrants***

Over the past three decades, the number of Koreans in the United States has dramatically increased from 69,130 in 1970 to 1,076,872 in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003e). Such a phenomenal population growth was due mainly to the 1965 immigration law favoring family reunion. Of the 1.08 million Koreans, 65% were foreign born (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003e). Most of the Korean immigrants typically came as adults and brought their elderly parents and children with them. They settled in metropolitan areas including Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago, and formed ethnic enclaves throughout the nation (Yu et al., 2002). Although Korean immigrants are geographically dispersed across a wide region in the United States, over 30% of this population is concentrated in California, especially in the Los Angeles area.

### **KOREAN IMMIGRANTS**

- **More than one million Koreans in the U.S. in 2000**
- **The post-1965 immigrants are highly educated, urban, with middle-class backgrounds**
- **Downward occupational mobility due to lack of English skills and experience in the U.S.**
- **One third of Korean immigrant households nationwide engage in self-employed labor-intensive small businesses**

Module 5 Slide 1

The post-1965 Korean immigrants were highly educated and many of them came from urban, middle class backgrounds (Kim, 1981). Like other

immigrant Asian groups, nearly 50% of Korean immigrant males received some college education in Korea and more than 70% of them held professional and white-collar occupations before coming to America (Hurh & Kim, 1990; Yu et al., 2002). After immigration, however, about one third of Korean immigrant households nationwide engage in self-employed labor-intensive small businesses such as liquor stores, restaurants, and dry cleaners, often in inner city neighborhoods. In addition, a significant percentage of this population is employed in low-paying, unskilled service sector occupations.

Lack of work experience in America and insufficient English skills make white-collar jobs inaccessible to Korean immigrants despite their advanced educational backgrounds. Language difficulties and unfamiliarity with American culture are identified as the major barriers to finding jobs commensurate with their educational achievements in mainstream American society (Yu et al., 2002). For many Korean immigrants, English remains an almost impossible language to master due to the vast linguistic differences between the two languages. Regionally, Min (1998) found that 45% of Koreans in Los Angeles are self-employed and an additional 30% work for Korean-owned businesses. A critical issue facing Korean immigrants, especially the male head of the household, is the high level of stress and low self-esteem that can result from status inconsistency, extended working hours, and long periods of work without leisure or vacation (Min, 1998).

### ***Child Maltreatment Among Korean Families***

Data were obtained by reviewing and analyzing 170 active Korean case files maintained by the Asian Pacific Unit of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (LA-DCFS) from July through September 2001. The 170 victims were reported to have experienced 214 incidences of maltreatment. Of these, 126 children (74%) were reported to have experienced a single type of maltreatment, while 44 (26%) were reported to have suffered more than one type of maltreatment. Of the 214 maltreatment incidents, the most prevalent type was physical abuse (39%), followed by neglect (25%), emotional abuse (24%), substantial risk for abuse (9%), sexual abuse (2%), sibling abuse (.5%), and other miscellaneous types of maltreatment (1%). Among the 44 victims who experienced two types of abuse, 45% suffered a combination of physical and emotional abuse; 16% physical abuse and neglect; 7% physical abuse and caretaker incapacity; 7% emotional abuse and neglect; and the rest, other combinations of abuse types. Victim gender was fairly equally distributed—50.6% male and 49.4% female. The children's ages ranged from 1 day to 18 years with an average of 9 years. Nearly two thirds of the victims spoke Korean.

**Table 5.1**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Maltreated Korean Children**

| Variable  | Total N | n (%)          |
|---|---------|----------------|
| Gender  | N = 170 |                |
| Male  |         | 84 (49.4%)     |
| Female  |         | 86 (50.6%)     |
| Age   | N = 170 | Mean = 9 years |
| 0-5 years   |         | 44 (25.9%)     |
| 6-10 years  |         | 60 (35.3%)     |
| 11-15 years   |         | 49 (28.8%)     |
| 16-18 years   |         | 17 (10.0%)     |
| Abuse type  | N = 170 |                |
| Physical abuse  |         | 84 (49.4%)     |
| Neglect   |         | 35 (20.6%)     |
| Emotional abuse   |         | 29 (17.1%)     |
| Substantial risk  |         | 19 (11.2%)     |
| Sexual abuse  |         | 3 ( 1.8%)      |
| Language preference of child                                    | N = 170 |                |
| Korean  |         | 108 (63.5%)    |
| English   |         | 55 (32.4%)     |
| Preverbal   |         | 7 ( 4.1%)      |
| Living arrangement  | N = 168 |                |
| Live with biological parents                                    |         | 117 (69.6%)    |
| Live with single parent   |         | 26 (15.5%)     |
| Live with stepfamily  |         | 15 ( 8.9%)     |
| Live with others<br>(e.g., grandparents, relatives, or friends) |         | 10 ( 6.0%)     |
| Severity of abuse   | N = 170 |                |
| Mild  |         | 82 (48.2%)     |
| Moderate  |         | 54 (31.8%)     |
| Severe  |         | 34 (20.0%)     |
| Chronicity of abuse   | N = 170 |                |
| Isolated  |         | 59 (34.7%)     |
| Sporadic  |         | 43 (25.3%)     |
| Repeated/persistent   |         | 68 (40.0%)     |
| Behavioral problem  | N = 170 |                |
| Yes   |         | 44 (25.9%)     |
| No  |         | 126 (74.1%)    |
| Disability  | N = 170 |                |
| Yes   |         | 52 (30.6%)     |
| No  |         | 118 (69.4%)    |

Slightly over half of the victims were reported to have experienced moderate to severe maltreatment (51.8%) and the rest suffered mild levels of abuse (48.2%). With regard to duration of abuse, 40% reportedly experienced repeated/persistent, 34.7% isolated, and 25.3% sporadic maltreatment. Over two thirds of the victims (67.2%) lived with their biological parents, with or without siblings, when they were referred to DCFS. Nearly a quarter of the sample lived with either a single parent (14.1%) or a stepparent (8.8%). The great majority of the victims (74.1%) had no behavioral problems prior to the report of abuse.

The biological father (38.5%) abused a little over one third of the victims, nearly one third by the biological mother (31.4%), and 17.8% by both parents. The perpetrators' ages ranged from 27-74 years (*Average age = 39.9*). About 40% had completed high school, 36% had graduated from college, 14.4% had completed less than middle school, and 8.1% had completed graduate or professional school. The great majority had not received any education in the U.S. (79.2%). Nearly three fourths of the perpetrators were married at the time they were referred to DCFS (73.8%), 14.1% were divorced or separated, 8.9% were single, 1.8% were widowed, and 1.2% were cohabitating. Significant circumstances associated with the maltreatment included excessive discipline involving corporal punishment (33.3%), witnessing spousal domestic violence (29.4%), family problems related to divorce or separation (13.5%), incapacity to provide care (9.5%), language and cultural barriers (7.9%), and parent's mental illness (6.3%).

**Table 5.2**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Perpetrators**

| Variable   | Total (N) | n (%)               |
|--|-----------|---------------------|
| Gender of Perpetrator                              | N = 168   |                     |
| Male   |           | 85 (50.6%)          |
| Female   |           | 83 (49.4%)          |
| Age of Perpetrator                                 | N = 168   | (Mean = 43.7 years) |
| younger than 20 years                              |           | 6 ( 3.6%)           |
| 20-30 years  |           | 8 ( 4.8%)           |
| 31-40 years  |           | 70 (41.7%)          |
| 41-50 years  |           | 78 (46.4%)          |
| older than 50 years                                |           | 6 ( 3.6%)           |
| Perpetrator (victim's relationship to perpetrator) | N = 170   |                     |
| Father   |           | 65 (38.2%)          |
| Mother   |           | 53 (31.2%)          |
| Both parents                                       |           | 30 (17.6%)          |
| Stepfather or stepmother                           |           | 9 ( 5.3%)           |
| Other  |           | 13 ( 7.6%)          |
| Marital status                                     | N = 168   |                     |
| Married  |           | 124 (73.8%)         |
| Separated/divorced/widowed                         |           | 27 (15.9%)          |
| Single   |           | 15 ( 8.9%)          |
| Cohabiting   |           | 2 ( 1.2%)           |
| Length of time in U.S. (Median = 15 years)         | N = 144   |                     |
| 1-10 years   |           | 76 (52.8%)          |
| 11-20 years  |           | 66 (45.8%)          |
| 21-30 years  |           | 2 ( 1.4%)           |
| Education level of perpetrator                     | N = 111   |                     |
| Less than middle school                            |           | 18 (16.2%)          |
| High school  |           | 44 (39.6%)          |
| College  |           | 40 (36.0%)          |
| Graduate/professional school                       |           | 9 ( 8.1%)           |
| Education in U.S.                                  | N = 168   |                     |
| Yes  |           | 21 (12.5%)          |
| No   |           | 77 (45.8%)          |
| Unknown  |           | 70 (41.7%)          |
| Circumstances leading to maltreatment              | N = 126   |                     |
| Excessive discipline                               |           | 42 (33.3%)          |
| Domestic violence                                  |           | 37 (29.4%)          |
| Divorce/separation related family problem          |           | 17 (13.5%)          |
| New immigrant (culture, language difficulty)       |           | 10 ( 7.9%)          |
| Incapable of providing care                        |           | 12 ( 9.5%)          |
| Parent(s) mental illness                           |           | 8 ( 6.3%)           |

Over 46% of the cases were referred by schools, 32.8% by the police, 14.8% by a therapist or counselor, 8.2% by doctors or nurses, 8.2% by a neighbor, and 7.1% by other sources. The great majority of the cases (82.8%) elicited an “immediate response” status when they were referred to DCFS. Upon DCFS’ completion of the investigations, 70.6% of the cases were assigned to family maintenance (victims continue to live in their own homes while perpetrators are removed from their homes or ordered to receive treatment), 22.4% to family reunification (victims are removed from their homes and placed in others’ homes), and 7.1% to permanency planning (after failure of an 18-month-long family reunification effort, victims are assigned to permanency planning including legal guardianship, long-term foster care, or adoption).

**Table 5.3**  
**Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Activities**

| Variable                      | Total (N) | n(%)        |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Referral source               | N = 122   |             |
| School                        |           | 57 (46.7%)  |
| Police                        |           | 40 (32.8%)  |
| Therapist/counselor           |           | 18 (14.8%)  |
| Doctors or nurse              |           | 10 ( 8.2%)  |
| Neighbor                      |           | 10 ( 8.2%)  |
| Other                         |           | 12 ( 7.1%)  |
| Emergency response status     | N = 122   |             |
| Immediate response            |           | 101 (82.8%) |
| 5-day                         |           | 67 (17.2%)  |
| Disposition                   | N = 170   |             |
| Family maintenance            |           | 120 (70.6%) |
| Family reunification          |           | 38 (22.4%)  |
| Permanency planning           |           | 12 ( 7.1%)  |
| Placement type                | N = 170   |             |
| In-home placement             |           | 120 (70.6%) |
| Out-of-home placement         |           | 50 (29.4%)  |
| Type of out-of-home placement | N = 50    |             |
| Kinship                       |           | 16 (32.0%)  |
| Non-Asian foster home         |           | 16 (32.0%)  |
| Group home                    |           | 6 (12.0%)   |
| Asian foster home             |           | 3 ( 6.0%)   |
| Emergency shelter             |           | 3 ( 6.0%)   |
| Unknown                       |           | 6 (12.0%)   |

Of those children who were placed out of home, 32% were placed in their relative's home (kinship care), another 32% were placed in a non-Asian foster home, 12% were placed in a group home, 6% were placed in an Asian foster home, and 6% were placed in an emergency shelter. DCFS' decision to remove a child from the home was found to be associated with severity of maltreatment, chronicity of maltreatment, the abused child's relationship with the perpetrator, emergency response status, and referral source. The more severe and persistent the maltreatment was, the more likely the child was to be placed out of home.

The child with the immediate response status was more likely to be removed from the home than children with other types of response status. The maltreated child was more likely to be kept out of home when the perpetrator was his/her biological mother or stepfather (or mother's boyfriend), when compared to children whose perpetrators were their biological father or both parents. The child who was referred by the police or counselor/therapist was more likely to be removed from home than children referred to DCFS by teachers.

A logistic regression analysis was conducted to determine which independent variables (gender, age, presence of behavioral problem, presence of disability, type of abuse, severity of abuse, chronicity of abuse, response status, and referral source) were predictors of DCFS' decision to remove the child from the home, when controlling for the other independent variables. Logistic regression analysis was most appropriate for examining the odds of children being kept in or removed from the home since the dependent variable was categorical with two categories (two types of placement) and multiple independent variables were used.

As shown in Table 5.4 (see Appendixes), *response status*, *referral source*, *type of abuse*, and *chronicity* were statistically significant in predicting out-of-home placement, while gender, age, presence of disability, and severity of abuse, did not contribute significantly to the model. For example, the children with immediate response status were 13 times more likely to be placed out of home than those with a 5-day response. The children who were referred by the

police were 45 times more likely to be removed from home compared to those referred by teachers. Children who suffered physical abuse were 15 times more likely to be removed from home compared to those who suffered emotional abuse. Also, children who were reported to DCFS at least three times (repeated/persistent abuse) were 19 times more likely to be placed out of home than those who experienced first-time/isolated abuse in the sample.

### ***Suggested Intervention Strategies***

- Bi-lingual and bi-cultural Child Protective Services workers
- Cultural sensitivity toward the parental use of corporal punishment as a childrearing practice and recognition of potential parental resentment of being accused of child maltreatment
- Parenting classes and anger management with emphasis on cultural sensitivity
- Ongoing coordinated services of CPS with wife abuse prevention programs to prevent co-occurring violence toward children and women in the Korean community
- Community education of Korean families at risk for child maltreatment by ethnic media, churches, CPS, and ethnic community agencies

### ***Group Discussion***

- Discuss how the immigration history/patterns of Korean Americans differ from that of other Asian groups.
- Discuss types of abuse and major characteristics of Korean child maltreatment victims and perpetrators
- Discuss how patterns of child maltreatment among Korean immigrants differ from those of other Asian immigrant groups.
- Discuss prevention and intervention strategies toward child neglect and abuse among Korean immigrants.

### ***Assignment Topics***

- What do you think are significant cultural factors affecting child abuse and neglect among Korean immigrant families?
- What do you think are significant socio-ecological factors affecting child abuse and neglect among Korean immigrant families?
- What factors do you think you should consider in providing culturally competent services to Korean immigrant families in situations involving child abuse and neglect?

## **MODULE VI**

### **CHILD ABUSE IN IMMIGRANT VIETNAMESE FAMILIES: CHARACTERISTICS AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

## MODULE VI

### **Note to Instructor**

This module is a combination of lecture, group discussions, and assignments. It introduces immigration history, characteristics and patterns of child maltreatment, and characteristics of victims and perpetrators among Vietnamese immigrants. This module will take approximately 40-50 minutes to complete.

### **Goals**

Participants will learn about the immigration patterns, adjustment problems, demographic and behavioral characteristics of child maltreatment victims and perpetrators among Vietnamese immigrants, and factors contributing to placement decisions by child protective workers.

### **Objectives**

At the completion of this module, participants will:

1. Understand the immigration history, adjustment patterns in the U.S., and prevalent mental health and family problems among Vietnamese immigrants.
2. Understand types of child abuse, and socio-demographic and behavioral characteristics of victims and perpetrators.
3. Understand variables contributing to the type of placement made by the child protective system and effective child welfare practice with Vietnamese immigrant families.

### ***Vietnamese Immigrants***

There were 1,122,528 Vietnamese across the United States in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002). This figure is nearly twice the number of Vietnamese counted in the 1990 census (593,213). Of the total number of Vietnamese in the United States in 2000, approximately 28% were children under the age of 18 years (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002).

There were 447,032 Vietnamese residing in California in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000b). While this figure for just one state accounted for nearly 40% of the entire Vietnamese population in the United States, it actually reflects a decrease from 47% of the total Vietnamese population in California in 1990. Among the entire Vietnamese population in California, almost half (233,573) were concentrated in the Los Angeles and Orange County areas. The next largest number of Vietnamese was found in San Francisco and San Jose (146,613; Pfeifer, 2001).

There was no significant Vietnamese immigrant group in the United States before 1975 except for a small number of students, military officers, and civil servants here for temporary training. Since the end of the Vietnam War in the spring of 1975, unprecedented numbers of Vietnamese have entered the United States as refugees. Refugees are different from voluntary immigrants. Unlike immigrants, refugees are forced to leave their home countries. Most are unprepared for their hasty departure. Due to fear of retaliation by the Communist regime that had triumphed over the South Vietnamese government, many of the

Vietnamese refugees had little or no time to prepare for their escape into a foreign country (Do, 2002; Strand & Jones, 1985).

### **VIETNAMESE AMERICANS**

- **1,122,528 Vietnamese across the United States in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002).**
- **447,032 Vietnamese residing in California in 2000.**
- **Half of them (233,573) are concentrated in the Los Angeles and Orange Counties area**

**(Pfeifer, 2001)**

Module 6 Slide 1

Following the fall of Saigon in 1975, millions of Vietnamese refugees and other Southeast Asians left their native countries and many of them sought refuge in the United States. By the end of the Vietnam War, the U.S. Congress passed the Indochinese Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975 (PL 94-23). Shortly after this law, the U.S. Refugee Act of 1980 (PL 96-212) was signed into law by President Carter to assist the process of resettlement through various federal programs coordinated by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (Rutledge, 1992; Segal, 2000). Many Americans felt partially responsible for the refugees' plight and readily coordinated their efforts to assist the refugees in resettlement.

The Vietnamese influx occurred in two waves: the first wave covered the period from April 1975 to early 1978, and the second wave from late 1978 to the present. The first wave of Vietnamese refugees consisted mostly of individuals who had a predominantly middle-class background with a high level of

educational attainment in South Vietnam. Then, new political upheavals and a deteriorating economy triggered a second and more massive exodus of Vietnamese refugees. Whether they escaped by sea (boat people) or by land across the jungle, these refugees endured many hardships as they left their homeland. Their lives were often at risk from starvation and pirate attacks.

Several characteristics distinguish second wave refugees from first wave. The second wave group was generally younger, less educated, and much less able to speak English than the first wave. A large percentage of them were farmers and fishermen in their homelands. Unlike the first cohort, most of the second and subsequent groups of Vietnamese refugees came from rural backgrounds, and their levels of education, literacy, and transferable job skills were significantly lower (Strand & Jones, 1985). Despite various U.S. resettlement programs designed to promote speedy economic self-sufficiency for Vietnamese refugees, many have experienced significant difficulties adjusting to life in the competitive, fast-paced, high technology environment of the United States. The extremely hazardous and degrading experiences undergone by most later-migrating Vietnamese refugees increased their risk for developing mental health problems such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), major depression, and adjustment disorder, as well as various other psychosomatic ailments such as general fatigue and weakness, stomach pain, and headaches (Montero, 1979; Segal, 2000).

## IMMIGRATION PATTERNS OF VIETNAMESE AMERICANS

- **First wave refugees came from April 1975 to early 1978; predominantly middle-class background with a high level of educational attainment in South Vietnam.**
- **Second wave cohorts came from late 1978 to the present and were generally younger, less educated, and much less able to speak English than the first wave. Significant adjustment difficulties in United States.**
- **Increased risk for developing mental health problems such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, major depression, adjustment disorder, and various other psychosomatic ailments.**

Module 6 Slide 2

### ***Child Maltreatment Among Vietnamese Families***

Among the cases reviewed in our 2004 study, a total of 124 Vietnamese victims were reported to have experienced 170 occurrences of maltreatment. Of these, 78 children (62.9%) were reported to have experienced a single type of maltreatment, while 46 children (37.1%) were reported to have suffered more than one type. Of the 170 incidents, the most prevalent type of maltreatment was physical abuse (39.4%, n = 67), followed by neglect (20.6%, n = 35), emotional abuse (15.3%, n = 26), substantial risk for abuse (11.8%, n = 20), sexual abuse (9.4%, n = 16), and caretaker incapacity/absence (3.5%, n = 6). Table 6.1 describes the demographic information for the Vietnamese victims. Among the 46 victims who experienced two types of abuse, 37% suffered a combination of physical and emotional abuse, 26.1% physical abuse and neglect, 17.4% neglect and sexual abuse, and the rest, other combinations of abuse types. The gender

of the victims was fairly equally distributed: 47.5% male and 52.5% female. The age of the abused children ranged from less than a year to 16 years with an average of 8.8 years. Over a third of the victims were ages 6-10 (39.3%), 27% were from ages 0-5, 21.3% were from ages 11-15, and 12.3% were from the 16-18 age group. English was the preferred language of approximately half of the children (49.2%), followed by Vietnamese (36.9%).

The great majority of the victims (78.7%) did not have any reported behavioral problems (78.7%) at the time an abuse report was filed. Approximately one fifth of the children were reported as having a wide range of behavioral problems including defiance, aggressiveness, poor impulse control, substance abuse, self-mutilation, and gang affiliation. With regard to the severity of abuse, over half of the victims were reported to have experienced moderate to severe maltreatment (20.5% and 38.5% respectively), and the rest were found to have suffered mild levels of abuse (41.0%). With regard to the chronicity of abuse, more than half of abuse victims reportedly experienced repeated/persistent maltreatment (53.3%), as compared to isolated incidents (28.7%) and sporadic episodes of abuse (18.7%). Eighteen percent of the victims had a prior history of abuse. Over half of the victims (56.5%) lived with their biological parents at the time they were referred to DCFS. About one third lived with a single parent (33.1%) and 10.5% lived with stepparents, grandparents, relatives, or others.

**Table 6.1**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Vietnamese Child Maltreatment Victims**

| Variable   | Total N | n (%)                  |
|--|---------|------------------------|
| Gender   | N = 122 |                        |
| Male   |         | 58 (47.5%)             |
| Female   |         | 64 (52.5%)             |
| Age  | N = 122 | Mean=8.8 years; SD=4.8 |
| 1-5 years  |         | 33 (27.0%)             |
| 6-10 years   |         | 48 (39.3%)             |
| 11-15 years  |         | 26 (21.3%)             |
| 16-18 years  |         | 15 (12.3%)             |
| Language preference of child                                 | N = 122 |                        |
| Vietnamese   |         | 45 (36.9%)             |
| English  |         | 60 (49.2%)             |
| Preverbal  |         | 15 (12.3%)             |
| Chinese  |         | 2 ( 1.6%)              |
| Abuse type   | N = 170 |                        |
| Physical abuse   |         | 67 (39.4%)             |
| Emotional abuse  |         | 26 (15.3%)             |
| Neglect  |         | 35 (20.6%)             |
| Sexual abuse   |         | 16 ( 9.4%)             |
| Substantial risk for abuse                                   |         | 20 (11.6%)             |
| Caretaker incapacity/absence                                 |         | 6 ( 3.5%)              |
| Severity of abuse  | N = 122 |                        |
| Mild   |         | 50 (41.0%)             |
| Moderate   |         | 25 (20.5%)             |
| Severe   |         | 47 (38.5%)             |
| Chronicity of Abuse  | N = 122 |                        |
| Isolated   |         | 35 (28.7%)             |
| Sporadic   |         | 22 (18.0%)             |
| Repeated/persistent  |         | 65 (53.3%)             |
| Children's behavioral problem                                | N = 122 |                        |
| Yes  |         | 26 (21.3%)             |
| No   |         | 96 (78.7%)             |
| Living arrangement   | N = 124 |                        |
| Live with biological parents                                 |         | 70 (56.5%)             |
| Live with single parent                                      |         | 41 (33.1%)             |
| Live with stepfamily   |         | 4 ( 3.2%)              |
| Live with others (e.g., grandparents, relatives, or friends) |         | 9 ( 7.3%)              |

The characteristics of the primary perpetrator are described in Table 6.2. A little over half (53.3%) of the respondents indicated they were married, 17.2%

reported being separated, and 15.7% reported being single. Nearly half of the respondents (47.5%) reported their religion as Buddhism, 22.1% as Catholicism, and nearly a quarter (24.6%) did not specify a religion. The majority (86.1%) reported Vietnamese as their language of choice, with 3.3% selecting Chinese. The vast majority (91.8%) reported their ethnicity as Vietnamese. Overall, 61.5% of the perpetrators were male and 38.0% were female. Close to half (48.3%) reported being unemployed, 16.4% reported being skilled laborers, and 11.5% reported being unskilled laborers. Table 6.2 provides a more comprehensive view of the perpetrators' occupations.

The mean age of the perpetrators was 39 years, with a range from 10-69 years. The mean number of years that the perpetrator had been in the United States was approximately 13, with the longest residence being 22 years and the shortest being 1 year. The mean for the perpetrators' level of education in Vietnam was 7.25 years. The mean for the educational history in the U.S. was 2.33 years, with a range of 1-3 years.

Mothers were the most likely to commit abuse against children (36.9%) with fathers second at 30.3%. Abuse by both biological parents was the third most frequent category (20.5%).

**Table 6.2**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Vietnamese**  
**Child Maltreatment Perpetrators**

| Variable  | Total N | n (%)                   |
|---|---------|-------------------------|
| Age of perpetrator                                | N = 105 | Mean=39.4 years; SD=4.5 |
| Younger than 20 years                             |         | 3 ( 2.9%)               |
| 21-30 years                                       |         | 14 (13.3%)              |
| 31-40 years                                       |         | 38 (36.2%)              |
| 41-50 years                                       |         | 46 (43.8%)              |
| Older than 50 years                               |         | 4 ( 3.9%)               |
| Victim's relationship to perpetrator              | N = 122 |                         |
| Father  |         | 37 (30.3%)              |
| Mother  |         | 45 (36.9%)              |
| Both parents                                      |         | 25 (20.5%)              |
| Stepfather  |         | 4 ( 3.3%)               |
| Sibling   |         | 3 ( 2.5%)               |
| Other (e.g., relative, boyfriend, guardian, etc.) |         | 8 ( 6.6%)               |
| Occupation of perpetrator                         | N = 121 |                         |
| Unskilled laborer                                 |         | 14 (11.5%)              |
| Skilled laborer                                   |         | 20 (16.4%)              |
| Self-employed                                     |         | 2 ( 1.6%)               |
| Clerk   |         | 3 ( 2.5%)               |
| Professional                                      |         | 7 ( 5.7%)               |
| Unemployed  |         | 59 (48.3%)              |
| Student   |         | 3 ( 2.5%)               |
| Unknown   |         | 13 (10.7%)              |
| Length of time in the U.S.                        | N = 109 | Mean=13.0 years; SD=6.0 |
| 1-10 years  |         | 41 (37.6%)              |
| 11-20 years                                       |         | 47 (43.1%)              |
| 21-30 years                                       |         | 21 (19.3%)              |
| Education   | N = 83  | Mean=7.3 Years; SD=6.1  |
| Less than middle school                           |         | 41 (49.4%)              |
| High school                                       |         | 30 (36.1%)              |
| College   |         | 12 (14.5%)              |
| Education in the U.S.                             | N = 77  | Mean=2.3; SD=0.6        |
| Yes   |         | 8 (10.4%)               |
| No  |         | 69 (89.6%)              |
| Marital status                                    | N = 121 |                         |
| Single  |         | 19 (15.6%)              |
| Married   |         | 65 (53.3%)              |
| Separated/divorced                                |         | 34 (27.9%)              |
| Cohabitation                                      |         | 3 ( 2.5%)               |

**Table 6.2**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Vietnamese**  
**Child Maltreatment Perpetrators (cont'd)**

| Variable                                  | Total N | n (%)      |
|---|---------|------------|
| Circumstances leading to maltreatment     | N = 65  |            |
| Alcoholism/substance abuse                |         | 18 (27.7%) |
| Divorce/separation related family problem |         | 1 ( 1.5%)  |
| Incapable of providing care               |         | 4 ( 6.2%)  |
| Parent(s) mental illness                  |         | 14 (21.5%) |
| Other                                     |         | 28 (43.1%) |

Table 6.3 provides information regarding DCFS involvement in the cases. Schools made the most referrals (45.9%), followed by the police (20.5%). Unspecified mandated reporters and mental health professionals both made 8.2% of the referrals. There are three different case dispositions considered by DCFS CPS workers for each victim of abuse—family maintenance, family reunification, and permanency planning. In this study, 75.4% of the victims were assigned to family maintenance. When a child victim is assigned to family maintenance, he or she is not removed from the home at any point during the investigation of alleged abuse. The family will frequently agree to accept certain services recommended by the caseworker, thus the case never goes to court. In some cases, court jurisdiction is involved to monitor the safety of the children remaining at home until the case can be closed.

Family reunification services involve the children being removed from home to either a relative's care or foster care, with the expectation of being returned home after the parents complete the services mandated by the court (e.g., parenting classes, anger management classes). Over 21% of the children

were assigned to family reunification services. Four children were assigned to permanency planning. After an 18-month-long family reunification effort failed, victims were assigned to permanency planning, which involved legal guardianship, long-term foster care, or adoption.

DCFS also offered various types of placement for the victim. The majority of the children (76.2%) remained at home with their parents. Of those who were placed out of home, 45.2% were placed in a relative's home (kinship care); 29% were placed in a non-Asian foster home; 22.6% were placed in an Asian foster home; and 3.2% were placed in a group home. DCFS' decision to remove the child from the home was found to be associated with the severity of maltreatment, chronicity of maltreatment, type of abuse, and referral source. The more severe and persistent the maltreatment was, the more likely the child was to be placed out of home. The child who was sexually abused or neglected was more likely to be kept out of the home, when compared to children who were physically or emotionally abused. A child who was referred by the police was more likely to be removed from the home than a child referred to DCFS by teachers. Although the relationship between a placement decision and the abused child's relationship with the perpetrator was statistically insignificant, a maltreated child was more likely to remain at home when the perpetrator was a parent and to be removed from the home when the perpetrator was a stepparent.

**Table 6.3**  
**DCFS Actions in Cases Involving Vietnamese Children**

| Variable                                       | Total N | n (%)      |
|--|---------|------------|
| Referral source                                | N = 122 |            |
| School   |         | 56 (45.9%) |
| Police   |         | 25 (20.5%) |
| Therapist/counselor                            |         | 10 ( 8.2%) |
| Other professionals                            |         | 14 (11.5%) |
| Doctor or nurse                                |         | 3 ( 2.5%)  |
| Other (e.g., parent, family friend, anonymous) |         | 14 (11.5%) |
| Emergency response status                      | N = 124 |            |
| Immediate response                             |         | 75 (60.5%) |
| 5-day  |         | 47 (37.9%) |
| Other  |         | 2 ( 1.6%)  |
| Disposition                                    | N = 122 |            |
| Family maintenance                             |         | 92 (75.4%) |
| Family reunification                           |         | 26 (21.3%) |
| Permanency planning                            |         | 4 ( 3.3%)  |
| Placement type                                 | N = 122 |            |
| Home with parents                              |         | 93 (76.2%) |
| Kinship care                                   |         | 14 (11.5%) |
| Asian foster home                              |         | 7 ( 5.7%)  |
| Non-Asian foster home                          |         | 7 ( 5.7%)  |
| Group home                                     |         | 1 ( 0.8%)  |

A logistic regression analysis was conducted to determine whether some selected variables including the victim's gender, age, type of abuse, severity of abuse, duration of abuse, emergency response status, and referral source were significant in predicting DCFS' decision to remove the child from the home. Logistic regression analysis was most appropriate for examining the odds of children being kept in or removed from the home since the dependent variable was categorical with two categories (two types of placement) and multiple independent variables were used.

As shown in Table 6.4 (see Appendixes), regression results revealed that referral source, type of abuse, and the presence of a disability were significant in predicting out-of-home placement, while gender, severity of abuse, chronicity of abuse, and emergency response status did not significantly contribute to the model. For example, children who were referred by the police or medical doctors were 62 times more likely to be removed from the home compared to those referred by teachers. The children who suffered sexual abuse were 25 times more likely to be removed from the home compared to those who suffered emotional abuse. Children who had disabilities, such as developmental delay or attention deficit, were 9 times more likely to be placed out of home than those who had no disability.

### ***Suggested Intervention Strategies***

- Bi-lingual and bi-cultural Child Protective Services workers
- Cultural sensitivity toward the parental use of corporal punishment as a child rearing practice and recognize resentment of being accused of child maltreatment
- Parenting and anger management classes with emphasis on cultural sensitivity
- Ongoing coordinated services of CPS with wife abuse prevention programs to prevent co-occurring violence toward children and women in the Vietnamese community
- Community education of Vietnamese families at risk for child maltreatment by ethnic media, CPS, and ethnic community agencies

### ***Group Discussion***

- Discuss how the immigration history/patterns of Vietnamese Americans differs from that of other Asian groups.
- Discuss types of abuse and major characteristics of Vietnamese child maltreatment victims and perpetrators.
- Discuss how patterns of child maltreatment among Vietnamese immigrants differ from those of other Asian immigrant groups.
- Discuss prevention and intervention strategies toward child neglect and abuse among Vietnamese immigrants.

### ***Assignment Topics***

- What do you think are significant cultural factors affecting child abuse and neglect among Vietnamese immigrant families?
- What do you think are significant socio-ecological factors affecting child abuse and neglect among Vietnamese immigrant families?
- What factors do you think you should consider in providing culturally competent services to Vietnamese immigrant families in situations of child abuse and neglect?

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## APPENDIXES

**Table 2.4**  
**Logistic Regression Results on**  
**Out-of-Home Placement for Asian Pacific Children**

| Variable             | Logit Coefficient | SE   | P    | Odds Ratio |
|----------------------|-------------------|------|------|------------|
| Age                  | .006              | .013 | .648 | 1.006      |
| Gender               |                   |      |      |            |
| Male                 |                   |      |      | _____      |
| Female               | .198              | .186 | .285 | 1.219      |
| Behavior Problem     |                   |      |      |            |
| No                   |                   |      |      | _____      |
| Yes                  | -.061             | .253 | .809 | 1.242      |
| Disability           |                   |      |      |            |
| No                   |                   |      |      | _____      |
| Yes                  | .602              | .249 | .016 | 1.826      |
| Emergency status     |                   |      |      |            |
| 5-day response       |                   |      |      | _____      |
| Immediate response   | .421              | .207 | .042 | 1.523      |
| Referral source      |                   |      |      |            |
| School               |                   |      |      | _____      |
| Medical doctor/nurse | 1.629             | .387 | .000 | 5.097      |
| Police               | 1.782             | .246 | .000 | 5.943      |
| Neighbor             | .733              | .437 | .093 | 2.082      |
| Counselor/therapist  | 1.038             | .367 | .005 | 2.825      |
| Other                | 1.652             | .276 | .000 | 5.219      |
| Abuse type           |                   |      |      |            |
| Emotional abuse      |                   |      |      | _____      |
| Physical abuse       | .681              | .337 | .043 | 1.976      |
| Sexual abuse         | .208              | .545 | .703 | 1.231      |
| Neglect              | .595              | .342 | .082 | 1.812      |
| Substantial risk     | .215              | .392 | .584 | 1.240      |
| Severity of abuse    |                   |      |      |            |
| Mild                 |                   |      |      | _____      |
| Moderate             | .217              | .254 | .392 | 1.242      |
| Severe               | .256              | .266 | .336 | 1.291      |
| Chronicity of Abuse  |                   |      |      |            |
| Isolated             |                   |      |      | _____      |
| Sporadic             | .477              | .302 | .115 | 1.610      |
| Repeated/persistent  | .807              | .278 | .004 | 2.242      |

**Table 3.4**  
**Logistic Regression Results on**  
**Out-of-Home Placement for Cambodian Children**

| Variable              | Logit Coefficient | SE     | P    | Odds ratio |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------|------|------------|
| Age                   | -.069             | .041   | .094 | .933       |
| Gender                |                   |        |      |            |
| Male                  |                   |        |      |            |
| Female                | .348              | .358   | .331 | 1.417      |
| Behavioral problem    |                   |        |      |            |
| No                    |                   |        |      |            |
| Yes                   | -.753             | .622   | .226 | .471       |
| Disability            |                   |        |      |            |
| No                    |                   |        |      |            |
| Yes                   | .148              | .612   | .809 | 1.159      |
| Emergency status      |                   |        |      |            |
| 5-day response        |                   |        |      |            |
| Immediate response    | -.973             | .441   | .027 | .378       |
| Referral source       |                   |        |      |            |
| School                |                   |        |      |            |
| Medical doctors/nurse | 2.200             | .693   | .001 | 9.029      |
| Police                | 2.174             | .601   | .000 | 8.794      |
| Neighbor              | 1.183             | .639   | .064 | 3.264      |
| Counselor/therapist   | .328              | 1.196  | .784 | 1.388      |
| Other                 | -7.617            | 14.868 | .608 | .000       |
| Abuse type            |                   |        |      |            |
| Emotional abuse       |                   |        |      |            |
| Physical abuse        | 1.034             | .975   | .289 | 2.811      |
| Sexual abuse          | -1.531            | 1.496  | .306 | .216       |
| Neglect               | -.293             | .969   | .763 | .746       |
| Substantial risk      | -.412             | .981   | .177 | .662       |
| Severity of abuse     |                   |        |      |            |
| Mild                  |                   |        |      |            |
| Moderate              | -.589             | .503   | .241 | .555       |
| Severe                | -.751             | .532   | .158 | .472       |
| Chronicity of abuse   |                   |        |      |            |
| Isolated              |                   |        |      |            |
| Sporadic              | -.507             | .740   | .493 | .602       |
| Repeated/persistent   | .283              | .604   | .639 | 1.327      |

**Table 4.4**  
**Logistic Regression Results on**  
**Out-of-Home Placement for Chinese Children**

| Variable              | Logit Coefficient | SE     | P    | Odds ratio |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------|------|------------|
| Age                   | .122              | .049   | .012 | 1.129      |
| Gender                |                   |        |      |            |
| Male                  |                   |        |      | _____      |
| Female                | -.219             | .411   | .593 | .803       |
| Behavioral problem    |                   |        |      |            |
| No                    |                   |        |      | _____      |
| Yes                   | -.936             | .535   | .080 | .392       |
| Disability            |                   |        |      |            |
| No                    |                   |        |      | _____      |
| Yes                   | .767              | .530   | .148 | 2.154      |
| Emergency status      |                   |        |      |            |
| 5-day response        |                   |        |      | _____      |
| Immediate response    | .900              | .479   | .060 | 2.460      |
| Referral source       |                   |        |      |            |
| School                |                   |        |      | _____      |
| Medical doctors/nurse | -5.734            | 19.510 | .769 | .003       |
| Police                | 1.940             | .519   | .000 | 6.957      |
| Neighbor              | -5.832            | 42.697 | .891 | 0.003      |
| Counselor/therapist   | .064              | .817   | .937 | 1.066      |
| Other                 | 3.181             | .597   | .000 | 24.067     |
| Abuse type            |                   |        |      |            |
| Emotional abuse       |                   |        |      | _____      |
| Physical abuse        | -.973             | .584   | .096 | .378       |
| Sexual abuse          | -1.468            | 1.248  | .240 | .240       |
| Neglect               | -.184             | .899   | .767 | .832       |
| Substantial risk      | -2.332            | .878   | .008 | .097       |
| Severity of abuse     |                   |        |      |            |
| Mild                  |                   |        |      | _____      |
| Moderate              | .596              | .633   | .347 | 1.814      |
| Severe                | .544              | .668   | .416 | 1.723      |
| Chronicity of abuse   |                   |        |      |            |
| Isolated              |                   |        |      | _____      |
| Sporadic              | -.216             | .652   | .741 | .806       |
| Repeated/persistent   | -.137             | .546   | .802 | .872       |

**Table 5.4**  
**Logistic Regression Results on**  
**Out-of-Home Placement for Korean Children**

| Variable              | Logit Coefficient | SE    | P    | Odds ratio |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------|------|------------|
| Age                   | .031              | .057  | .581 | 1.032      |
| Gender                |                   |       |      |            |
| Male                  |                   |       |      | 1.914      |
| Female                | .649              | .511  | .204 | 1.914      |
| Behavioral problem    |                   |       |      |            |
| No                    |                   |       |      | 2.139      |
| Yes                   | .760              | .665  | .254 | 2.139      |
| Disability            |                   |       |      |            |
| No                    |                   |       |      | 1.251      |
| Yes                   | .224              | .638  | .726 | 1.251      |
| Emergency status      |                   |       |      |            |
| 5-day response        |                   |       |      | 13.303     |
| Immediate response    | 2.588             | .631  | .000 | 13.303     |
| Referral source       |                   |       |      |            |
| School                |                   |       |      | 2.717      |
| Medical doctors/nurse | 1.000             | 1.095 | .361 | 2.717      |
| Police                | 3.818             | .831  | .000 | 45.501     |
| Neighbor              | 1.847             | 1.285 | .150 | 6.343      |
| Counselor/therapist   | 2.823             | .924  | .002 | 18.831     |
| Other                 | 2.914             | .790  | .000 | 18.438     |
| Abuse type            |                   |       |      |            |
| Emotional abuse       |                   |       |      | 15.010     |
| Physical abuse        | 2.790             | .931  | .004 | 15.010     |
| Neglect               | 1.762             | .899  | .050 | 5.827      |
| Substantial risk      | 2.170             | 1.098 | .048 | 8.758      |
| Severity of abuse     |                   |       |      |            |
| Mild                  |                   |       |      | 1.677      |
| Moderate              | .511              | .728  | .483 | 1.677      |
| Severe                | .364              | .777  | .638 | 1.440      |
| Chronicity of abuse   |                   |       |      |            |
| Isolated              |                   |       |      | 7.740      |
| Sporadic              | 2.046             | .849  | .016 | 7.740      |
| Repeated/persistent   | 2.965             | .846  | .000 | 19.404     |

**Table 6.4**  
**Logistic Regression Results on**  
**Out-of-Home Placement for Vietnamese Children**

| Variable                         | Logit Coefficient | SE    | P    | Odds ratio |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------|------|------------|
| Age                              | .154              | .090  | .088 | 1.166      |
| Gender                           |                   |       |      |            |
| Male                             |                   |       |      | _____      |
| Female                           | -.235             | .710  | .741 | .791       |
| Behavioral problem               |                   |       |      |            |
| No                               |                   |       |      | _____      |
| Yes                              | .949              | 1.214 | .434 | 2.584      |
| Disability                       |                   |       |      |            |
| No                               |                   |       |      | _____      |
| Yes                              | 2.240             | 1.084 | .039 | 9.397      |
| Emergency status                 |                   |       |      |            |
| 5-day response                   |                   |       |      | _____      |
| Immediate response               | -.528             | .986  | .592 | .590       |
| Referral source                  |                   |       |      |            |
| School                           |                   |       |      | _____      |
| Doctor/nurse/police              | 4.124             | 1.176 | .000 | 61.827     |
| Counselor/therapist              | 3.262             | 1.304 | .012 | 26.098     |
| Other                            | 1.601             | 1.116 | .152 | 4.956      |
| Abuse type                       |                   |       |      |            |
| Emotional abuse/substantial risk |                   |       |      | _____      |
| Physical abuse                   | 1.045             | 1.326 | .431 | 2.844      |
| Sexual abuse                     | 3.217             | 1.802 | .074 | 24.958     |
| Neglect                          | 1.504             | 1.412 | .287 | 4.501      |
| Severity of abuse                |                   |       |      |            |
| Mild                             |                   |       |      | _____      |
| Moderate                         | 1.723             | 1.218 | .157 | 5.602      |
| Severe                           | 2.081             | 1.221 | .088 | 8.013      |
| Chronicity of abuse              |                   |       |      |            |
| Isolated                         |                   |       |      | _____      |
| Sporadic                         | -.173             | 1.479 | .907 | .841       |
| Repeated/persistent              | 1.612             | 1.478 | .275 | 5.014      |