



Our Mission:

The Saint Louis University School of Public Health is dedicated to the discovery, translation, and dissemination of public health knowledge to improve the health and well being of all.



Prenatal Mental Health

This project has enrolled a cohort of 744 pregnant low-income women to study the relationship between psychiatric disorder and pregnancy outcomes. The representative population-based sample was stratified by location of residence (urban versus rural), and proportionately included Caucasian and African American women. Researchers used the Diagnostic Interview Schedule-IV (DIS-IV) to assess psychiatric characteristics of the sample. The project is funded by the National Institute of Mental Health.

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Discovery

What is the health problem?

- ❖ Nearly half the population of poor urban and rural young women has a lifetime psychiatric diagnosis and about 25% of women have an active diagnosis during pregnancy.
- ❖ Psychiatric problems during pregnancy are related to having low birth weight infants, decreased maternal and child bonding, and slower infant growth and development.

Translation

How do we take what we know and apply it to treating pregnant women?

Results of this study will be used to:

- ❖ Inform health providers, social workers, and policy makers about the prevalence and complications of maternal psychiatric problems.
- ❖ In particular, we will share information with policy makers and practitioners about the burden of maternal psychiatric illness on child development.

Dissemination

How did we disseminate project findings?

- ❖ We will publish study findings in academic journals.
- ❖ We will present findings to state and local maternal and child health professionals and to the St. Louis maternal and child health coalition.
- ❖ We will share findings with prenatal, postnatal, and child development home visitation programs (e.g., Nurses for Newborns, Whole Kids Outreach, Parents as Teachers).

Change

What change occurred because of the dissemination?

- ❖ Increased awareness of prevalence of lifetime and current psychiatric disorders among pregnant women.
- ❖ Increased awareness of the impact of lifetime and current psychiatric disorders among pregnant women on the birth outcomes.
- ❖ Informed mental health policies that address the role of mental health during pregnancy that allows for primary and secondary prevention for mothers and young children.