New Brief Provides Recommendations to Reduce Disparities in Child Abuse Detection

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A new solutions-focused PolicyLab *Evidence to Action* brief released today reviews data on disparities in hospital-based child abuse evaluation and reports the results of efforts to address this critical issue.

Accurate, timely diagnosis of child physical abuse is key to preventing repeated and escalating abuse. However, nearly 1 in 3 young children diagnosed with an abusive injury had prior medical visits during which there was a missed opportunity to diagnose abuse and to intervene to protect the child from further harm.

The brief outlines PolicyLab research reviewing U.S. pediatric and general hospital data that found uneven use of skeletal surveys, which the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends to identify occult, or hidden, fractures in all children under age 2 with injuries concerning for physical abuse. The research also uncovered significant differences in skeletal survey use with regards to race and socioeconomic status (SES), highlighting the need to improve detection and address child abuse for all children.

The authors propose recommendations to improve evaluations for child physical abuse, decrease disparities and protect children who have been abused from further harm. Learn more in the brief here.

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