“Threats to caregiving in the community following infant reentry from a prison nursery”

This session continues to report on findings from the first longitudinal study of infants raised in a US prison nursery and their mothers, “Maternal and Child Outcomes of a Prison Nursery Program” (RO1 NR007782, M. Byrne, PI), a project supported by NIH for the past 8 years. A weekly Nurse Practitioner visit program was added to the prison nursery programming during the prison co-residence stay of 100 mother/infant dyads and then children were followed during the reentry years with the biological mother and/or an alternative family caregiver. Multiple survey, questionnaire, videographed, and qualitative outcome measures were used. This study focuses on predictors of behavioral development for a subset of 53 child/primary caregiver dyads re-enrolled in the long term reentry study phase. Secure attachment in spite of maternal insecurity and achievement of child development milestones were established during the nursery phase. Caregiver changes, under employment, and sparse resources characterized the reentry phase. Children separated from the mother at end of nursery co-residence had more internalizing problems in third reentry year than children seamlessly cared for by their mother. Caregiver depressive symptomatology and parent-child dysfunctional interaction explained 45% of the variance. Following a supportive prison nursery co-residence experience both maternal and alternative caregivers require continued community nursing resources.

Study related publications:


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