

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Aggression in Fragile X Syndrome

 View the online report: www.ourfragilexworld.org/aggression-in-FXS

Date Published: August 2017

What was the research about?

Our Fragile X World (OFXW) researchers studied aggression in individuals with fragile X syndrome (FXS) and how it affects the parents and legal guardians who take care of them.

What did the research team do?

We conducted a survey which asked about how often individual's with FXS showed aggression, what triggered it, how it affected families, and what families did to handle it. We also looked at how often sensory or health issues were related to aggression.

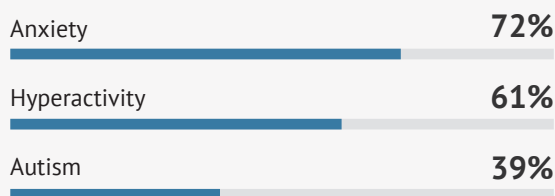
Who was in the study?

Almost 800 caregivers of individuals with FXS completed the survey. Most caregivers who took the survey were white, college-educated, married women with an average age of 49 years. Children with FXS ranged in age from toddlers to older adults. Most children lived at home with their parents.



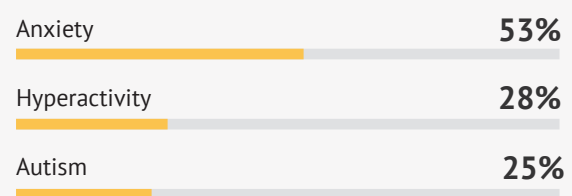
642 males with FXS were included in the study, with an average age of 20 years.

Other disorders that males with FXS had



132 females with FXS were included in the study, with an average age of 16 years.

Other disorders that females with FXS had

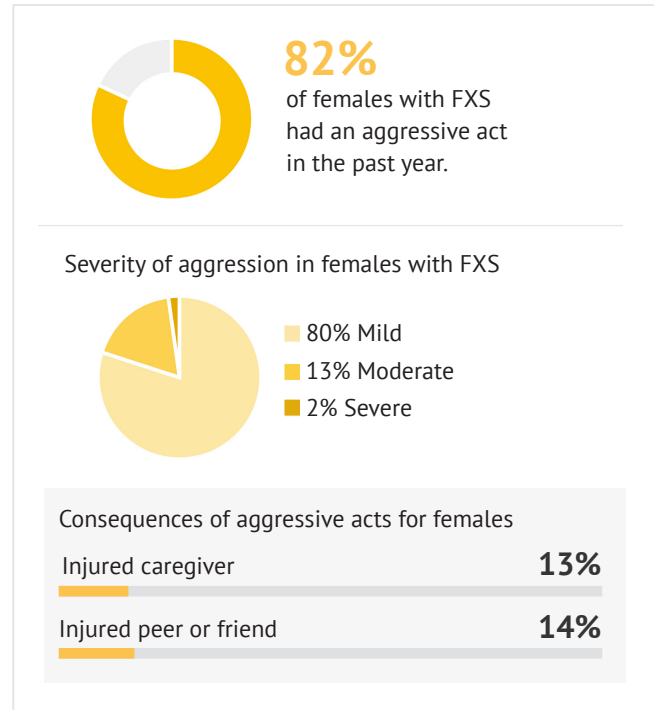
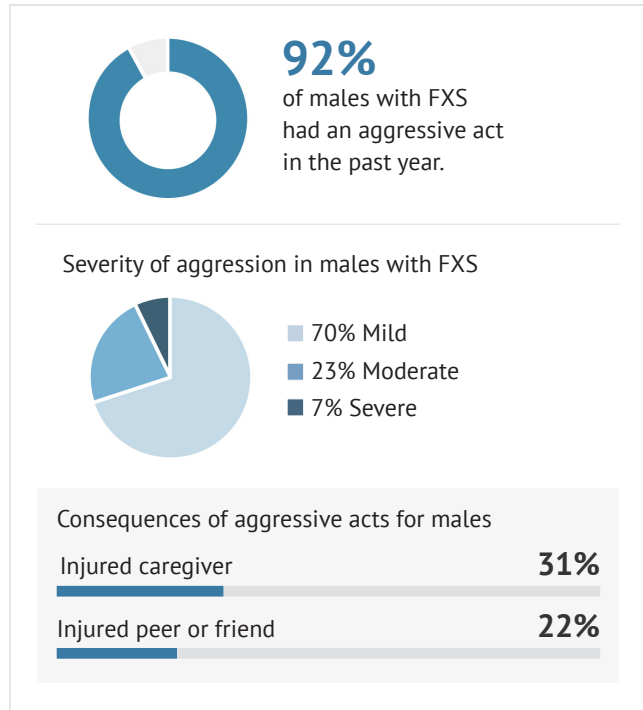


Source. Wheeler, A.C., Raspa, M., Bishop, E., Bailey Jr., D. B. (2016). *Aggression in fragile X syndrome*. Journal of Intellectual Disability Research, 60 Part 2, 113-125

What did the research team learn?

Having temper tantrums, being defiant, arguing, hitting, pushing, or kicking were common forms of aggression. Most of the children had 4 to 5 aggressive acts in the past year.

Aggression was often triggered by trouble communicating with others. Children with high anxiety, hyperactivity, sensory issues, and those from lower income families had more problems with aggression.



Common ways caregivers handled aggression



Redirecting the child's attention



Calming activities



Ignoring



Medication



Time out and loss of privileges



Behavioral therapy

What does this mean for families?

Many individuals with FXS have trouble with aggression. We learned that sensory issues, anxiety, or a lack of family resources can affect how often and how severely a person may act out with aggression. Individuals with FXS may act aggressively to try to deal with or escape from something that is frustrating or unpleasant to them.

Understanding the triggers of aggression can help families and professionals decide how to prevent and treat this problem. For example, helping an individual learn other ways to communicate and interact with others may help reduce aggression.

If your child has temper tantrums or other types of aggression, talk with your health care provider about a plan for handling these issues. It may also be helpful to reach out to a parent support group in your area to learn what others have tried.