

Adverse events affect children's development, physical health and biology

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It's known that adverse childhood experiences carry over into adult life, but a new study is focusing on the effect of these experiences in the childhood years.

For an abstract to be presented at the American Academy of Pediatrics 2016 National Conference & Exhibition in San Francisco, researchers conducted a systematic literature review to identify some of the clinical signs that can be used to recognize children at risk after experiencing trauma. They examined 39 cohort studies to determine the [effect](#) adverse childhood experiences has on health and biological outcomes in children.

The authors found that household dysfunction affects children's weight early in childhood, and abuse and neglect affect children's weight later in childhood. Children exposed to early adversity also have increased risk for asthma, infection, somatic complaints, and sleep disruption. Maternal mental health issues are associated with elevated cortisol levels, and maltreatment is associated with a lower cortisol profile.

"The majority of research on early adversity has looked at long-term adult outcomes," said Debby Oh, PhD, research associate at the Center for Youth Wellness in San Francisco, California. "While this research has helped identify the problem, we must also deepen our understanding of what is happening in the brains and bodies of our children as they experience adversity."

Dr. Oh said that with appropriate intervention, children are able to recover from some of these negative health effects, making early detection a powerful tool to protect the health and well-being of children before long-term adult outcomes occur.

More information: Dr. Oh will present the abstract, "Systematic Review of Pediatric Health Outcomes Associated with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)," at American Academy of Pediatric National Conference on Oct. 24, in San Francisco, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. PT in Moscone West Convention Center rooms 2022/2024.

Provided by American Academy of Pediatrics

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