Reviewer's report

Title: Office-based screening for domestic violence: use of a child safety questionnaire.

Version: 2 Date: 19 December 2003

Reviewer: Robert Siegel

Reviewer's report:

General
This manuscript is an important study and clearly leads to the advancement in the field of DV. I think the authors do not appreciate the significance of their work. This study is much, much larger than any previous pediatric study and is the first to include a sizable Hispanic population. I think the authors should clearly state in the introduction that previous pediatric studies had relatively small numbers and failed to give us insight into the Hispanic Community. This what makes this study different and a new contribution to the literature.

Other study points I think should be addressed.
1) I would like to see a comparison of non-hispanic vs hispanic prevalence. This is probably not possible given the screening form, but I'm sure a comparison of English speaking vs Spanish speaking could be made.

2) The authors when comparing before and after compare the five who were significant enough to make an intervention. There may have been many more cases of DV disclosed. They may or may not be mentioned in the child's chart. I think this should be mentioned as a study limitation.

3) Page 7 paragraph 2 of results, it isn't explained what the p value is in comparison to. I would mention ...compared to disclosed before the formal screening tool.

4) The discussion has a long description of pregnancy studies. I have no idea what that has to do with the paper. I would either cut it, or tie it in someway to pediatrics. The Siegel study did show that even with obstetrical screening, many cases were missed.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
None