

Mental Health Correlates of Dating Violence Among Young Women Involved with the Juvenile Justice System

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Background

- There has been a steady increase in the proportion of girls detained or placed on probation in juvenile justice settings¹

- Girls involved with the juvenile justice system experience high rates of violence within dating relationships²

- While previous studies demonstrate that dating violence is associated with negative mental health outcomes, potentially confounding factors such as parental abuse, substance abuse, and other psychological risk factors have not been controlled

Methods

- A sample of 305 girls aged 13-17 involved with two juvenile systems in Nevada completed an interview using the Audio Computer Assisted Self Interview (ACASI)

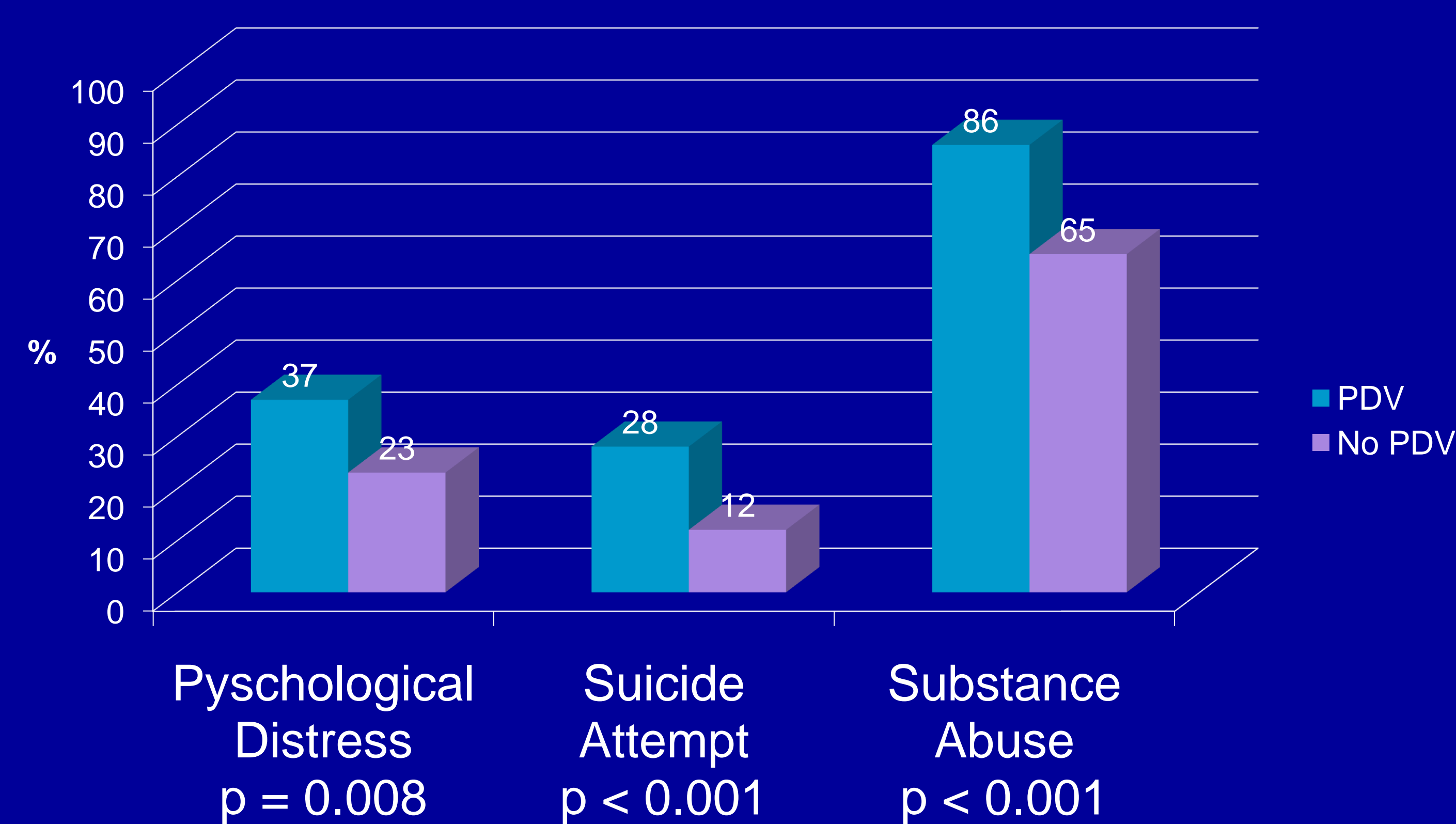
- The ACASI interview contained standardized measures of dating violence (YRBS), parental abuse (Add Health, Wave III), psychological distress (BSI-18), substance abuse (CRAFFT)

- Multiple logistic regression was used to assess whether dating violence (physical and mental) is independently associated with mental health outcomes

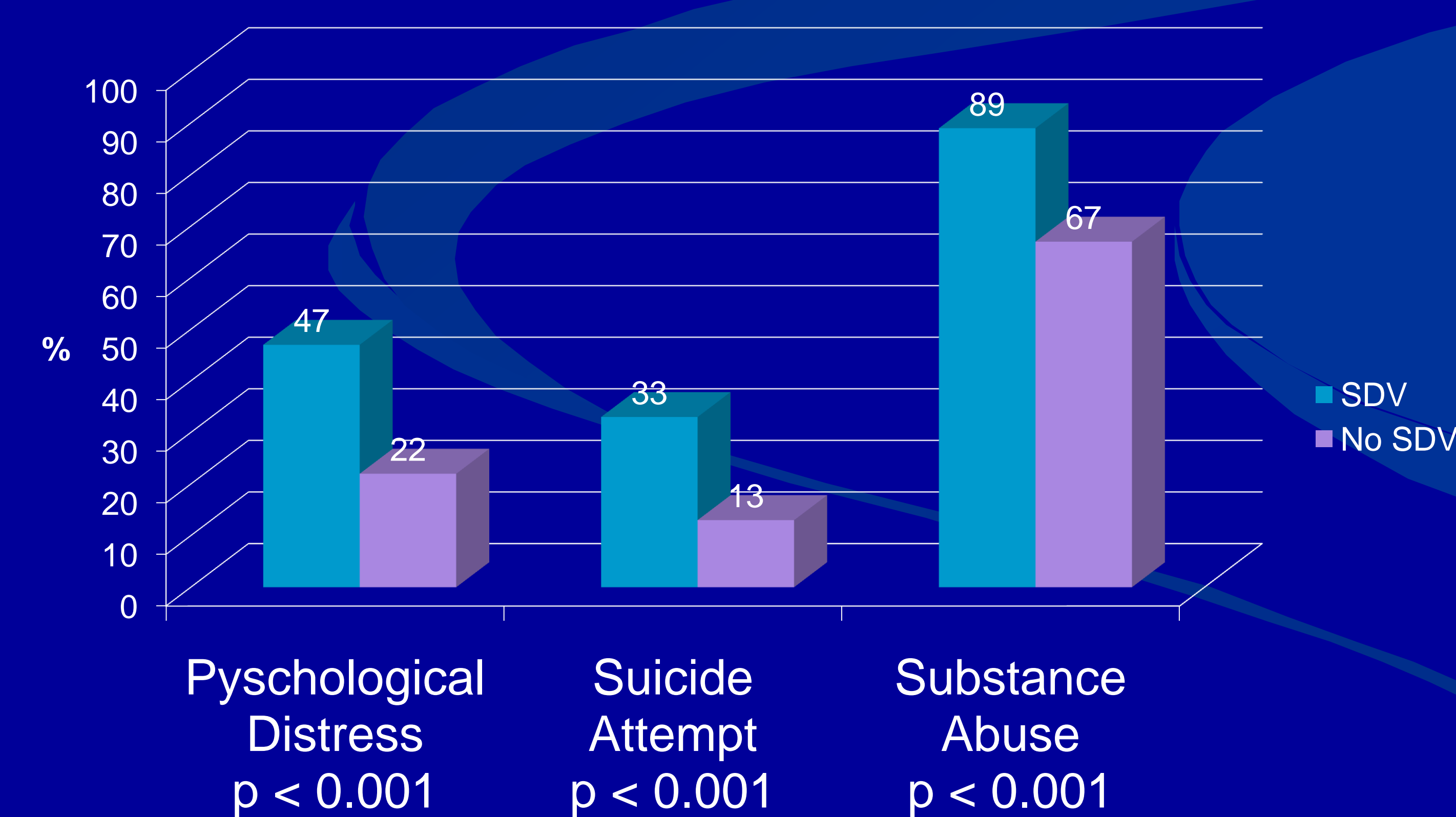
Participant Characteristics

Variable	N = 305
Age	%
13-14	17.7
15-16	50.2
17	32.1
Race	
White	41.3
Black	23.9
Latina	26.2
Other	08.2
Probation Status	
Formal probation	84.9
Diversion	15.1
Currently Detained	28.2

Physical Dating Violence (PDV)



Sexual Dating Violence (SDV)



Mental Health Factors Independently Associated with Dating Violence

	Physical Violence	Sexual Violence
	AOR (95% CI)	AOR (95% CI)
Psychological Distress (BSI-18)	1.3 (0.7, 2.4)	2.6 (1.3, 5.1)
Suicide Attempt (with intent to die)	2.1 (1.1, 4.2)	2.3 (1.1, 4.8)
Substance Abuse (CRAFFT)	2.3 (1.1, 4.7)	3.7 (1.3, 10.0)

AOR =Odds Ratio adjusted for demographics, parental physical abuse, parental sexual abuse, and other mental health risk factors

Conclusions & Recommendations

- A high proportion of participants had experienced physical or sexual dating violence

- After controlling for demographics, parental abuse and other mental health risk factors, dating violence was independently associated with adverse mental health outcomes

- Programs and policies aimed at improving the mental health of girls in the juvenile system should screen for and address dating violence

References

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2. Kelly, P.J, Cheng, A., Peralez-Dieckmann, E., & Martinez, E. 2008. Dating violence and girls in the juvenile justice system. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. Retrieved from <http://jiv.sagepub.com/cgi/rapidpdf/0886260508323664v1>



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