

PHACS Adolescent Master Protocol
Participant Summary

Title: Behavioral and Emotional Risks among Children and Adolescents with Perinatal HIV Exposure and HIV Infection

Authors: Kathleen Malee, Kathy Tassiopoulos, Renee Smith, Rohan Hazra, Susannah Allison, Pim Brouwers, Miriam Chernoff, Betsy Kammerer, Suad Kapetanovic, Sharon Nichols, George Siberry, Paige Williams and Claude Mellins, for the PHACS team.

Study Description: Children and teens with HIV and those born to mothers with HIV who are not infected themselves may have problems with their feelings or behaviors while they are growing up. These problems may be related to HIV or HIV medicines. They also may be related to stressful experiences in their lives, poverty, or other difficult life situations.

Study Population: We looked at 297 youth 7 - 16 years to see if they had more than usual amounts of sadness, worrying, aggression, hyperactivity or trouble paying attention at home or school. 229 of these youth were HIV positive. 68 were not infected but had mothers with HIV.

Results: Many (63%) children, teens and caregivers described several emotional and behavioral problems. Caregivers said that school age children (7-11 year olds) who were not infected (but had mothers with HIV) had more trouble with their feelings and behavior than did children with HIV. Troubles included worrying, sadness, hyperactivity, aggressive behavior, and attention problems. Both groups of children (those with HIV and those without HIV but who had mothers with HIV) reported more than the usual amounts of worrisome problems. Children 8-11 years of age talked about problems with learning and paying attention in school. Teens 12-18 years of age described problems with over-activity and paying attention.

Conclusions: We think that having HIV or having a mother with HIV is sometimes stressful for children and teens. It may influence their emotional health as they grow up. It is important to understand children's and teens' feelings and problems early so they can get the help and support they need at home and school. If they receive help with their feelings and behavior, their chances for good health and success as grown-ups will be better.

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