Key Concerns and Revised Term Paper Outline

Key Concerns

There are certain concerns that are frequently experienced in families where physical child abuse has occurred.

These can be problems resulting from maltreatment or problems leading to (causing, increasing the likelihood of) maltreatment.

A behavior, condition or status must be something that can be improved or corrected by intervention or treatment to qualify as a problem or concern. This would exclude historical factors such as parental history of abuse as a child since intervention cannot improve or correct an event that has already occurred.

The following types of systems must be represented:

- **Child**: a concern (cognitive, emotional, or behavioral problem) experienced by maltreated children that probably results from physical maltreatment.
- **Parent**: a concern experienced by the maltreating parent (parental risk factor) that contributes to the maltreating behavior.
- **Social/Community**: A social/community concern (environmental risk factor) that contributes to the maltreating behavior.

On the following pages I have outlined some frequently appearing concerns associated with physical child abuse. These concerns are organized by the system with which they are associated.

You must select three to five concerns for your term paper. You must discuss how you would integrate the cognitive/behavioral and community practice models to work on these concerns with clients referred for physical child abuse. Concerns from all three systems (child, parent, and social/community) must be represented in those you select.

You may not select substance abuse as one of the concerns for this paper.
Child

Several studies have examined the characteristics of abused children. One methodological difficulty with most of these studies is that they infer causation from correlational findings. Thus, while I am identifying these issues as representing effects of abuse, they are more correctly identified simply as issues experienced by physically abused children.

**Internalizing problems**
- depression
  - feelings of hopelessness
  - low self-esteem, blaming self for maltreatment, etc.

**Negative social behavior**
- aggressive behavior (violence, threats, etc.)
- impulsive behavior
- lack of appropriate assertive behavior
- noncompliance (with parents, teachers)
- poor social skills
  - affective recognition skills (recognizing displayed emotions)
  - social withdrawal
- self-destructive behavior

**Academic performance**
- developmental delays
- language deficits
- lower scores on measures of academic achievement

References for Child System Concerns


Parent

Parental system issues have been investigated more extensively. Here is a selection of issues.

**Knowledge and expectations of children**
- lack of knowledge about child development
- distorted judgment of child behavior (misattribution of malicious intent, identifying “normal” behavior as “abnormal”)
- unrealistically high expectations

**Child management skills**
- low rates of positive behavior (praising desirable conduct, showing physical affection)
- ineffective behavior (failure to notice appropriate behavior, unclear or inconsistent requests, threatening punishment, inconsistent provision of consequences for desired and undesired child behavior)

**Emotional overreactivity**
- habitual patterns of aggression/anger; poor anger control
- low tolerance for stress; poor coping skills

**Family discord**
- arguments, coercive process
- inadequate communication skills
- inadequate problem-solving skills
- lack of emotional support; low frequency of positive interactions

**References for Parent System Concerns**


Society/Community

Most of the research in this area is fairly recent. Generally, it suggests that the following social factors contribute to child abuse.

**Availability of resources**
- poverty; inadequate housing
- unemployment
- poor or no access to information about parenting
- lack of support network (e.g., extended family, friends, neighborhood)
- poor or no access to infrastructural resources (e.g., health care, education, public transportation systems).
- unavailability of adequate and affordable child care

**Norms**
- tolerance for and institutionalization of violence toward children (e.g., corporal punishment, bullying)
- weak disapproval for displays of anger; myth that harm will occur if anger is not “vented”
- societal preference for punishment as a method of behavior control
- lower status individuals have fewer rights than higher status individuals
- lower status for women and children

**Learning**
- glamorization of violence; modeling of aggressive behavior; witnessing violence
- reinforcement of other self-destructive behaviors (substance abuse, overspending)

**References for Society/Community System Concerns**


Term Paper (APA Style)

In this paper you should discuss how you would integrate the cognitive/behavioral and community practice models to work with clients referred for physical child abuse. You will specify how to implement the integrated model to work on three to five problems frequently associated with intra-family physical child abuse. You should discuss work with the child, work with the abusing parent, and work in the community. A part of your grade will be based upon how well you integrate individual and community work.

Your paper must be organized using these section headings.

- Introduction
  - Key Problems/Concerns
    - Parent
    - Child
    - Social/Community
  - Interventions for Selected Problems/Concerns
    - Parent
    - Child
    - Social/Community
      - Process
  - Parent
  - Child
  - Social/Community
  - Integration of Interventions
  - References
  - Appendix

- Your paper must follow this outline.
- Your paper will have No More than twelve pages of text.
- In addition to the text, your paper will include an APA style title page and APA style citations and references. There should be no abstract. Your page layout will be APA style, including short titles and page numbers.

I am serious about following this outline, using APA style, and the length of this paper, including length of the sections of this paper. They are among the criteria I shall use for assigning grades.
I. **Introduction** (about 3 to 4 pages)

A. **Key Problems/Concerns.** There are certain problems that are frequently experienced in families where physical child abuse has occurred and in the communities where these families reside.

These can be problems resulting from maltreatment or problems leading to (causing, increasing the likelihood of) maltreatment.

Select between three and five of the more frequently occurring problems (see previously listed key problems) for discussion in this paper. Cite and briefly discuss more than one professional article from peer-reviewed journals to justify the problems selected.

Each of the following client system problems must be represented in the key problems that you identify:

- **Child:** a specific problem experienced by the maltreated child that was probably a result of the maltreatment.
- **Parent:** a specific problem experienced by the maltreating parent that contributed to the maltreating behavior (alcohol or substance abuse may not be a concern chosen for this paper).
- **Social/Community:** A specific social/community problem that contributes to the maltreatment of children.

B. **Interventions for Selected Problems/Concerns**

For the three to five key problems selected, choose an intervention package for each problem and briefly discuss the outcome evaluation research on the effectiveness of each. These must include at least one “child,” one “parent,” and one “social/community” problem.

For the “child” and “parent” problems, the intervention package must be explicitly based upon the cognitive-behavioral model.

[For this paper, you should not select increasing awareness of child abuse or increased reporting of child abuse as a goal of intervention.]

- Cite and briefly summarize published outcome evaluation studies in peer-review journals that dealt with the intervention chosen for each problem.
  - If you can find no evaluation studies specific to your selected intervention and problem for individuals or families where physical child abuse was a concern, report on intervention evaluation studies for your selected problem for individuals or families where physical child abuse was not a specified concern.
  - Similarly, if you can find no evaluation studies for a social/community concern where your selected problem was discussed within the context of physical child abuse, report on intervention evaluation studies for the community concern where physical child abuse was not taken into account as an associated concern.
  - If you still can find no studies dealing with intervention evaluation specific to your selected problem, use a study dealing with a similar problem.

- If you can find no outcome evaluation studies for your selected problem or a similar problem, say so in your paper and note where you looked for such studies?
  - (It is very unlikely that there were no studies. If you report in your paper that you found none, I shall make my own search.)

- How were the interventions evaluated?
  - Group research designs:
    - Group comparisons are usually evaluated using statistical tests.
  - Single system (single subject, single case) analyses.
    - A decision about the efficacy of the intervention is based upon repeated demonstration of improved outcome in evaluations of different individuals, families, or communities (replication).
Case studies typically are not used to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention. They are often used to describe the process of intervention and to identify resources, problems, and/or idiosyncratic effects. Likewise, field studies typically are not used to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention. They are often used to describe the process of intervention and to identify resource availability and use, community concerns, and/or community structure.

- What were the conclusions about the effectiveness of particular interventions?
- Were cultural issues addressed (e.g., differential effectiveness across cultural groups; modification of presentation of intervention to enhance implementation)?

This section is the less important section of the paper. Do not waste space with a too lengthy discussion of the practice evaluation literature.

II. Treatment Process (about 8 to 9 pages)
For the three to five problems/concerns and interventions you discussed in Section I, write a description of the intervention process for each of the problems. In order to make these process descriptions, you may have to find case or field studies that describe the implementation of the intervention. These case or field studies may be taken from books or journal articles. Address any modifications you might make to the intervention packages to accommodate cultural factors.

- Intervention packages that include empirically supported procedures will enhance your grade.
- Intervention packages for individuals that include a community change component are desirable, but those without such a component will not be subject to penalty.

Discuss how the interventions for the parent, child, and social/community concerns support each other.

This section is the more important section of the paper. Your description of the intervention process should be clear enough that the reader would know how to carry out the intervention after reading your description.

III. References
References must follow APA style conventions.

IV. Appendix
Place photocopies of the outcome evaluation articles in an appendix at the end of your paper.