

S07-02 - MATERNAL PERINATAL DEPRESSION: IMPACT ON INFANT EMOTION REGULATION AND LATER TODDLER BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

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Introduction: Pre-and Post-natal maternal stress and/or psychopathology can have negative effects on infant temperament and later toddler behavior (Buitelaar, Huizink, Mulder, Robles de Medina, & Visser, 2003; Gutteling et al., 2005; Whitaker, Orzol, & Kahn, 2006). Infant temperamental difficulties, such as shyness or emotional lability, have been associated with later behaviors problems as children develop (Olson, Bates, Sandy, & Lanthier, 2000; Olson, Bates, Sandy, & Schilling, 2002). In particular, infant emotionality and emotional reactivity has been suggested as an early precursor to externalizing problems in children (Crockenberg, 2005).

Objectives/aims: The goal of this research study is to explore the links and potential pathways between maternal perinatal depression and adverse infant and toddler behavior problems.

Methods: The present study utilizes data from a high-risk community sample and explores the links between maternal stress and depression during pregnancy and postpartum predicting to their infants' emotion regulation problems at 7 months of age. On a smaller subset we further explore the associations between early emotion regulation problems and subsequent development of pre-school behavior problems.

Results: We found that both maternal postpartum depression and problematic bonding uniquely predict problematic infant temperament at 7-months, and that in turn, infant emotion regulation problems were predictive of higher scores of toddler behavior problems 12 months later.

Conclusions: Our preliminary data confirms that infant emotionality (in the context of maternal psychopathology and problematic bonding) may be an early precursor to the development of later toddler behavior problems.