

Depressed Moms' Parenting Style Linked to Toddler Stress

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LiveScience:

Preschoolers whose parents are depressed get stressed out more easily than kids with healthy parents, but only if their mothers have a negative parenting style, according to a new study.

The research, set to be published in an upcoming issue of the journal *Psychological Science*, measured the levels of the stress hormone cortisol in kids' saliva after mildly stressful experiences, such as interacting with a stranger. The researchers found that cortisol spikes were more extreme in kids whose parents had a history of depression and also exhibited a critical, easily frustrated parenting style.

“It’s actually quite hopeful, because if we focus on the parenting, we could really intervene early and help parents with chronic depression when they have kids,” study author Lea Dougherty, a psychologist at the University of Maryland, said in a statement.

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