
Title	What Singaporean Teachers and Social Workers Say about Child Abuse: Facts Versus Myths.
Author(s)	Gillian Potter, Freda Briggs and Kurt Lushington
Source	<i>Teaching and Learning</i> , 23(1), 13-25
Published by	Institute of Education (Singapore)

This document may be used for private study or research purpose only. This document or any part of it may not be duplicated and/or distributed without permission of the copyright owner.

The Singapore Copyright Act applies to the use of this document.

What Singaporean Teachers and Social Workers Say about Child Abuse: Facts Versus Myths

Gillian Potter, Freda Briggs and Kurt Lushington

Introduction

This paper reports on the responses of Singaporean social workers and teachers to questions about facts and myths surrounding child abuse and neglect. Two aspects of child abuse were focused upon: sexual and emotional. Prior to attending seminars on child abuse and domestic violence, 154 kindergarten teachers, special education teachers and social workers completed a questionnaire. It included common myths collected from victims, perpetrators and professionals and was designed to identify aspects of their knowledge of child abuse and neglect versus the influence of universal myths. Results show that special education teachers were the least well informed on child protection issues despite international recognition that children with disabilities are the most vulnerable to abuse of all kinds. Social workers displayed the most accurate knowledge but serious gaps were identified among all the professionals. The results of this survey, which is the first of its kind, will be valuable for future professional development planning for educators and social workers.

A Social Problem: Child Abuse and Family Violence

Child abuse and family violence are socially and economically costly to society. The social impact of child abuse is unequivocal; abuse has a negative effect on all family members as well as the development of the child victim. Governments in USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Scandinavia and England budget money each year for dealing with reports of abuse, assessment of abuse victims, operations of the justice system and treatment of the effects of child abuse. Long-term effects can include mental and physical ill health, family breakdown, drug and alcohol abuse, antisocial, criminal as well as self-destructive behaviours and suicide.

Chan, Elliott and Tan's (1996) significant monograph, *Public Perceptions of Child Abuse and Neglect in Singapore*, reports on the responses of 401 Singaporean residents who were surveyed to establish their definitions of child abuse, the circumstances in which they would report abuse and to whom reports should be made. They found that ethnicity was linked to perceptions of abuse. People of Chinese descent judged emotional and physical abuse less seriously than Malaysians and Indians. Two thirds of respondents (66%) approved of 'putting children down', comparing them negatively with others in the hope that this will motivate them to improve their behaviour or academic achievements. A distinction was made between 'unacceptable behaviour' and abuse. Every category of child abuse was classified as 'unacceptable' more frequently than it was classified as 'abuse'. The authors suggested that either the term 'child abuse' carries less favourable connotations than 'unacceptable' or that Singaporeans are uncertain about their definitions (Chan, *et al.*, 1996).

Investigating what forms of abuse were perceived to be reportable, Chan, *et al.* (1996) expected to find a reluctance to report because family violence and child abuse are regarded primarily as a "family affair" rather than a social concern. Inconsistencies were evident in responses to these questions. Ninety-four percent of respondents thought that severe physical abuse should always be reported, yet, at the same time, they showed a high tolerance of caning. Seventy-three percent of subjects categorised caning as acceptable. This is consistent with other Asian studies that found that Singaporeans regarded "light caning" as an essential component of child discipline. They associated this with "parental love" and concern rather than violence or bad temper. Similarly, beating with rattan sticks was the most popular and painful punishment inflicted on Hong Kong children while Indian professionals also used and advocated this form of punishment (Samuda, 1988; Segal, 1995).

In the study by Chan, *et al.*, (1996), 89% of the participants said that child sexual abuse or a person's failure to protect a child from such abuse should always be reported. Eighty-five percent of subjects thought that reports should be made to police, 15.2% thought that they should be referred to the Ministry of Community Development and Sports (MCDS) and 3% thought that they should be referred to the Singapore Children's Society. Chan, *et al.*, (1996) found that reports of sexual abuse to police had remained stable at an average of 394 cases a year from 1990-1993.

Chan, Chow and Elliott's (2000) research titled *Professional and Public Perceptions of Physical Child Abuse and Neglect in Singapore* concentrated on physical abuse and neglect, suggesting that Singaporeans were not aware of the signs of sexual abuse, its damaging effects on victims or, possibly, how to report it. A total of 401 male and 817 female professionals were surveyed. The authors confirmed the coincidence of different types of abuse, the fact that psychological abuse is present in all other forms of abuse and that some Chinese cultural ethics and practices are conducive to child abuse. They referred especially to the emphasis

on filial piety that makes children regarded as parents' "property", enabling some parents to exploit and beat them with no risk of outside interference. The socialisation mechanisms that support and perpetuate this tradition were identified as discipline to ensure absolute obedience and an emphasis on attachment. Chan, *et al.*, (2000) examined the circumstances in which professionals and members of the public thought that potentially abusive behaviours were tolerable and found little difference between the two groups. Professionals had not adopted different criteria and an explanation for this might be a lack of training for handling cases of child abuse and neglect. The researchers concluded that:

There is a clear need for greater education of professionals on agreed criteria by which child abuse and neglect may be recognised, reported and remedied. In addition, preventive measures would similarly require professional agreement. (Chan, et al., p.86)

Chan, *et al.*, (2000) revealed that there was no coordinated approach to child abuse reporting and data collection in Singapore. They referred to the difficulties of ascertaining true figures. Although child sexual abuse was said to be "hidden" and under-reported, there were substantially more reports of child sexual abuse made to authorities than any other forms of abuse. It was noted however that while the child abuse rate in the US was then 12.4 children in 1000, it was only 0.16 in Singapore. Furthermore, the substantiation rate for Singapore was much lower than in other countries. More recent reports confirm the same high rate of unsubstantiated cases. Between 1996-2000, MCDS recorded 766 cases of undifferentiated child abuse of which only 169 were confirmed (22.1%). Four-hundred and seventy-four cases (61.9%) were labelled as "lack of evidence but needs assistance" and an astonishing 123 cases (16.1%) were deemed to constitute "false reporting" (Ministry of Community Development and Sports, 2001). Chan, *et al.*, (1996) suggested that the small numbers of substantiated cases in Singapore might relate to the lack of community and professional education for police, counsellors, social workers, doctors, nurses, teachers and child care personnel.

The conclusions reached by Chan, *et al.*, (2000), point to the need for consensus among professionals and likewise, the broader community regarding the definition and reporting of child abuse and neglect. Necessarily, such consensus is dependent on the convergence of beliefs and attitudes regarding what constitutes child abuse and neglect. We suggest that this can be informed by examining and challenging some of the myths that underlie and perpetuate child abuse and neglect. Although studies to date have tended to examine myths in isolation, collectively the present literature has identified a range of beliefs and attitudes that are ill-informed and counter-productive.

As a starting point, we propose that consensus can be facilitated by identifying the level to which professionals endorse established myths about child abuse and neglect. In turn, this information can be used to guide the planning of pre-service and in-service programs, thereby improving the outcomes for child victims and their families.

Aims of the Research

The aims of our research were:

- to examine the level of endorsement for a variety of myths regarding child abuse (sexual and emotional) and neglect among three groups of Singaporean workers in contact with victims: social workers, kindergarten and special education teachers and,
- to investigate attitudes and beliefs toward reporting suspicions or signs of abuse.

Methods

The participants for the study were 22 experienced practicing kindergarten teachers [mean age = 31.0 years, SD = 7.7], 64 special education teachers [mean age = 27.8 years, SD = 6.8] and 68 social workers [mean age = 30.9 years, SD = 7.6]. Ninety three percent of subjects were female, 33% were married and 20% were parents with one or more children. The majority of subjects identified themselves as Chinese (73%), followed by Indian (6%) and Malay (6%) with the remainder either not reporting or listing another nationality.

As part of a larger survey, subjects completed a 42-item questionnaire on child abuse and an 18-item questionnaire on child emotional abuse. Subjects were requested to record their level of agreement with individual items using a five-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree".

The questionnaire included:

- (a) items based on statements (that have previously been determined as myths) collected from child abuse and neglect perpetrators, victims and professionals,
- (b) items similarly collected that were true, and
- (c) statements regarding reporting and the role of child workers as protectors.

To control for socially desirable responses, participants were also asked to complete the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale which is used to validate responses on the attitudes and beliefs questionnaire.

The questionnaires were completed by subjects prior to their attendance at separate seminars relating to domestic violence and/or child abuse. The seminars for social workers were organized by the authors and the Singapore Ministry of Community Development and Sport. The seminars for teachers were provided in collaboration with the Singapore National Institute of Education.

Findings

This section presents only a small selection of the total findings of the study.

1. The professionals lack knowledge of sexual abuse and reporting procedures

The professional groups that spend the most time with the most vulnerable children have the least knowledge of what to report and how to report suspicions, evidence or disclosures of child abuse. While a mere 14% of the group of experienced Singapore social workers were unfamiliar with reporting procedures, a massive 60% of experienced special education teachers and an alarming 86% of kindergarten teachers indicated that they did not know what to report and how to report child abuse or neglect when it is suspected or confirmed.

Although police statistics show that child sexual abuse is the most frequently reported form of abuse, there was evidence of denial that child sexual abuse occurs in Singapore. Surprisingly, 17% of social workers employed in the field of family violence claimed that child sexual abuse does not happen. Almost a quarter of special education teachers (24%) and more than a third of kindergarten teachers (34%) also denied that child sexual abuse is a problem. Ten percent of special education teachers and 14% of kindergarten teachers went so far as to say that "if child sexual abuse happens, I'd rather not know about it given that it's unpleasant".

On the positive side, 99% of social workers and 96% of teachers said that they would like to do something to help child sexual abuse victims. Ninety-six percent of social workers, 100% of kindergarten teachers and 88% of special education teachers said that they would like to know more about child sexual abuse and how they can help to prevent / stop it from happening. Seven percent of the latter didn't want to know anything about it because it is not an attractive subject and 6% were unsure.

It is important to note that 94% of social workers, 88% of special education and 100% of kindergarten teachers believed that all professionals who have contact with children should have a background in child development. These professionals were identified as teachers, child-care workers, police, lawyers, social workers and members of the judiciary.

2. There is a prevalence of identification with myths

Myth 1: 'Young children are not at risk of sexual abuse'

Twenty-one percent of social workers, 40% of special education teachers and 43% of kindergarten teachers indicated that child sexual abuse is only a risk to adolescents. An additional 15–19% of professionals from all groups were unsure of the situation. This is contrary to the findings of Chan, *et al.*, (2000, p. 8) who confirmed that the risk of victimisation (all forms of abuse) tends to decrease with age and

with the research of Briggs and Hawkins, (1996) who found that 16% of 5–8 year olds (N = 85) revealed that they had been used for abusive sexual “games” by adolescent and adult child-minders.

Failure to accept that young children are at highest risk of all forms of abuse can have serious implications for:

- the recognition of signs and symptoms of abuse in young children;
- reporting suspicions and evidence of abuse;
- the introduction of child protection policies and practices in kindergartens and child care centres;
- the provision of safety education for children;
- the provision of support and information for early childhood professionals and parents;
- the use of safe practices when parents employ child minders.

Myth 2: ‘Young children make up stories about sexual abuse’

The proportion of Singapore professionals who endorsed the all too prevalent myth that children concoct stories about sexual abuse was quite small. Only 10% of kindergarten teachers, 12% of special education teachers and 6% of social workers said that young children make up stories about sexual abuse. However, it is important that the myth is eradicated to ensure that young children are believed when they first disclose sexual misbehaviour. This widespread myth inhibits the reporting of offences. Contrary to popular belief, the younger the reporter, the more likely she/he will tell the truth. Young children are incapable of “making up” allegations of sexual abuse because the sexual behaviours and sayings of offenders are beyond their imagination.

Most people think that they can tell when children are lying but the reality is that adults are poor judges of truth/untruth. When reporting sexual abuse, a child will “look guilty”, fidget, be hesitant and avoid eye contact, all of which relate to embarrassment and nervousness, not untruthfulness.

Myth 3: ‘Females do not commit sex offences against children’

More than half of the kindergarten teachers (51%) and almost as many special education teachers (48%) recorded the myth that females do not commit sexual offences against children. This suggests that many may not take abuse prevention as seriously as they should when centres and schools are staffed predominantly by females.

The McMartin preschool case at Manhattan Beach, California was the first to receive international publicity. It was alleged that hundreds of 3–5 year olds had been subjected to bizarre sexual rituals involving the owner and female staff.

Finkelhor, Williams and Burns (1989) subsequently studied a large number of reported cases for their book, *"Nursery Crimes: Sexual Abuse in Day Care"*.

In Australia, Briggs, Hawkins and Williams (1994) found that 50% of jailed child sex abusers (N = 85) had been sexually abused by females. A survey of 95 multi-cultural male victims who had no convictions for offences against children showed that 23% had been sexually abused by females. When children were abused under the age of six, female offenders were usually baby-sitters, older sisters and their friends. One third of boys abused between the ages of 6 and 10 years were abused by adult sisters-in-law, mothers and school-teachers.

Myth 4: 'Children with disabilities are at low risk of sexual abuse because they are sexually unattractive'

Eighteen percent of each professional group recorded that they did not know that disabled children were at any risk of sexual abuse. Fifty percent of the kindergarten teacher group, 44% of special education teachers and 62% of social workers believed that children with disabilities are at less risk of sexual abuse than non-disabled children because they are less physically attractive. In other words, these professionals mistakenly believed that sexual offences relate to sexual attractiveness when it is widely acknowledged that they relate to the powerlessness of victims.

International studies show that children with disabilities are at greatest risk of all forms of abuse. Parents often feel that they can't cope. When a baby is born with a disability, the difference between parental expectations and reality often results in shock, guilt, anxiety, depression and anger that are all stages in the normal grief process. Although the child may be dearly loved, the guilt and grief of parents can be life-long (Garbarino, Brookhauser, Authier, & Associates, 1987). These parents often become socially isolated if not rejected at the time when they most need support. Caring for a disabled child can be exhausting, frustrating and stressful. Given that stress and social isolation are two major factors that contribute to child abuse, it is easy to see why disabled children are at high risk of physical and emotional maltreatment. They are also at highest risk of sexual abuse. Some sex offenders specifically target children with disabilities because they are less likely to be prosecuted if their victims lack the sophisticated communication skills needed to give evidence in an adult criminal court.

Risk is associated with the devaluation and dehumanisation of children who are perceived as imperfect. It is thought that adults who would not consider using non-disabled children for sex, will abuse the disabled without conscience. Abusers are most frequently family members and people involved in the victims' day-to-day care; and the risk increases with the amount and type of touch required (Senn, 1998; Briggs, 1996).

Myth 5: 'The sexual abuse of children with disabilities is less damaging than the abuse of non-disabled children because they don't understand what is happening'

Some sex offenders, professionals and parents rationalise that the abuse of children with disabilities is less damaging than the abuse of non-disabled children "because these children don't understand what is happening". Some professionals and parents fail to report disclosures of sexual offences for that reason.

Ten percent of the sample of Singapore kindergarten teachers, 17% of special education teachers and 5% of social workers indicated commitment to the myth. Kennedy (1990) and others (Garbarino *et al*, 1987; Briggs, 1996) have shown that the effects of child sexual abuse compound the emotional problems associated with disability, increasing the sense of isolation, low self esteem, anxiety, anger, powerlessness, embarrassment, withdrawal, depression, self blame, frustration, fear and stigmatization. Unfortunately, the teachers employed with disabled children were the ones least likely to think that child sexual abuse was damaging (17%).

Myth 6: 'Child sexual abuse doesn't happen in Singapore'

Of the respondents, 33% of special education teachers, 36% of social workers and 23% of kindergarten teachers thought that child abuse does not happen in Singapore. Such a belief can create complacency and reduces the likelihood that children will be given realistic protection and safety education. It suggests the need for community education.

Myth 7: 'Parents don't want safety programs in schools'

Eighteen percent of the Singapore kindergarten teacher group, 24% of the special education teachers and 26% of social workers were under the impression that Singaporean parents would not want personal safety skills to be taught in schools. These statistics closely resemble the incidence of child abuse in Singapore as shown above.

Assumptions of parental disinterest have been disproved in the USA, Australia and New Zealand (Briggs & Hawkins, 1996; Finkelhor, 1981).

When parents are aware of the child sexual abuse problem, they usually want schools to help because they lack the knowledge, skills and confidence to tackle this sensitive subject. They are usually afraid of alarming children unnecessarily. In Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA, personal safety skills are taught from pre-school upwards as part of the health and safety curriculum: safety with electricity, fire, water and road safety.

Myth 8: 'Children should be taught to keep secrets'

Fifty percent of kindergarten teachers, 46% of the special education teachers and 24% of social workers revealed that they teach children to keep all secrets,

especially family secrets. Given that most abuse is presented as a special secret (and secrecy facilitates the perpetuation of this crime), children are unlikely to disclose it.

When abuse becomes intolerable, victims may seek help by referring to their possession of a secret. They may ask a parent or teacher if it's "alright to tell". Ill-informed adults are likely to reinforce the importance of secrecy, thereby confirming the victim's helplessness and hopelessness (Briggs, 1996; Briggs & Hawkins, 1996).

Myth 9: 'Young children should be punished for acting sexually'

When young children are worried, they tend to act out the situations that are causing the anxiety. Children who are worried about surgery or hospitalization, play at being nurses, doctors and patients in hospitals. Young children who have been sexually abused may act out the sexual acts with soft toys, dolls or other children (Sivan, Schor, Koepl, & Noble, 1988). Older children may also behave sexually to attract the teacher's attention, hoping that the teacher will understand and help.

All too frequently, uninformed teachers and parents respond with shock, disgust and punishment, adding to the psychological damage already inflicted on victims by offenders. Forty-two percent of the kindergarten teacher group members and 32% of special education teachers said that children should be punished for acting out sexually, compared with the social workers who were much better informed with only 3% advocating punishment.

Myth 10: 'Young children should be punished for making sexually explicit drawings'

Few children can verbalise their feelings about sexual abuse. As a result, they often express their emotions through their drawings. Lacking the appropriate language to express themselves, they may draw sexually explicit pictures and phallic symbols. Unfortunately, child artists are usually punished and humiliated instead of being asked, "Who is that in your picture? What's she/he doing? Where does this happen?"

Children's drawings and sexualised behaviour may contain important clues relating to what is happening in their lives (Lewis, & Greene, 1983; Yates, Butler & Crago, 1985). Unfortunately, Singapore teachers were more likely to punish victims than question them about their drawings (79% of kindergarten and 66% of special education teachers). Social workers seemed to be more aware of the messages and symbolism of children's drawings and only 7% advocated punishment.

3. There was some agreement with myths that contribute to emotional abuse

Chan, *et al.*, (1996) found that Singapore parents were frequently emotionally abusive to their children and that 66% approved of denigrating children and

comparing them negatively with others. A large number of parents (73.4%) were described as using threats of abandonment or threats that police would come to take children away if they misbehaved. They compared children unfavourably with others hoping that this would motivate them to succeed.

Singapore Health Ministry figures show that half of the 2,358 students who saw psychiatrists at government out-patient clinics in 1998, attended kindergartens and primary schools. The number of young psychiatric patients multiplied 3.5 times between 1990 and 1998 and psychiatrists confirmed that most cases were related to a fear of failure (Ting, 2001). The psychiatrists anticipated that the number of child patients would continue to increase unless pressures to succeed were reduced. Government concerns relating suicidal children such as 12-year old Simran Kaur who took her life when she failed to achieve her parents' academic expectations, will lead to amendments to the Children and Young Persons Act in late 2001 (Kaur, 2001; Leong, 2001).

Our research showed that fewer professionals support the emotional maltreatment of children than could have been expected given the findings of Chan, *et al.*, (1996). However, the current survey was undertaken shortly after the suicide of Simran Kaur which, in turn was followed by a strong media focus on the emotional needs of children. Numerous articles appeared in *The Straits Times* authored by Mathi, (2000, 2001), Ng, (2000) and Ting, (2001). This may account for the fact that attitudes relating to the emotional needs of children we found are somewhat different from those found by Chan, *et al.* (1996).

Our 2001 research indicated that few of the teachers or social workers were convinced of the value of negative criticism for motivating children. Given the importance of their influence in children's early development, it is nevertheless a concern that 16% of kindergarten teachers advocated the use of criticism for motivation. They were the ones who believed that praising children is bad because it results in a reduction in effort and conceit (20%) and that telling children that they are a nuisance will improve their behaviour (16%). By comparison, only 1% of social workers believed that praising children resulted in a reduction in effort or conceit. This is a significant change from Chan, *et al's* (1996) findings where 66% approved of putting children down and comparing them negatively with others. It is a reflection of increased on-going professional training of social workers provided by the Singapore Ministry of Community Development and Sports.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Following their research comparing *Professional and public perceptions of physical child abuse and neglect in Singapore*, Chan, *et al.*, (2000) concluded that there was a clear need for the education of professionals in recognising, reporting and responding to all forms of child abuse. The findings of our survey confirmed that need and the Singapore Ministry of Community Development and Sports and The National Institute of Education are to be commended for their swift responses.

This study extends the earlier work of Chan, Elliott and Tan (1996) and Chan, Chow and Elliott (2000), by examining the beliefs of teachers and social workers relating to child sexual abuse and emotional abuse, with a view to identifying training needs. Our research indicates that teachers rely extensively on dangerous myths and lack sufficient knowledge for recognising, managing and reporting child abuse. This group was the least likely to blame the perpetrator for sexual abuse, the least likely to adequately protect children and, alarmingly (given the age group they teach), the least likely to recognise the vulnerability of young children to sexual abuse. Another cause for concern is that too many teachers denied the risks to children with disabilities.

It is also a concern that 86% of the teachers did not know how and when to report child abuse and yet all supported the view that professionals who work with children should have a sound knowledge of child abuse and child development.

Special education teachers were the least well informed and did not realise that the children they taught were at highest risk of all forms of abuse. They were the most likely to think that children make up stories of child abuse. About half of the group was unaware of female offenders and only a little more than a third (36%) realised that young children's sexualised behaviour was likely to relate to sexual victimisation. They constituted the group most likely to reject personal safety education for students because of the unsubstantiated fear that it might lead to false reporting. They were also the least likely to value expertise in child development. Only 49% knew how and when to report cases of child abuse. Fifty-four percent doubted the value of teaching children to keep secrets and 64% thought that praising children could be damaging.

Clearly, the teachers' lack of knowledge could inhibit them from identifying and reporting signs of child sexual abuse and handling disclosures sensitively. There is an obvious need for child abuse/child protection education for all professionals whose work brings them into contact with children. Such education should focus on the dynamics of abuse, definitions, understanding children's responses to abusive situations, the recognition of all forms of abuse and neglect and reporting and handling suspicious cases. Teachers in particular need a greater emphasis on the norms of child development and substantial pre-service and in-service education given on child abuse issues. The teaching profession probably has the most important role in child protection given that, outside the family, teachers spend more time with child abuse victims than any other profession. Teachers have the opportunity to support victims and stop abuse or, on the other hand, cause psychological damage to victims and, by default, allow abuse to continue. Singapore's teacher educators should take advantage of the vast quantity of international literature available on this subject.

In addition, it is recommended that education authorities introduce personal safety education into the school health curriculum, helping children to stay safe with people as well as with traffic and other hazards. Again, there are evaluated programs and teaching resources to assist Singapore in the writing of a culturally

appropriate curriculum; for example 'Keeping Ourselves Safe', (New Zealand) and 'Teaching Children to Protect Themselves' (Australia). There are many others in Canada, UK and US from which information can be derived.

Concurrently, there should be substantial community education programs to assist Singaporean parents to provide better protection for their children.

Freda Briggs is a Professor of Child Development at the University of South Australia and her interest area is in the field of child abuse and family violence. Email: freda.briggs@unisa.edu.au

Dr Gillian Potter is an Assistant Professor in the Specialised Education Academic Group at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University. She is an advocate for children's rights. Email: gkpotter@nie.edu.sg

Dr Kurt Lushington is a collaborating researcher and currently an Assistant Professor in Psychology at the University of South Australia and the Sleep Centre at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Adelaide, South Australia.

References

- Briggs, F., Hawkins, R.M.F., & Williams, M. (1994). "A comparison of the early childhood and family experiences of incarcerated, convicted male child molesters and men who were sexually abused in childhood and have no convictions for sexual offences against children." Report to the Australian Criminology Research Council, Canberra. Adelaide: University of South Australia.
- Briggs, F. (1996). *Why My Child?* Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Briggs, F., & Hawkins, R.M.F. (1996). "Keeping ourselves safe: A survey of New Zealand school children aged 10–12 years and their parents." Report for the Commissioner of Police and Minister of Education, New Zealand. Adelaide: University of South Australia.
- Chan, J.S., Chow, Y., & Elliott, J.M. (2000). *Professional and Public Perceptions of Physical Child Abuse and Neglect in Singapore*. Research Monograph No. 3. Singapore Children's Society.
- Chan, T.C., Elliott, J.M., & Tan, P.M. (1996). *Public Perceptions of Child Abuse and Neglect in Singapore*. Research Monograph Number 1. Singapore Children's Society.
- Finkelhor, D. (1981). "Survey of parents in Boston," in Finkelhor, D. (1984). *Child Sexual Abuse: New Theory and Research*. New York: Free Press.
- Finkelhor, D. (1984). *Child Sexual Abuse: New Theory and Research*. New York: Free Press.
- Finkelhor, D., Williams, L.M., & Burns, N. (1989). *Nursery Crimes: Sexual Abuse in Day Care*. Newbury Park, California: SAGE Publications.
- Garbarino, J., Brookhauser, P.E., Authier, K.K., & Associates (1987). *Special Education, Special Risks: The Maltreatment of Children with Disabilities*. New York: Aldine D.E. Gruyter.
- Kaur, K. (2001). "'Emotional abuse' Singapore." *The Sunday Times*. April 1st.
- Kennedy, M. (1990). *The Deaf Child Who Is Sexually Abused – Is There a Need for a Dual Specialist?* London: National Deaf Society.
- Leong, P. (2001). "Exams busiest time for helpline." Singapore: *The Sunday Times*. January 14th.
- Lewis, D., & Greene, J. (1983). *Your Child's Drawings: Their Hidden Meaning*. London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd.

- Mathi, B. (2000). "Most children worry about failing exams." Singapore: *The Straits Times*. November 21, p. 4.
- Mathi, B. (2000). "Girl jumps to death over PSLE results". Singapore: *The Strait Times* December 30, p. H8.
- Mathi, B. (2000). "Simran's Dad baffled by her death plunge." Singapore: *The Straits Times*. November 2, p. H2.
- Ministry of Community Development and Sports (2001). *Number of child abuse investigated by year by outcome (1996 to 2000)*. Singapore: MCDS Child Protection and Welfare Service.
- Ng J. (2000). "Caned for getting 73% in maths exam." Singapore: *The Strait Times* November 21, p. H3.
- Samuda, G.M. (1988). "Child discipline and abuse in Hong Kong." *Child Abuse and Neglect: The International Journal*, 12 (2), 217–231.
- Segal, U.A. (1995). "Child abuse by the middle class? A study of professionals in India." *Child Abuse and Neglect: The International Journal*, 19, 217–231.
- Senn, C.Y. (1988). *Vulnerable: Sexual Abuse and People with an Intellectual Handicap*. Downsville, Ontario: G. Allan Roeher Institute.
- Sivan, A.B., Schor, D.P., Koeppel, G.K., & Noble, L.D. (1988). "Interaction of normal children with anatomical dolls." *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 12 (3), 295–304.
- Ting, L.W. (2001). "They're not crazy - Just kids with problems." Singapore: *Straits Times*, 20 March, p. H2.
- Yates, A., Butler, L.E., & Crago, M. (1985). "Drawings by child victims of incest." *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 9, 183–189.