

Battered baby syndrome at Kenyatta National Hospital

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Abstract:

Thirty children presenting with Battered Baby Syndrome over a five year period were studied retrospectively. The male:female ratio was 1:1.1. The majority (60%) were aged 0-11 months. 14 children (46%) were abandoned while six (20%) had multiple fractures, six (20%) multiple bruises and bites, and four (13.3%) had other forms of abuse. Twelve (40%) children were malnourished while eight of the babies (26.6%) were small for gestational age. Children were most frequently brought to hospital by the police or their mothers. The children were most frequently abused by their mothers either through abandonment or through physical battering. Details of mothers of the 14 abandoned children were unknown. Among the mothers of the other children, nine mothers were single, seven married and living with spouses and one stepmother. Two children (6.6%) died while the fate of two others was not known. Three children were sent home without intervention of the social worker, while twenty three children were discharged following intervention of the social worker; fourteen sent home, nine to a childrens' home and one through the juvenile court.