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TITLE: Social disparities in children's and adolescents' epigenome-wide methylation profiles

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ABSTRACT:

Children exposed to socioeconomic adversity are at prospective risk for of a variety of adult health disorders, steeper cognitive decline, and earlier mortality. The health-related antecedents of adult morbidity and mortality, such as obesity, are themselves socioeconomically graded in childhood. These findings raise two key challenging questions: (1) How does childhood adversity “get under the skin” to affect the precursors of adult disease vulnerability? and (2) What biomarkers can be useful in evaluating interventions aimed at mitigating the biological embedding of adversity? In this talk I present research conducted within the Texas Twin Project that examines epigenome-wide methylation profiles as candidate biomarkers of social health disparities. Our findings suggest promising avenues for research integrating epigenome-wide methylation profiles, polygenic scores, and family designs in advancing our understanding of human development in unequal societies.

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