New Research From *Clinical Psychological Science*

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Read about the latest research published in *Clinical Psychological Science*:

Auditory Processing in Growth-Restricted Fetuses and Newborns and Later Language Development

Barbara S. Kisilevsky, Beverly Chambers, Kevin C. H. Parker, and Gregory A. L. Davies

Past research has found that children who are born small for their gestational age are at risk for language deficits. In the first of three studies, fetuses that were of average size for their gestational age (AGA) were played audio recordings of a passage of text being read by their mothers. AGA fetuses showed a sustained increase in heart rate in response to their mothers' voices, whereas fetuses that were small for their gestational age (SGA) showed only a brief increase in heart rate. Compared with their AGA counterparts, SGA subjects continued to show deficits as infants (study 2) and at 15 months (study 3). This supports the authors' hypothesis that fetal growth restriction affects the development of auditory system functioning, which can then lead to impaired auditory processing.

Nonsuicidal Self-Injury, Pain, and Self-Criticism: Does Changing Self-Worth Change Pain Endurance in People Who Engage in Self-Injury?

Jill M. Hooley and Sarah A. St. Germain

People who engage in nonsuicidal self-injury (NSSI) tend to be highly self-critical and to have a heightened tolerance for pain. In this study, the authors examined whether changing beliefs about the self could alter pain tolerance in people who engage in self-injury. Participants who had or had not engaged in NSSI were assessed for pain tolerance using a pressure algometer before and after they completed a task meant to induce positive feelings or feelings of self-worth. Increasing feelings of self-worth — but not positive mood — decreased pain endurance levels for NSSI participants. No effect was seen in control participants. This suggests that interventions that increase feelings of self-worth may be effective in reducing NSSI behaviors.

A Behavior Genetic Analysis of Pleasant Events, Depressive Symptoms, and Their Covariation

Mark A. Whisman, Daniel P. Johnson, and Soo Hyun Rhee

Positive emotions are often featured in models of depression, but few studies have examined what predisposes people to derive pleasure from their surroundings. Whisman and colleagues examined genetic and environmental influences on the experience of pleasant events, depressive symptoms, and covariation between the two. Monozygotic and dizygotic twin pairs who were part of the National Survey of Midlife Development in the United States study reported their experiences of commonly rewarding events and their depressive symptoms. The results indicate that the experience of pleasant

events is moderately heritable and that the genetic influences on the experience of pleasant events are largely similar to those of depressive symptoms, suggesting a common genetic influence for rewarding responses and depressive symptoms.