Exposures to Adverse Childhood Experiences and Mental Health

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Mental Health
Mental Health (internalizing)

- Good coverage of mental health with specific screeners, generally.
  - Most mood and internalizing disorders have at least 1 questionnaire to assess them that could be given to parents about kids or given to adolescents.
  - Good measurement of suicidal ideation and behavior
  - SDQ is the only ‘general’ psychopathology measure.
"General" Mental Health Measure

• Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) or Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC)

Pro:
• Measure multiple subscales with clinical cut-offs for many disorders (e.g., depression, PTSD, somatoform disorders)
• Broad ‘internalizing’ and ‘externalizing’ subscales

Con:
• Are sold by individuals or companies
• Require special scoring software or manuals
Childhood Adversity
Childhood Adversity

Evidence from randomized control trials indicates that these associations are causal – exposure to prolonged adversity in early life leads to changes in brain, behavior, and physiology.

Nelson et al., 2007; Sheridan et al., 2018; Muennig, Schweinhart, Montie, & Neidell, 2009
Prevalence is high

- Parent death: 7.3%
- Parent divorce: 28.4%
- Other parent loss: 4.9%
- Parent mental illness: 15.6%
- Parent substance use: 10.7%
- Parent criminality: 26.3%
- Family violence: 8.4%
- Physical abuse: 4.2%
- Sexual abuse: 4.4%
- Emotional abuse: 5.9%
- Neglect: 2.2%
- Poverty: 16.2%
- Any Adversity: 58.3%
Impact continues throughout the lifespan

- **Childhood**: 44.6%
- **Early Adulthood**: 28.6%
- **Adolescence**: 32.0%
- **Mid-Later Adulthood**: 25.9%

National Comorbidity Study
How should we characterize exposure?
Cumulative Risk Approach

McLaughlin et al, 2012, *Archives of General Psychiatry*
Cumulative Risk (ACEs)

• Effectively predicts who is most at risk
• Usually covers a lot of ground in a short amount of time

In PhenX:
- Adverse Life Events Scale (children or adults)
- Life Stressor Checklist (adults)
- Stressful Life Events Screening Questionnaire
Limits of Cumulative Risk measurement approach

• Limited number of biological mechanisms can account for this kind of model (e.g., stress)

• Not a very in depth assessment of kind of exposure, timing of exposure, duration of exposure, etc.
Poverty

Institutionalization

Neglect

High Threat

Low Deprivation

Community Violence

Domestic Violence

Physical & Sexual Abuse

Complex Exposures

Typical Developmental Environments

Sheridan & McLaughlin, 2014; McLaughlin, Lambert, Sheridan, 2014
Dimensional Model of Adversity and Psychopathology (DMAP)

• Abuse predicts emotional reactivity, disrupted fear learning, and lack of regulation skills controlling for neglect, poverty, parental education, and cognitive stimulation in the home.¹

• Cognitive stimulation in the home, parental education and neglect are associated with cognitive deficits controlling for maltreatment and violence exposure.²

1. McLaughlin, et al., 2015; Busso, et al., 2016; Lambert, et al., 2017; McLaughlin, et al., 2016; Milojevich, et al., under review; Machlin, et al., in prep
2. Sheridan, et al., 2017; Miller, et al., 2018; Rosen, et al., 2018; Rosen, et al., under review
Threat in PhenX - family

• Maltreatment
  – Conflict Tactic Scale- Parent/Child Version (CTS-PC)
  – Child Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ)
  – Childhood Experience of Care and Abuse (CECA)
  – Maltreatment and Abuse Chronology of Exposure Scale
  – Lifetime Trauma and Victimization History Instrument
  – Child Abuse Potential Inventory

• Domestic Violence
  – Conflict Tactic Scale – Revised (CTS-2)
Threat in PhenX – outside of family

• Violence (general)
  – Violence Exposure Scale for Children – revised (VEX-R)
  – National Survey of Children’s Exposure to Violence
  – Juvenile Victimization Questionnaire 2\textsuperscript{nd} Revision
  – General Victimization Scale

• Community Violence
  – Screen for Adolescent Violence Exposure (SAVE)
  – Neighborhood Safety
Deprivation in PhenX

• Neglect
  – Multidimensional Neglectful Behavior Scale – Child Report
  – CTS, CTQ, CECA all have neglect subscales

• Cognitive Home Environment
  – StimQ (infant, toddler, preschool versions)

• Suggestions:
  – HOME Interview
  – HOME questionnaire
HOME Interview

• 45 min – 1 hour interview/observation covering:
  – Parental investment in and resources for scaffolding their child’s cognitive development
  – Safety/cleanliness of the home environment
  – A few questions about harsh discipline

• Questionnaire:
  – Asks same questions, but no observation & in questionnaire form (X number of questions)
  – Can be used with adolescents/children

Should the HOME be included?

• Pros:
  – well validated, commonly used, associated with cognitive outcomes, even adulthood.
  – RCT’s based on HOME conceptualization indicate causal links between cognitive stimulation and cognitive outcomes

• Cons:
  – Woefully out of date
    • sexist and adherent to a family structure which is uncommon today
    • No digital media included.
  – Updated versions of questionnaire have been made but these are not specifically as well validated

• Offer updated versions as options?
Typical Family Function

- Family Environment
  - Family Risk and Protective Factors
  - Family Interpersonal Relationships Protocol
  - Parent Practices Interview
  - Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scale IV
  - Family Functioning Scales
  - Family Socialization Interview
Other Environments for Children

• School Environment
  – School Social Environment
  – School Risk and Protective Factors
  – School Safety Questionnaire
  – American School Climate Survey

• Neighborhood
  – Physical Activity Neighborhood Environment Survey (PANES)
  – Neighborhood Safety
  – Community Risk and Protective Factors
  – Protocol – Neighborhood Concentrated Disadvantage
  – Neighborhood Stress Index
Other Adversity

• **Trauma Screens**
  – UCLA PTSD Index
  – Traumatic Life Events Questionnaire
  – Traumatic Events Screening Inventory
  – Child and Adolescent Trauma Screen

• **Discrimination**
  – Major Experiences and Everyday Discrimination Scales (adults only)
Missing Variables

• **Other discrimination:**
  – Heightened Vigilance Scale
    • 10 questions about vigilance related to discrimination

• **Family Chaos/unpredictability**
  – Confusion, Hubbub, and Order Scale (CHAOS)
    • 15 items about household order
  – Household Chaos (observed) from Family Life Project
    • 10 items observed in the household and in interactions with the household