Integrative Review of Pregnancy Health Risks and Outcomes Associated with Adverse Childhood Experiences

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Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) such as abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction increase risk of health problems across the lifespan. This integrative review of literature identified pregnancy risk factors and outcomes associated with maternal history of ACEs and what is known about routine screening for ACEs in prenatal care. A systematic search of seven databases generated a sample of seventeen articles. Results indicated a graded relationship between ACEs and physiologic, psychologic, social, and behavioral pregnancy health risks and negative pregnancy outcomes of preterm birth and fetal death. More research is needed to identify effective and efficient methods for prenatal ACEs screening.