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### Children's Resilience to Family Financial Insecurity

Approximately 906,000 children are exposed to some form of abuse or neglect in the United States. A wide variety of research has concluded that children who are exposed to harsh kinds of maltreatment will potentially be at risk for a range of problems in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Children who are maltreated tend to grow up in family households with multiple problems occurring. Consequently, children's resilience to maltreatment may depend on the total number of stressors that they face, as the fit between the child and the environment is the best predictor of children's psychological well-being.

This research focused on correlations between the economic stressors and household net income of the family and their relationship to the child's cortisol reactivity and mental health stability, as it was predicted that there will be significant correlations between the four variables. Social support or coping mechanisms (Problem Focused Coping and Positive Cognitive Restructuring) were analyzed with the purpose of finding to what degree they modify the relationship between the aforementioned variables. Self-report questionnaires were given to families who had been previously visited by social workers, indicating previous child maltreatment cases. This study found that as the families' economic stressors increased with increasingly low net income, the child's behavioral problems increased, indicating a lower standing of resilience; their cortisol levels increased as well. When coping mechanisms were used effectively the child was seen to have lower cortisol reactivity and was deemed to be resilient. This is useful as it can act as a guide for social workers in encouraging the child victim to hold more resilience to their traumatic event. In addition, the child can become more aware of coping strategies to be used to incorporate resilient behavior. However, no cause and effect conclusions can be drawn from this study.

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