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Exploring Loss of Parental Attachment at a Young Age and Its Impact on Adult Health

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Abstract

Current research has established a link between traumatic childhood experiences and adult health and wellbeing (Centers for Disease Controls and Prevention, ACES). At least 1 in 6 has experienced some form of adverse childhood experiences (ACES). At least five of the top ten leading causes of death are linked to ACES. This exploratory project focused on adults who were, for a variety of reasons, not raised by their biological parents. This included children raised through the foster care system, raised by their relatives, and/or raised by family friends. The impact of losing attachment to one's biological family was explored with adults using surveys and open-ended interviews. It was anticipated that participants who experienced trauma and/or child abuse will report struggles with both their mental and physical health and wellbeing.

"Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 5 Nov. 2019, www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aces/index.html.

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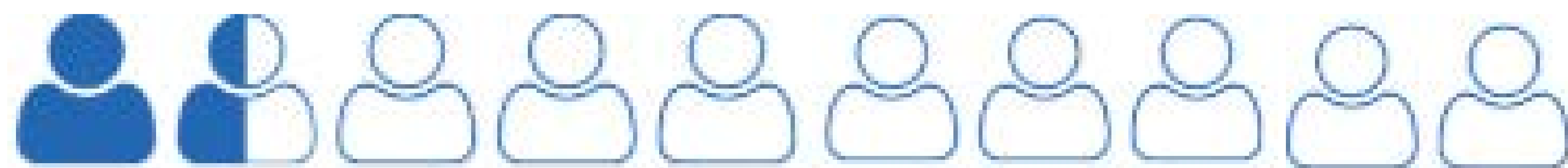
Sarah Bofukya Bope
Mentor: Robin Allen, PhD

Literature Reviews

Current research has established a link between traumatic childhood experiences and adult health and wellbeing (Centers for Disease Controls and Prevention, ACES). At least 1 in 6 has experienced some form of adverse childhood experiences (ACES). At least five of the top ten leading causes of death are linked to ACES. This exploratory project focuses on adults who were, for a variety of reasons, not raised by their biological parents. This particular population has not been previously studied.



64% of adults have experienced at least one type of Adverse Childhood Experiences (CDC, 2019).



16% of adults have experience more than four types of Adverse Childhood Experiences (CDC, 2019).

Research Question

What are the effects on health and wellbeing of one losing attachment to their biological parents at a young age?

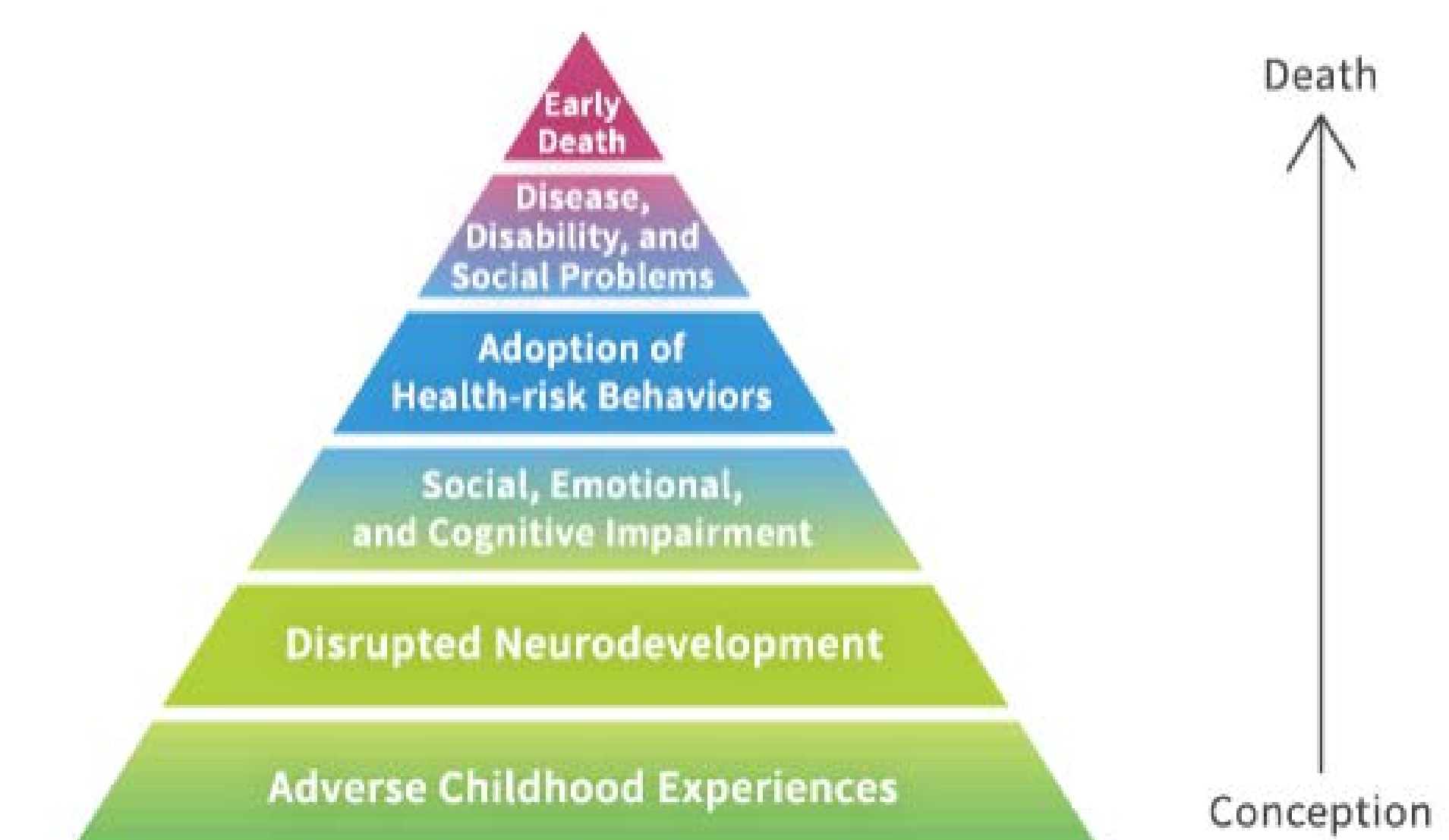
Methods

The impact of losing attachment to one's parents will be explored through cross-sectional internet surveys and non-probability interviews.

Possible Results

It is anticipated that individuals that have experienced trauma/and/or child abuse will report struggles with both their mental and physical health and wellbeing. Although, individuals with higher protective factors are hypothesized to have stronger health and wellbeing.

Mechanism by which Adverse Childhood Experiences Influence Health and Well-being Throughout the Lifespan



(Health Enhancement Systems, 2019)

References

"Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 5 Nov. 2019, www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aces/index.html.

"The Hidden Risk Factor: How Adverse Childhood Experiences Influence Adult Well-Being." *Health Enhancement Systems*, 4 Sept. 2019, www.hesonline.com/2019/01/14/adverse-childhood-experiences-ace-influence-wellbeing/.