

VIOLENCE: INCIDENCE AND FREQUENCY OF PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSAULTS AFFECTING MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS IN GEORGIA

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Threats to the physical and psychological safety of mental health professionals comprise serious problems according to 1,131 licensed mental health professionals in the state of Georgia, including clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, professional counselors, psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers. From a total of 6,431 surveys sent out, 1,131 (18%) were returned. Results revealed 2,696 separate accounts of 8,292 perpetrators who had committed 14,120 acts of physical or psychological assaults, that 61% of the respondents had been victimized by violent acts of a psychological or physical nature, and that 29% reported that they had feared for their lives at least once during their professional careers. These data are consistent with other research indicating that 6 out of 10 professionals will be assaulted during their professional careers.

This research has resulted in the following two publications:

Arthur, G. L., Brende, J. O., & McBride, J. L. (1999). Violence in the Family Therapist's Workplace: Preventive measures. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 7 (4), 389-394.

Arthur, G. L., Brende, J.O, & Quiroz, S. (2002). Violence: Incidence and impact of physical and psychological assaults on mental health providers in Georgia. *Journal of General Psychology*, 22(4), 1-20.

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