

Children exposed to domestic violence

Detrimental effects and mediating mechanisms

ASD
Kindeswohlgefährdung und
Allgemeiner Sozialer Dienst

dji
Deutsches
Jugendinstitut



Deutsches
Jugendinstitut

Gefördert von



Bundesministerium
für Familie, Senioren, Frauen
und Jugend

Heinz Kindler, Susanna Lillig, Herbert Blüml,
Thomas Meysen, Annegret Werner (Hg.)

Handbuch
Kindeswohlgefährdung
nach § 1666 BGB und
Allgemeiner Sozialer Dienst (ASD)

www.dji.de/asd



Domestic violence: Children's experience

- Interview studies with children (2006: 12 Studies) show that domestic violence regularly is experienced as
 - Frightening
 - Threatening
 - And highly aversiv
- As a result emotional security experienced in the family is undermined
- Some children try to intervene, others try to distance themselves, most children worry about their own security, their family relationships and try to take care of victims, siblings and sometimes perpetrators

Effects on behavioral adaptation and maladaptation

- Several meta-analysis based on control group studies (10 – 40) arrive at roughly similar conclusions

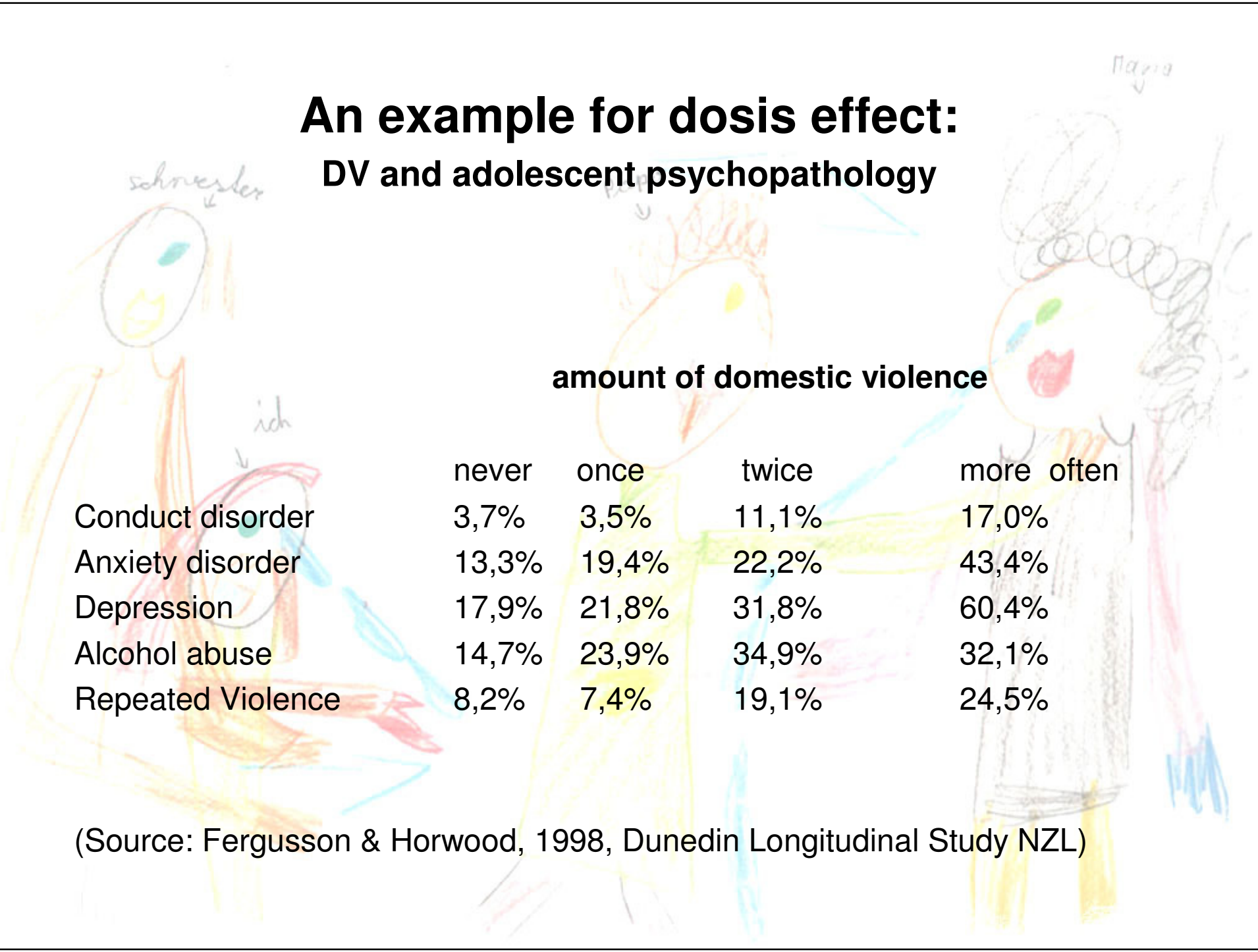
d statistic	Internalising	Externalising
Kindler (2002, only CBCL)	-.81	-.61
Kitzmann et al. (2003)	-.50	-.43
Wolfe et al. (2003)	-.38	-.42
Davies (2005)	-.48	-.46

- Risk ratios for children above clinical cutoffs have been varied with numbers between 2.0 und 5.0

Domestic violence as causal toxic influence

- There are some hints that domestic violence acts as a causal toxic influence
 - Longitudinal studies
 - Dosis effects
 - Studies controlling for alternative explanations
 - Studies showing mediating mechanisms between DV and negative outcome
- However there seem to be also non-causal indirect pathways and cumulative effects together with other stressors.
- The „double whammy“ of DV and parental alcohol abuse has not been properly explored

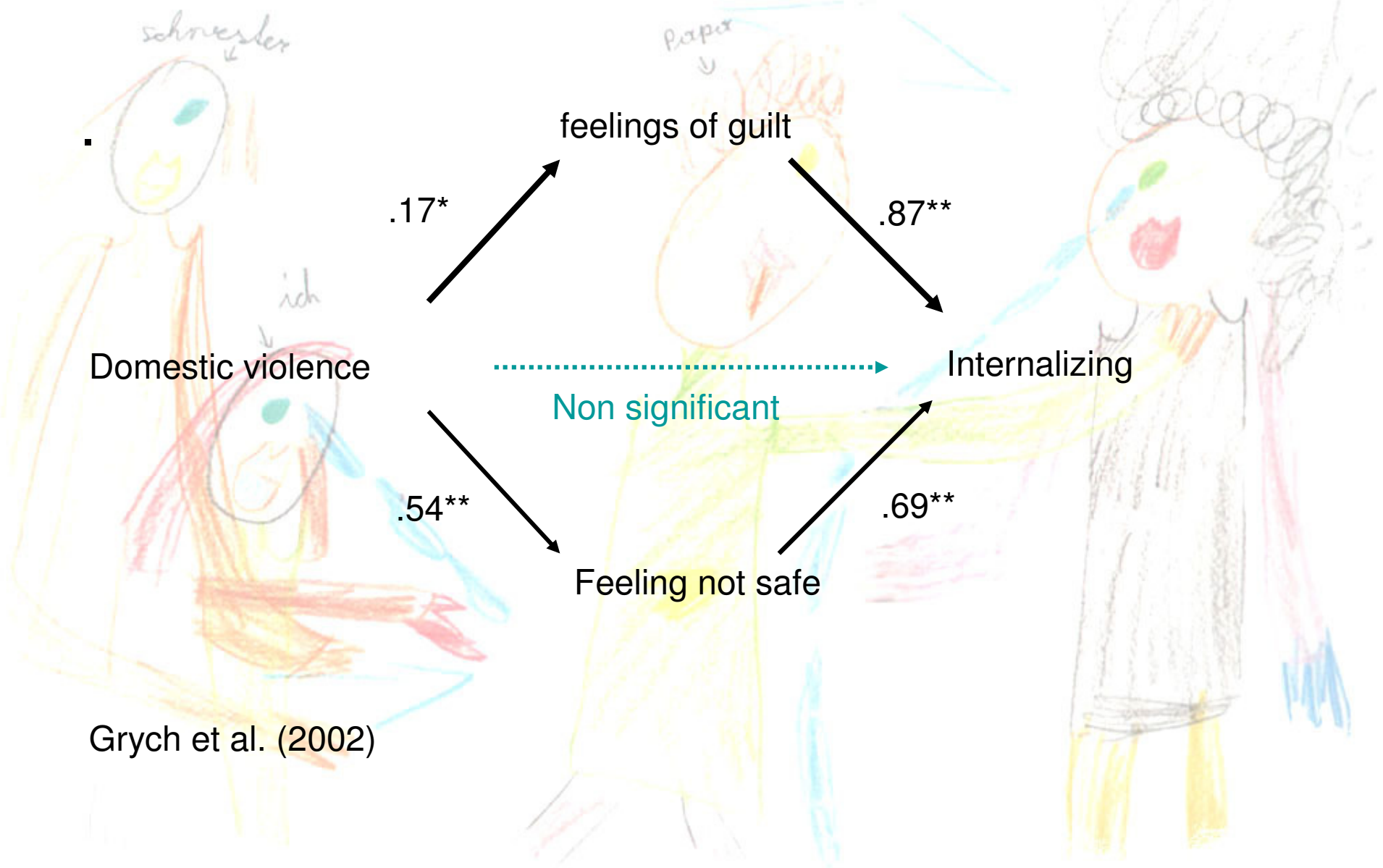
An example for dosis effect: DV and adolescent psychopathology



	amount of domestic violence			
	never	once	twice	more often
Conduct disorder	3,7%	3,5%	11,1%	17,0%
Anxiety disorder	13,3%	19,4%	22,2%	43,4%
Depression	17,9%	21,8%	31,8%	60,4%
Alcohol abuse	14,7%	23,9%	34,9%	32,1%
Repeated Violence	8,2%	7,4%	19,1%	24,5%

(Source: Fergusson & Horwood, 1998, Dunedin Longitudinal Study NZL)

Mediation Analysis



Grych et al. (2002)

Consequences

- Good reasons for cooperation between DV services, alcohol treatment and child protection/child welfare services, e.g.
 - Within alcohol treatment and DV services children may present with own problems that need to be addressed because they don't necessarily go away if alcohol abuse and DV end
 - Within alcohol treatment and DV services some clients show comorbidity and persisting parenting capacity limitations that need to be recognized and addressed

Dimensions of parenting capacity

- care and safety
- attachment
- socialisation
- stimulation



Einschätzung der
Erziehungsfähigkeit

Pflege und Versorgung

Bindung

Vermittlung von
Regeln und Werten

Förderung

Grundlegendes konzeptuelles Verständnis

Resilience Enhancement

- Resilience is a risky concept and resilience enhancement may be not useful as a general strategy
- Heterogeneity in risk exposure studies is only partly due to resilience
 - Large differences in proximal risk conditions in families labeled as DV
 - Sleeper Effects
 - Multifinality
- Taking into consideration these factors rates of resilient children in child maltreatment studies have fallen below 10% (4)
- However: There may be no alternative
- There are cases where it works

Thank you for your attention

ASD
Kindeswohlgefährdung und
Allgemeiner Sozialer Dienst

dji
Deutsches
Jugendinstitut