



An Assessment of Differential Response: Implications for Social Work Practice in Diverse Communities

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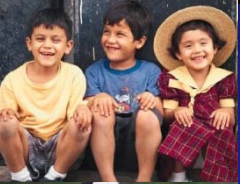
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Overview of the Problem: Lack of Prevention Services

- In the U.S., over 2 million child maltreatment reports per year receive no services
- Evidence that unsubstantiated cases re-refer at rates similar to substantiated cases
- Differential response: Voluntary, community-based services for lower-risk families



Overview: Alameda County DR Program

Reports of child abuse/neglect

Screened out cases in designated zips

CBO liaison

Assessment & Triage

Moderate to High Risk

Low Risk

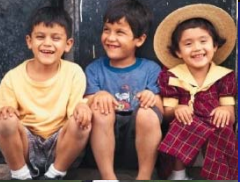
Intensive family support

- ◆ Weekly home visits
- ◆ Linkages to other service providers

Info on community services

Program Goals

- Overarching goal: Prevention of child welfare system involvement
- Proximal goals:
 - Increased connections with community resources
 - Provision of temporary social support
 - Elimination of unmet basic needs
 - Improvement of parent-child relationship



Methods

Process:

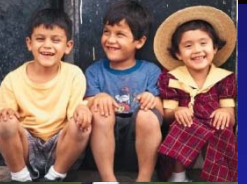
- Focus groups with line staff (n = 12)
- Interviews with managers (n = 16)
- Interviews with clients (n = 30)

Outcomes:

- Treatment group: 161 families who received intervention
- Comparison group: 477 families eligible for intervention

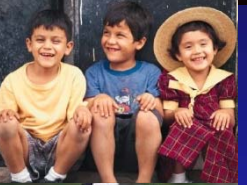
Community services:

- Data collection and organization using GIS

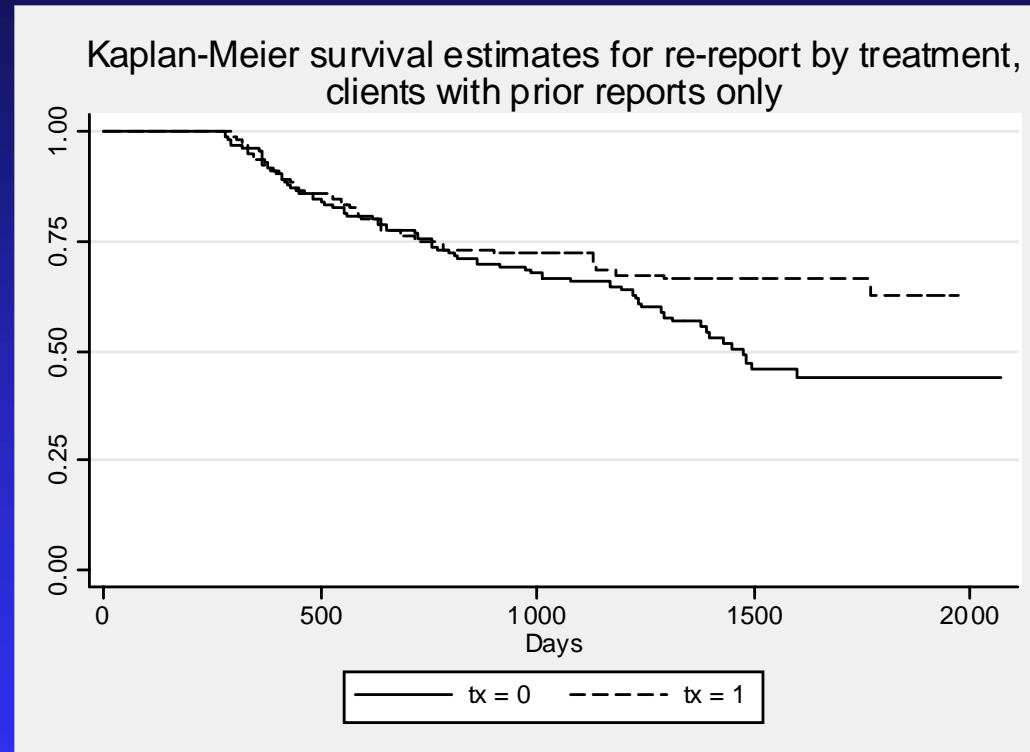


Research Question: Outcomes Study

Question	Data Collection	Analysis
Is DR in Alameda County successful in preventing future child welfare system involvement?	Administrative child welfare data for DR clients and comparison groups	Survival analysis

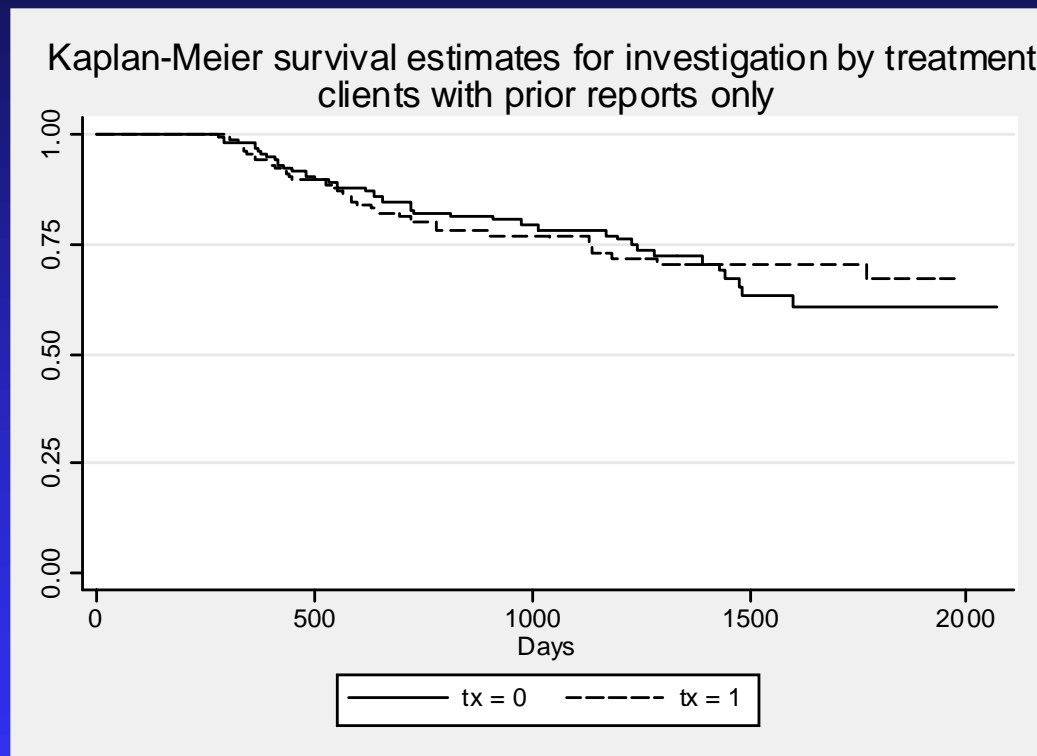


Client Outcomes: Report as Failure



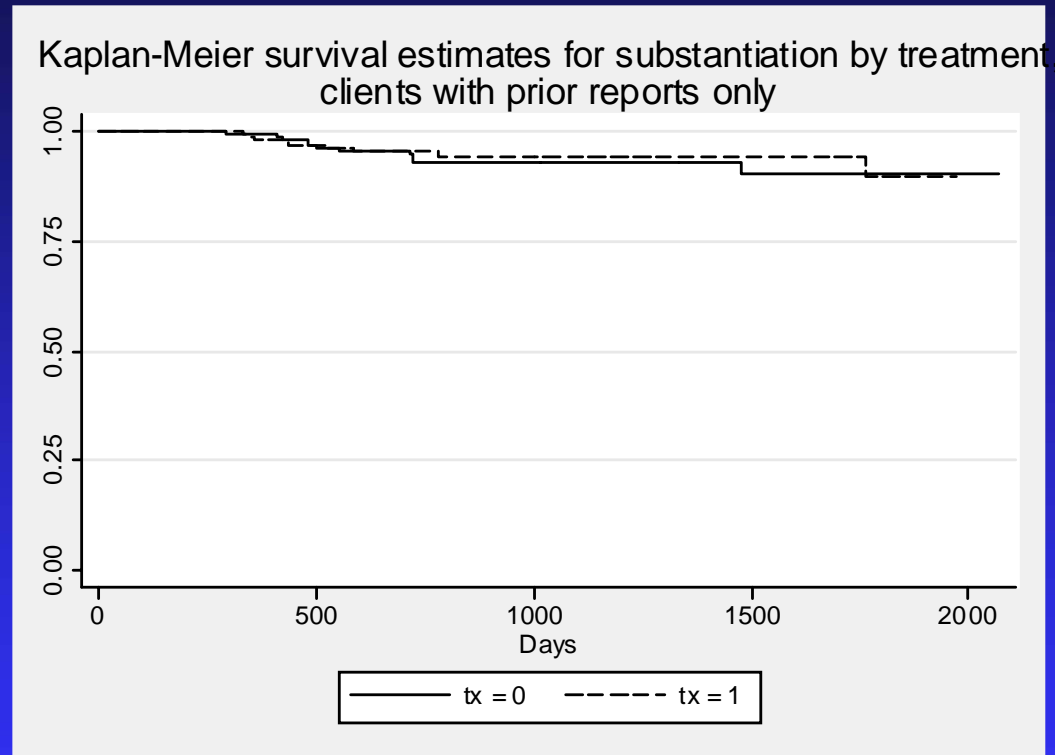
- Unadjusted: Hazard ratio 1.03, p-value 0.87
- Evidence of strong confounding by prior reports
- Clients with prior reports only: Hazard ratio 0.69, p-value 0.064

Client Outcomes: Investigation as Failure



- Unadjusted: Hazard ratio 1.45, p-value 0.05
- Clients with prior reports only: Hazard ratio 0.96, p-value 0.85

Client Outcomes: Substantiation as Failure



- Unadjusted: Hazard ratio 1.82, p-value 0.15
- Clients with prior reports only: Hazard ratio 0.84, p-value 0.71
- Rare event, large confidence intervals

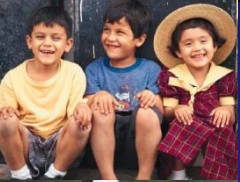
Implications

- While goal of this program is prevention of recurrence of maltreatment, the findings are in line with meta-analyses of child maltreatment prevention programs that show small treatment effects¹
- Findings also fit with other DR studies that have found no difference in re-reporting for DR and non-DR families²
- Intervention may have beneficial outcomes in untested domains, such as parenting and health

¹ MacLeod & Nelson, 2000; Van den Noortgate, Geeraert, Grietens, & Onghena, 2006.


² Center for Child and Family Policy, 2004; English et al., 2000; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2005a.

Thank you



Questions?

References

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