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A PROPOSAL FOR SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME PREVENTION PROGRAMS: DO MORE PLAYERS SUCH AS NEUROPSYCHOLOGISTS AND NEUROSURGEONS NEED TO COLLABORATE IN ORDER TO PREVENT THIS PHENOMENON?

Vaitsa Giannouli, Nikolaos Syrmos

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

E-mail: giannouliv@hotmail.com

According to the literature, abusive head injuries in infants and children are considered of utmost importance worldwide as they are the major cause of severe morbidity and mortality by head trauma especially in infants (Vinchon, 2022; Vinchon, & Di Rocco, 2022a), but unfortunately even today in many countries, the prevention of such cases is approached as something complex and fuzzy.

In a recent publication the results of the implementation of a shaken baby syndrome prevention program conducted solely by nurses in Turkey is found to have a positive impact (Kaya et al., 2022). But what can healthcare professionals, other than nurses, do in order to contribute to this initiative? Increasing mothers' awareness and knowledge of shaken baby syndrome by the healthcare professionals, who are closer to them, such as nurses, could be a starting point. A basic point for further consideration should also be the education-training-awareness of healthcare professionals of all specialties regarding the clinical features, and the organization by multidisciplinary teams including two groups of specific interest; pediatric neuropsychologists and pediatric neurosurgeons of outreach programs, aiming to those who may or may not play the role of perpetrators (that is the parents).

More specifically, these two groups (neuropsychologists and neurosurgeons) are of extreme importance for such intervention programs, as they are those professionals who specialize on the dangers of specific parent behaviors-actions on infant-child brain/physical health, as well as on the cognitive and psychological consequences of parents' behaviors. Thus, these professionals are those who know firsthand what information is crucial to be given to parents (current and/or future) through education programs, and can target, for example, at parents of newborn infants and how they may better understand how anger management and other violent behaviors (intentional and/or unintentional) can have medical and psychological consequences both for their children and themselves. Especially, parents have to understand how learning and behavior are related to brain development, and how the normal course of this development is affected by what they do or what they do not do.

Although pediatric neurosurgeons have been found to have homogeneous attitudes regarding surgical, intensive care, and legal management of such cases (Vinchon, & Di Rocco, 2022b), we still know little about what laypeople believe and know in different cultural contexts. In addition to that, we must keep in mind that such campaigns must not only focus on the dissemination of scientific

knowledge, as information is not all that matters in healthcare (Giannouli et al., 2017), but to put a double aim, that is a) to plan strategies for prevention and early intervention in order to support families that are at risk of domestic violence (taking the form of infant/child abuse and neglect), but before that b) to examine, clarify and (if needed) change the widely held attitudes, views and behaviors with respect to the above issues, so we can aim at them in a more tailored way (Dias et al., 2005).

Thus, a strong commitment to preventing abusive head injuries needs both a global and a local perspective by all involved healthcare professionals. We recommend that prevention of abusive head injuries should entail: 1) Information on the risks of violent behavior on a baby, 2) Targeted campaigns when risk factors for domestic violence are identified, and 3) Disseminating knowledge about the developmental impact of violent behavior by a “tailored approach” adapted to the public’s knowledge and beliefs. Although the huge task of widespread prevention and the restricted manpower available can be bridged by educating nurses to run such programs, this is a naïve solution. Our approach must be based not only on up-to-date knowledge disseminated by groups of experts, but also on the real diverse beliefs and needs about these issues in each country as these may act as impediments with varying implications on our race for the prevention of abusive head injuries.

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Vaitsa Giannouli
(Corresponding author)

PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, School of Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 54124 Thessaloniki, Greece.

E-mail: giannouliv@hotmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2176-8986>

Nikolaos Syrmos

PhD, School of Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 54124 Thessaloniki, Greece.

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6703-8095>