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# CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION EFFORTS IN TURKEY

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# CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

## “Right to Protection”

- Right to protection from all forms of physical and mental violence
  - Child abuse is violation of child rights
  - A strong mechanism must be present to protect children from all forms of abuse and violence which threatens their survival and development
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# Child Abuse in Turkey

- One third of the children get corporal punishment for discipline
- Sexual abuse among adolescents: 11–37 % in different studies
- Intrafamilial sexual abuse is kept as a secret because of society's taboos
- Emotional abuse and neglect: not reported but considered to be high because domestic violence, poverty and low education level are common problems in our population.

*International Journal of Child Health and  
Human Development 2009;2:251-258*

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# Child Abuse in Turkey

- A school study reports sexual abuse in childhood as 13.4-28 %

*Arch. Sex Behaviour*  
2005;34:185-95

- A population based study reveals 35% physical abuse

*Journal of Child Development and Education*  
1986;1:7-14.

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# Child Abuse and Neglect in Turkey

- Professional awareness of child abuse and neglect is very recent in Turkey
  - Rare case reports of child abuse and neglect appeared in Turkish medical literature in 1990's
  - Medical schools started developing child abuse curriculum in late 1990s
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# PEDIATRICIAN'S ROLE IN PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE

- Primary prevention: strategies designed for all children regardless of the risk of abuse
  - Secondary prevention: strategies focused on families who are most at risk
  - Tertiary prevention: prevention of re-abuse of victims
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# UNIVERSAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

- Home visitation programs
  - Parent training programs
  - Enhanced primary care
  - Targeted to specific maltreatment forms
    - Physical abuse
    - Sexual abuse
    - Abusive head trauma
    - Neglect
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# CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN TURKEY

- Home visitation programs
    - Not done for prevention of child abuse
    - Social services (only for tertiary prevention)
    - Home visitation in health system: Nurses, family physicians??
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# CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN TURKEY

- Parent training programs:
    - Provided mainly by Ministry of National Education and some non-governmental organizations (ACEV, Çağdaş Yaşamı Destekleme Derneği, etc)
    - They are not targeted specifically to abuse prevention but improving parenting skills is a well known child abuse prevention strategy.
    - Recently: programs provided by Turkish Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (TSPCAN)
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# Family Training Programs in Turkey and the World

- In the world: various programs are performed starting from 1960's.
    - Head Start program
    - Early Childhood Stimulation Through Parent Education
    - The mother child home program
    - Parents as teachers
  - In Turkey, such training programs started in 1980's
    - AÇEP
    - “My Family”
    - “7-19 family training”
    - “0-18 family training”
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# Family Training in Early Child Development

- Early Childhood (0-6 years of age); very important as the child's physical growth and mental-cognitive-emotional and social development is so fast in this period
  - Supporting development in this period enables the child to be successful in many important fields
  - Parents are the ones to give this support
  - Parenting programs lead them to correct support
  - **Who can reach these families in this early period???**
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# Health Care Providers:

- Families receive guidance about their infants from the health care providers in the very early phases
  - Well child care or pediatric visits are opportunities to provide information about supporting growth and development, protection and promotion of health, etc
  - Health care providers are usually trusted and respected by the parents
  - **What about more structured training programs performed by health care providers?**
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# “Effectiveness of Family Training Performed by Physicians in Two Different Sociocultural Level Groups”

- **Trainers:** 2 physicians (one pediatrician, 1 family physician)
  - **Trainees:** Mothers who have children between 0-6 years of age
    - Gazi Hospital Group: Mothers of infants who attend to well child clinics (17 mothers who were at least college graduates and have an occupation)
    - Yıldız Group: Mothers of infants who are followed in Yıldız primary health care center (11 mothers mostly primary school graduates, mostly housewives, unoccupied)
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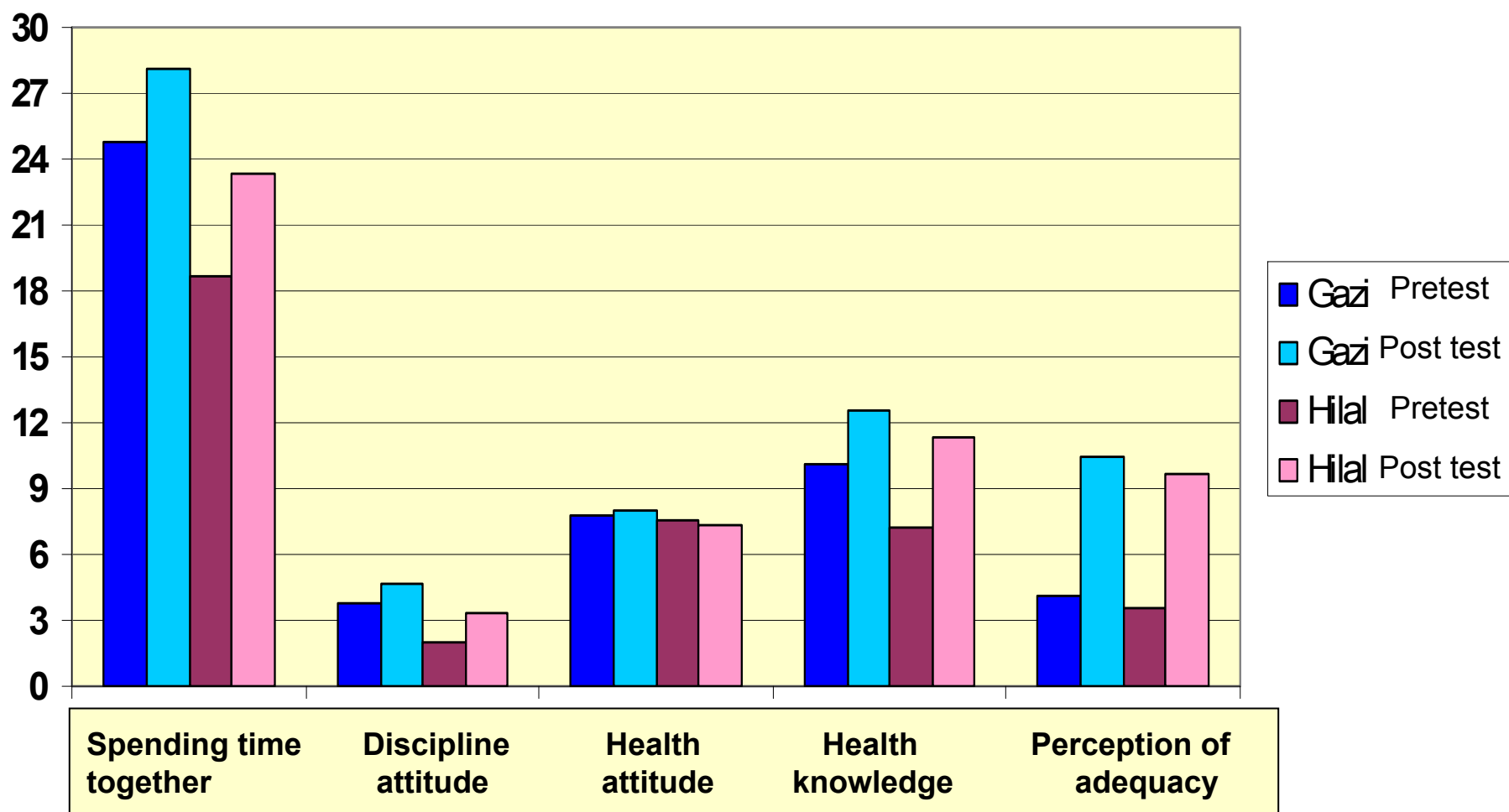
# Phases of the Study:

- **Pretest:** A test composed of 60 questions about spending time together, discipline attitude, health knowlegde and health attitude
  - **Training:** Two–hour sessions/week (16 weeks)
  - **Post test:** Same as pretest
  - **Focus group interviews:** detailed feedback obtained from mothers about their perception of adequacy as a mother
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## Results of Pre and Post tests:

- Statistically significant increase in their knowlegde and attitude about:
    - ❑ Spending efficient time with their children
    - ❑ Use of positive parenting and discipline techniques
    - ❑ Improved communication skills
    - ❑ Correct management of health problems in their children
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## *Results of Focus Group Interview:*

- Mothers said that they enjoyed the program and benefited from it
  - They report that they have a much better communication with their children, their husbands and with their surrounding in general
  - They think that the spouses must get the training as well
  - They tried to share the information with mothers around them who have not attended similar courses
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# CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN TURKEY

- Enhanced primary care
    - Well child care clinics
      - In universities where there is a social pediatrician
    - Family physician system
      - A recent change in the health system
      - Results yet unknown
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# CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS TARGETED TO SPECIFIC FORMS OF ABUSE

- Abusive head trauma (AHT) management
    - Is AHT an issue in Turkey?
    - What do parents know about the dangers of shaking?
    - AHT Prevention program
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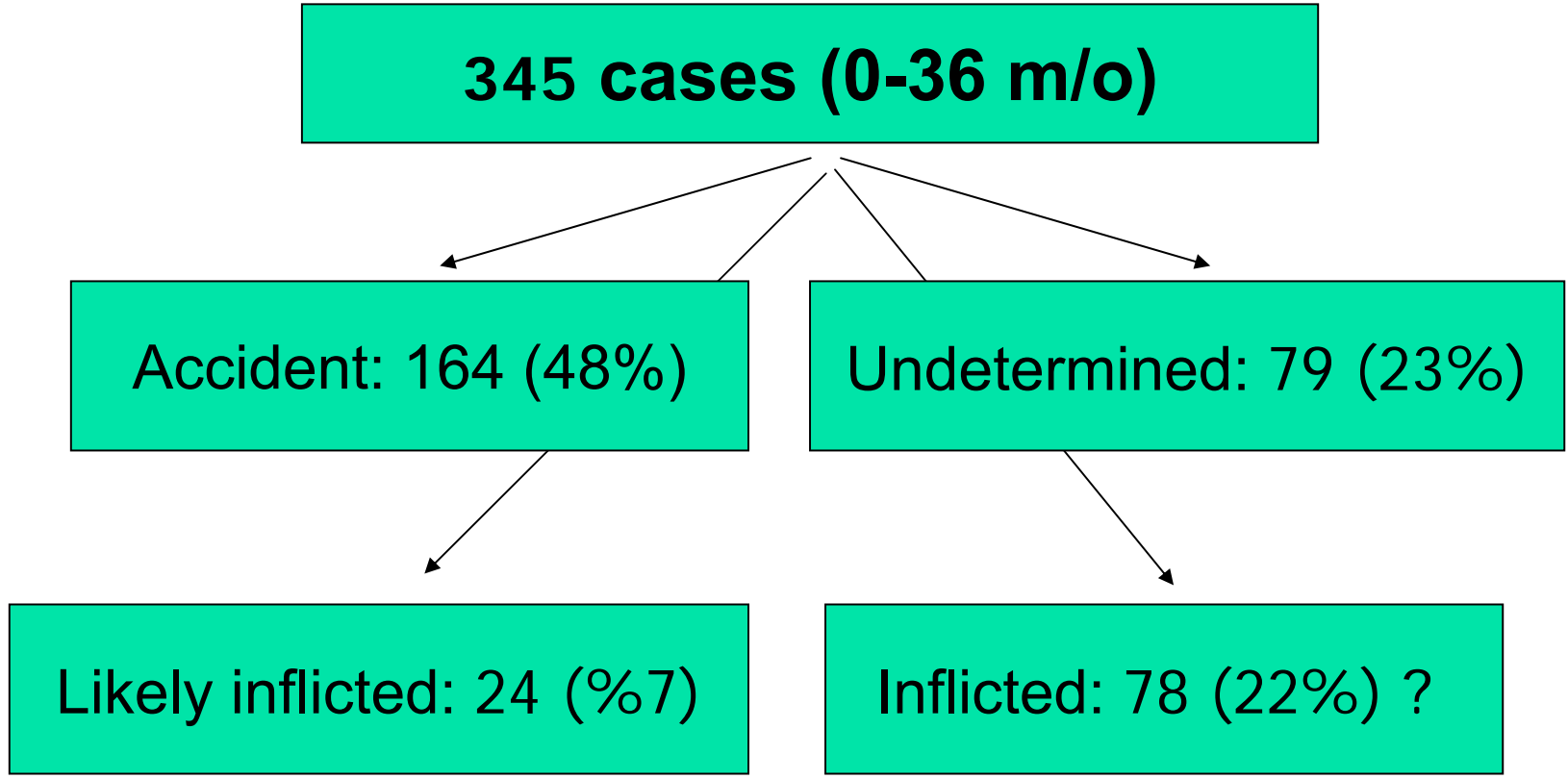
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# Is AHT an issue in Turkey?

- A multicenter study: Data from 12 centers for a retrospective study
  - Method:
    - Children <36 m/o with
    - SDH, SAH, Skull fracture, coma, retinal hemorrhages, change in consciousness...
    - Head CT and/or MRI
    - Symptoms, history, physical exam, imaging findings, retinal exam, lab results, social status, reporting documented retrospectively
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# Demographics

Hospital (n)	Gender	Age (m)	Report filed	Child removed
	Male (%)	Avr $\pm$ SD	Yes %	Yes %
<b>GACH (98)</b>	56 (57)	19.2 $\pm$ 10.1	100.0	0.0
<b>AU (31)</b>	18 (58)	14.5 $\pm$ 8.4	100.0	0.0
<b>VGU (79)</b>	45 (58)	13.9 $\pm$ 7.4	28.0	0.0
<b>CU (38)</b>	18 (47)	20.6 $\pm$ 10.5	94.9	2.6 (1/38)
<b>DU (3)</b>	2 (67)	26.7 $\pm$ 7.2	100.0	33.3 (1/3)
<b>GU (16)</b>	7 (44)	17.4 $\pm$ 8.7	100.0	0.0
<b>GAU (20)</b>	14 (70)	9.1 $\pm$ 6.9	5.0	0.0
<b>EU (19)</b>	11 (58)	14.1 $\pm$ 8.3	38.7	0.0
<b>OGU (5)</b>	1 (20)	14.4 $\pm$ 5.0	0.0	0.0
<b>SBAH (33)</b>	22 (67)	13.4 $\pm$ 8.0	87.5	0.0
<b>TOTAL(345)</b>	<b>194 (56)</b>	<b>16.2<math>\pm</math>9.4</b>	<b>70.9 (244/345)</b>	<b>0.6 (2/345)</b>



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**Retinal exam performed only in 36/345  
(10%)**

**Skeletal survey not performed in 177  
(52%)**

**incomplete work-up  
is widespread**

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# Reported AHT cases

Case	Hospital	Sex	Age (m)	Offender	Comments
1	CU-Sivas	F	6	Father	Offender convicted, GCS <3, witnessed by mother, recovered
2	EU-Kayseri	F	24	Step mother	Trial continuing, GCS <3, no confession, no witness, recovered
3	GU-Ankara	F	9	?	Not tried, prosecutor closed case, GCS <3, no confession, child died

CU: Cumhuriyet University, EU: Erciyes U, GU: Gazi U, F: Female

M: Male; Of: Offender; m: months, GCS: Glasgow coma score

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# What do parents know about the dangers of shaking?

- A study performed with 521 mothers whose infants are followed in Gazi University well child clinics:
    - Only 9% thought that shaking can kill a baby
    - 24% believes that shaking can not cause serious injury in an infant
    - Only 15% of the mothers who knew the dangers of shaking had learned this information from their doctors, the most common source was mass media
    - 75% of mothers admitted that they feel furious or frustrated when their babies have inconsolable cry
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# CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS TARGETED TO SPECIFIC FORMS OF ABUSE

- Sexual abuse prevention
    - May be directed to families, youth and children
      - Ministry of Education had a program for training of high school students about sexuality
      - Family training programs have 1-2 sessions about sexual abuse
      - Peer education
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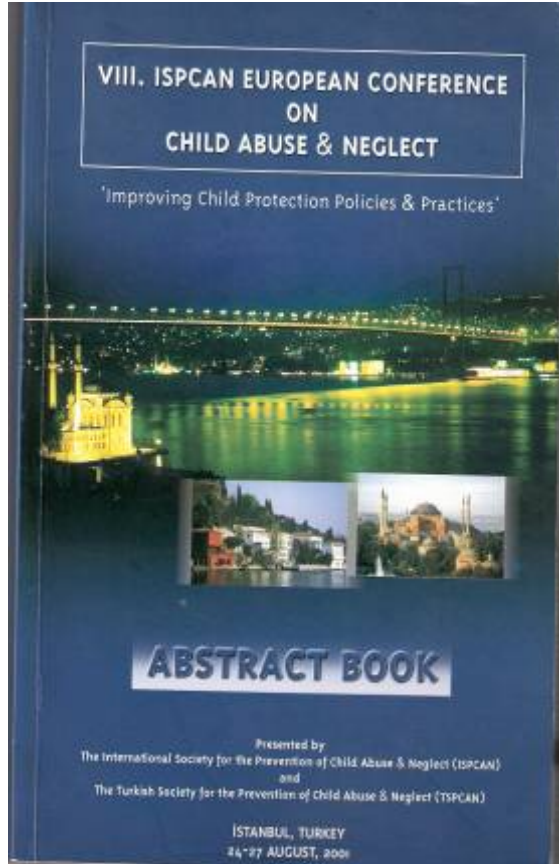
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# CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN TURKEY

- Tertiary prevention (prevention of re-abuse)
    - Hospital based child protection teams
      - Universities:
        - Child protection centers in 3 universities (Gazi, Marmara and Erciyes Universities), many others are being developed (a project supported by UNICEF)
        - Multidisciplinary teams in numerous universities and state hospitals
      - Ministry of Health (for sexual abuse case management)
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# TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS

## ■ CONGRESSES AND CONFERENCES:



### Çocuk İstismarı ve İhmaline Multidisipliner Yaklaşım

Gazi Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi  
Dekanlık Konferans Salonu, Ankara

16-17 Mayıs 2006





# XIX. ISPCAN

International Congress on  
Child Abuse and Neglect

09-12 September 2012 Istanbul, TURKEY



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[www.ispcan2012.org](http://www.ispcan2012.org)

09 - 12 September 2012  
Harbiye Cultural Center & Museum

first  
announcement



Ortaoyun Mosque



St. Irene



Maiden's Tower

[www.ispcan2012.org](http://www.ispcan2012.org)

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