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TITLE: Time-Varying Effects of Genetic and Parental Risks for Intergenerational Transmission of Depression on Child Anxiety and Depressive Symptoms.

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ABSTRACT:

Both genetic and environmental influences are important for the transmission of depression across generations. There are still key questions regarding whether these genetic and environmental influences on child symptoms are stable or variable over time, and whether there are sensitive periods during childhood in which offspring are particularly vulnerable to parents' depressive symptoms, possibly due to genetic vulnerability. To address these gaps, we examined the time-varying effects of adoptive

mothers' and fathers' depressive symptoms on child anxiety/depressive symptoms and investigated moderation by genetic susceptibility for psychopathology. Participants were drawn from the Early Growth and Development Study, a longitudinal study of adopted children and their adoptive and biological parents ($N=561$). Data come from assessments that occurred when children were between 9 and 84 months. Genetic effects were low and stable during early childhood and began to increase at 54 months. Whereas adoptive mother effects increased from 13 to 54 months and then began to decrease, adoptive father effects decreased from 13 to 54 months and then began to increase. Regarding the gene-environment interplay of influences, after 78 months, adoptive mother depressive symptoms were positively related to child symptoms among children with average and low genetic susceptibility. Similar results were found for adoptive father effects from 72 to 81 months. The current study provides a useful illustration of how time-varying effects modeling can be used to examine how genetic and familial interplay influences on child adjustment can change across developmental periods, which could, in turn, inform the development of more targeted interventions.

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