

Living in the Fire: The impacts of Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA) on Caregivers of Children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

Anita Gibbs¹

¹*School of Social Sciences, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.*

Presenter's email: *anita.gibbs@otago.ac.nz*

Introduction: Child and adolescent to parent violence and abuse (CAPVA), refers to abuse and violent behaviours by children towards their primary caregivers. CAPVA can include a full range of physical, emotional, verbal, financial and material actions over long time periods. Little research has been undertaken exploring the impacts of CAPVA on caregivers of children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

Method: Fifty-eight caregivers were interviewed using semi-structured interviews to explore the extent and impacts of CAPVA on their health and well-being. Interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed using inductive, deductive and thematic analysis procedures.

Key Findings: Over half of caregivers (55%) identified problematic levels and impacts of CAPVA, including physical violence and frequent emotional abuse. Health and stress issues were mentioned by all caregivers. Caregivers also identified how a lack of understanding from caring professionals led to feelings of shame and isolation. Caregivers were able to implement some strategies of de-escalation and distraction. Caregivers wanted to see changes where CAPVA is acknowledged, training is provided and FASD services are funded.

Discussions and Conclusions: CAPVA is a significant and frequent issue for caregivers of children who have FASD. CAPVA impacts caregivers' well-being, health and finances. Practitioners can demonstrate empathy and increased support by believing caregivers and by making efforts to secure more than superficial help for families.

Implications for Practice or Policy: Currently CAPVA is underacknowledged and few practitioners have the knowledge or skills to offer families assistance in New Zealand. This can change through recognition of the extent of this form of family violence, and provision of resources to fund specialist training, and the development of specialist interventions.

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