**How parenting sensitivity is related to childhood trauma in parents and children**

Tiffany J. Hicks, Ashley N. Hamm, Kaitlyn S. Wood, and Dr. Shari L. Kidwell, Mentor.

Morehead State University, Department of Psychology, College of Science

In recent years, greater attention has been paid to aversive childhood experiences and their impact on later functioning. Cumulative exposure to toxic stress has been associated with increased risk in both physical and mental health domains, as well as in parenting (Hays-Grudo & Wilson, 2020). The present study explores connections between parents’ sensitivity/synchrony scores on The Toddler CARE-Index (TCI: Crittenden, 2007) and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in parent and child. As part of a larger longitudinal study of Eastern Kentucky families, 21 children (mean age 4.5 years) and their parents participated in the Strange Situation (Ainsworth, Blehar, & Waters, 1978). This separation-reunion procedure places caregivers under some stress. Highly synchronous parents, however, modify their behavior to stay consistently sensitive to their child’s needs. When the children averaged 16 years of age, they were administered the Transition to Adulthood Attachment Interview (TAAI; Crittenden, 2006), and parents completed the Life Experiences Questionnaire (LEQ; Cowen et al., 1990). Both were coded for ACEs, for example, divorce, parental substance use, etc. Coding is nearly complete, and the authors hypothesize that parents who were exposed to more adverse life events will: a) show less synchrony with their child at age 4.5; and b) have children who were also exposed to more adverse life events. Many of our dyads received low synchrony scores, indicating a lack of emotional attunement with their children and a need for early intervention. If our hypotheses are supported, findings will suggest a role for synchrony/sensitivity in the intergenerational transmission of risk.