

**Abstract title:**

Child Maltreatment, Sexual Risk Behaviors and Victimization Among Female Adolescents Seeking Detoxification Treatment for Substance Use Disorders: an Israeli Case Study

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Objectives:** Childhood maltreatment trauma (CT; i.e., sexual, physical, and emotional abuse and physical and emotional neglect) is associated with subsequent adverse psychological, somatic and social consequences, including increased susceptibility to substance use disorders (SUDs). It is also increasingly becoming apparent that CT is closely related to adult sexual risk behavior. The present study examines the relationship between the severity of CT and the prevalence of sexual risk behaviors and sexual victimization in 194 randomly selected female adolescents and emerging-adults seeking treatment for SUDs in an inpatient detoxification unit.

**Methods:** Clinical characteristics and sexual experience were assessed using standardized, in-depth interviews and self-reports. Childhood maltreatment trauma was assessed based on the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire – Short Form (CTQ-SF) and a modified version of the HIV Risk-taking Behavior Scale (HRBS) was used to assess risky sexual behavior. The treatment site under study provided the only inpatient detoxification treatment program for young women in the country thus reflecting a general estimation of this population.

**Results:** CT severity was significantly associated with a greater likelihood of risky sexual behaviors, sexual victimization and sexual assaults with either the perpetrator, the victim or both consuming drugs/alcohol shortly before or during the assault. In total it was found that 88.7% of the participants experienced sexual assaults and 61.3% were involved in trading/exchanging sex. Drug use severity was associated with riskier sexual behaviors.

**Conclusions:** This is the first study on sexual behavior, sexual victimization and childhood maltreatment trauma among Israeli young females seeking inpatient detoxification treatment for SUDs. Results replicate prior work on associations between CT, SUDs and sexual risk behaviors found in adults in other countries. Findings imply that female adolescents and emerging adults with SUDs may benefit from screenings for CT and integrating trauma-informed interventions to reduce sexual victimization.