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CHILDHOOD PARENTAL PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL MALTREATMENT AND ASSOCIATIONS WITH MENTAL HEALTH AMONG 952 UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN CHINA

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Background Although numerous studies have documented the prevalence and negative outcomes of child maltreatment by

parents worldwide, research into this issue is still rare in China. There is an urgent need to address the issues.

Objectives To investigate the prevalence of childhood parental physical and psychological maltreatment (CPPPM) and associations with demographic factors, self-reported mental health and risky behaviors among 952 university students (males 697, females 255) in China.

Results Overall, 44.6% of students reported having been physically or/and psychologically maltreated at least one time, one of four forms of maltreatments by their parents before age of 16, the four forms of maltreatments were hit/kick/push with open hands/fist/feet/other part of body (25.1%), beating with an objects (20.9%), humiliated in front of other people and try to make the child feel bad, stupid or worthless (6.7%), and witnessing parents' physical violence (22.7%). Risk of any CPPPM was not associated with the existence of siblings (one-child vs two- or more child families), rural/urban residence during childhood, or parental education. Compared with their peers who had no CPPPM, the students with two or more forms of CPPPM showed significantly higher level of loneliness, more depressed, suicidal thinking, drank alcohol, and involved in violence.

Significance This research showed that the problem of CPPPM is not uncommon and the problem has a significant correlation with youth mental health problems.