

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION FORM

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SEX + GENDER

Exploring the role of sex and gender on health research



CHR D 2020: Abstract Submission Form

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Title

The Impact of Maternal Dyadic Interactions on Child Stress Physiology and Resiliency

Background

A child's ability to regulate their physiology in response to stress has important implications for long-term physical and mental health. Through support, parents assist child stress regulation and impact development by buffering children from the consequences of stress.

Objective

This study examines specific parent behaviours that are associated with children's physiological recovery from acute stress.

Methods

This data is drawn from a larger University of Denver study examining risk and resilience in families exposed to socioeconomic adversity. Participants included 41 English speaking maternal dyads with children aged 6 to 45 months. Assessments designed to elicit an acute stress response from children and responsivity from parents were recorded and analyzed. Children's hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis activity was assessed by measuring salivary cortisol reactivity and recovery. It was predicted that higher levels of maternal sensitivity would predict faster post-stressor recovery to baseline following an acute stressor.

Results

A linear regression revealed links between maternal comfort and child cortisol recovery, ($F(5,20) = 6.094, p = .001$) but not reactivity ($F(3, 25) = .336, p = .799$), ($F(5, 23) = .379, p = .858$). The findings add knowledge about the role of maternal comforting behaviors (both gestures and verbalizations) predict children's cortisol recovery. These results add specific knowledge about the role of maternal comforting actions as a potential pathway to buffer children's physiological stress response.

Conclusion

Future research will examine results in a larger sample with Spanish speaking Latino families. Future clinical research may also seek to encourage such comforting behaviours in dyadic interactions as targets for promoting resilience following stress.

Theme:

Clinical

Do you have a table/figure to upload?

No

Are you willing to participate in Goodbear's Den?

Yes

Presenter Status:

Undergraduate Students

What was your role in the project?

Analyze Data

Authors

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