



## **UNC CFAR Social and Behavioral Science Research Core Database**

**INSTRUMENT TITLE:** AAS: Abuse Assessment Screen

**SOURCE ARTICLE:** McFarlane, J., Parker, B., & Soeken, K. (1995) Abuse during Pregnancy: Frequency, Severity, Perpetrator, and Risk Factors of Homicide. *Public Health Nursing*. 12(5): 284-289

**POPULATION:** heterosexuals, women, youth, African American, patients, Latino

**RESPONSE OPTIONS:** Circling YES or NO, circling all that apply, open-ended questions about duration and frequency, and marking injuries on a body map

**SCORING:** Not available

**SURVEY ITEMS:** This instrument has already been formatted by the author, please see attached

**RELIABILITY INFORMATION:** Not Available

**VALIDITY INFORMATION:** Content and Criterion Validity Reported

**TERMS OF USE:**

Individuals may use this information for research or educational purposes only and may not use this information for commercial purposes. When using this instrument, please cite:

McFarlane, J., Parker, B., & Soeken, K. (1995) Abuse during Pregnancy: Frequency, Severity, Perpetrator, and Risk Factors of Homicide. *Public Health Nursing*. 12(5): 284-289

When presenting results using any survey information you obtained from the SABI, please acknowledge the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Center for AIDS Research (CFAR), an NIH funded program P30 AI50410.

To survey a prenatal population, Hillard (1985) screened 742 pregnant women, asking one abuse-focused question. She reported that 3.9% were abused during the current pregnancy. A random sample of 290 pregnant women attending public and private clinics answered nine abuse-focused questions; 8% of the women reported abuse during the current pregnancy (Helton, McFarlane, & Anderson, 1987). Berenson, Stiglich, Wilkinson, & Anderson (1991) interviewed 501 women and found 5.5% to have been abused during the current pregnancy. In a postpartum sample of 488 women, 8.3% of the women reported physical abuse during pregnancy, with 29% reporting an increase in the abuse during the pregnancy period (Campbell, Poland, Waller, & Ager, 1992). In one prospective study, Amaro, Fried, Cabral, & Zuckerman (1990) asked one abuse-focused question of 1,243 black and Hispanic women, with 7% reporting physical or sexual abuse during pregnancy. Limitations of all these studies include lack of data on the severity or frequency of the injury, relationship of the woman to the perpetrator, and co-existing risk factors of homicide. Additionally, most sampled populations were predominately of one ethnic or racial group, and prevalence rates were calculated on cross-sectional data.

To test the effectiveness of straightforward clinical assessment for abuse, the authors devised a five-question Abuse Assessment Screen (AAS) and interviewed 691 pregnant women, detecting an abuse rate during pregnancy of 16%—a prevalence more than double that of all previous reports (McFarlane, Parker, Soeken, & Bullock, 1992). Further analysis by age revealed a rate of abuse for pregnant teenagers of 21.7% (Parker, McFarlane, Soeken, Torres, & Campbell, 1993).

**METHODS**

The sample consisted of an ethnically stratified cohort of 1,203 African-American (*n* = 414), Hispanic (*n* = 412), and white (*n* = 377) pregnant women from public prenatal clinics in Houston, Texas, and Baltimore, Maryland. All women in the prenatal clinic were invited to participate in the study, regardless of abuse status. "Hispanic" was defined as non-Anglo, non-African-American, and of Spanish-speaking descent.

**INSTRUMENTS**

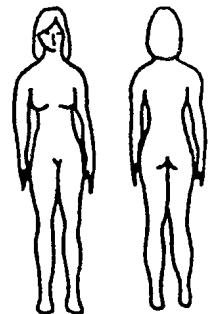
**Abuse Assessment Screen (AAS)**

The Nursing Research Consortium on Violence and Abuse designed the AAS (Parker & McFarlane, 1991). The AAS consists of five questions to determine the frequency, severity, perpetrator, and body sites of injury within a stated period of time (see Figure 1). Content validity was established for the five-question AAS with a panel of 12 nurse researchers of white, African-American, and Hispanic ethnicities working in the area of abuse of women. Significant

**Figure 1.** Abuse assessment screen.

(Circle YES or NO for each question)

1. Have you ever been emotionally or physically abused by your partner or someone important to you?    wYES    NO
2. WITHIN THE LAST YEAR, have you been pushed, shoved, slapped, hit, kicked or otherwise physically hurt by someone?    YES    NO  
 If YES, by whom (Circle all that apply)  
 Husband/Ex-husband    Boyfriend/Ex-boyfriend  
 Stranger    Parent/Step-parent    Sibling    Other Relative  
 Multiple \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total number of times \_\_\_\_\_  
 How long have you been in this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
3. SINCE THE PREGNANCY BEGAN have you been pushed, shoved, slapped, hit, kicked or otherwise physically hurt by someone?    YES    NO  
 If YES, by whom (Circle all that apply)  
 Husband/Ex-husband    Boyfriend/Ex-boyfriend  
 Stranger    Parent/Step-parent    Sibling    Other Relative  
 Multiple \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total number of times \_\_\_\_\_  
 How long have you been in this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mark the area of injury on the body map  
 Score each incident according to the following scale:  
 1 = Threats of abuse including use of a weapon  
 2 = Slapping, pushing; no injuries and/or lasting pain  
 3 = Punching, kicking, bruises, cuts and/or continuing pain  
 4 = Beating up, severe contusions, burns, broken bones  
 5 = Head injury, internal injury, permanent injury  
 6 = Use of weapon; wound from weapon  
 (If any of the descriptions for the higher number apply, use the higher number)
4. WITHIN THE LAST YEAR, has anyone forced you to have sex?    YES    NO  
 If YES, by whom (Circle all that apply)  
 Husband/Ex-husband    Boyfriend/Ex-boyfriend  
 Stranger    Parent/Step-parent    Sibling    Other Relative  
 Multiple \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total number of times \_\_\_\_\_  
 How long have you been in this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Are you afraid of your partner or anyone you listed above  
 YES    NO



(*p* < .001) criterion-related validity was established for the AAS when responses to questions 2, 3, and 4 were compared with scores from the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS),