



Therapeutic Perinatal Research with Low-Income Families: Leveraging Benevolent Childhood Experiences (BCEs) and Fathers' Perspectives to Promote Resilience

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SUMMARY

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This article explored the value of clinical research during the pregnancy period that would be valuable and beneficial because of its ability to build positive, inclusive, and therapeutic experiences in low-income and ethnically diverse pregnant women and fathers-to-be.

With a lack of research studies and clinical practices that harness resilience processes for pregnant women with childhood trauma, this specific study sought to leverage participants' benevolent childhood experiences and promote insight to counteract mental health and relationship problems before babies are born.

Participants in San Francisco and Denver completed a clinical research protocol on mental health symptoms, childhood trauma and life stressors,

benevolent childhood experiences, relationship dynamics, and demographic information.

Participants also provided narratives that encouraged them to reflect on topics such as attributions toward their partner and baby in uterine, how much they plan to parent as compared to their own mother or father, and what aspects of their lives are currently the most fulfilling and joyful, versus difficult and stressful.

Despite participants' report of extensive childhood trauma, cumulative stress, and elevated depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms, their reflections at the end of illustrate that they feel their stories are valued, learned to connect past experiences to present functioning, gain insights about their romantic relationships, and enjoy the research experience.

The researchers attribute the

findings to the fact that pregnancy elicits reflection on one's childhood, it also represents an important window to build insight and foster resilience.

1. Narayan, A.J., Natzl, V.M., Merrick, J.S., River, L.M., and Peña, R. (2019). Therapeutic Perinatal Research with Low-Income Families: Leveraging Benevolent Childhood Experiences (BCEs) and Fathers' Perspectives to Promote Resilience. *Zero to Three* 39(5), pg 43-53. [Link](#)