

Children in Poorer Neighborhoods are at a Greater Risk of Developing Alcohol Use Disorders as Young Adults

In studying emerging adults who lived in deprived neighborhoods when they were children, Scientist [Katherine Karriker-Jaffe](#) and colleagues found indirect pathways that mediated the risk for developing alcohol use disorders (AUD). Such pathways included success in school during adolescence, and being engaged in higher education, gainful employment or military service when they were older.

The study used population registry data from Sweden and assessed over 452,000 males and 431,000 females born between 1979 and 1990.

“While only twenty-five percent of the participants lived in deprived neighborhoods at some point in their childhood, our findings are important for countries that lack the strong social safety net that Sweden has – countries such as the U.S.,” said Karriker-Jaffe. “It also highlights the need to assess whether and how the quality of our schools affects someone’s achievements and the education they attain to understand fully how early educational opportunities, for instance, impact a person’s health later in life.”

Greater knowledge of how these causal pathways work can better inform and promote interventions to mitigate the effects of living in a poorer neighborhood for children and youth. This can help reduce alcohol problems, while improving health and well-being throughout their lifetime.

###

Karriker-Jaffe, K.J., Lönn, S. L., Cook, W.K., Kendler, K.S., Sundquist, K. Chains of risk for alcohol use disorder: Mediators of exposure to neighborhood deprivation in early and middle childhood. Health and Place: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1353829217307189>

Support for this paper was provided by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism at the National Institutes of Health under award number R01AA023534 (M-PIs K.S. Kendler and K. Sundquist). The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism or the National Institutes of Health.

If you are interested in arranging an interview with Katherine Karriker-Jaffe, PhD, contact Diane Schmidt, Communications Specialist at the Alcohol Research Group, at (510) 898-5819 or dschmidt@arg.org.