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Author: Peter Barr

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**Early Neighborhood Conditions and Trajectories of Depressive Symptoms across Adolescence and into
Adulthood**

Peter Barr, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology
Virginia Commonwealth University
817 W. Franklin St
Suite B-16, room B-30
Richmond, VA. 23284
pbarr2@vcu.edu

Abstract

Early life conditions, including childhood socioeconomic status (SES) or exposure to adverse conditions, can have long-term consequences on mental health. However, relatively little has examined the long-term influence of exposure to adverse neighborhood conditions in early life. Both neighborhood disadvantage and neighborhood disorder have been consistently linked to mental health outcomes, especially depression. The current analysis uses data from all waves of the National Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Add Health) to determine the influence of neighborhood context on trajectories of depressive symptoms from adolescence into adulthood. We find that neighborhood disadvantage has no influence on initial levels or change over time in depressive symptoms after adjusting for individual level covariates. However, neighborhood disorder is associated with greater initial levels of depressive symptoms during adolescence and this difference persists throughout the early life course. Additionally, while female respondents had greater levels of depressive symptoms across time, the effect of neighborhood conditions did not vary by sex. Our results demonstrate that early neighborhood conditions are an important risk factor for long-term patterns of depressive symptoms, above and beyond important proximal factors such as family SES, family composition, and race-ethnicity.

Keywords: Neighborhoods; Longitudinal analysis; Depression; Adolescence; Young Adulthood

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