



## MT. HOPE FAMILY CENTER

# RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

### **Background Information:**

When people enter early adulthood (ages 19-22), school, work, friendships, romantic relationships, and mental and physical health are all important areas of growth. We know that people who experienced child maltreatment may experience challenges in any of these areas, but we also know that not everyone who experienced maltreatment struggles, and many people succeed in some ways and struggle in others.

### **What is the SOLAR study?**

SOLAR is a follow-up study of the kids who participated in the summer research camp between 2004-2008. SOLAR Research Assistants caught up with participants when they were between the ages of 18-22. The goal of this paper was to learn about patterns of success and challenges among young adults who experienced poverty and maltreatment as kids.

### **Here's a quick summary of what we found:**

- Overall, young adults with a history of child maltreatment were more likely to face challenges in multiple areas of their life.
- However, people were not defined by their adversity and many showed remarkable resilience (attending college, gainfully employed, mentally well, with quantity and quality of friends). About 20% of individuals who experienced maltreatment fit this criteria.
- Among Black men who showed multiple successes in many areas of life, many also experienced physical health consequences from the adversity (specifically, they were more likely to have low-grade inflammation).

### **Why does this research matter??**

1. Understanding who succeeds in the face of adversity, and how that success might look different for different people, helps us to design interventions that can help those who struggle. Rather than apply universal, "one-size-fits-all" interventions following maltreatment, we should personalize our work and match interventions to each person's distinct needs.
2. Our findings show that people are not defined by their early adversities and are capable of incredible coping and adaptation.
3. Our results highlight the need to change broken, oppressive systems and create positive conditions that allow individuals to thrive in multiple aspects of their life, rather than continue to ask them to individually overcome the adversities placed on them.

## WANT TO LEARN MORE? READ:

[Characterizing competence among a high-risk sample of emerging adults: Prospective predictions and biological considerations](#) by Justin Russotti, Jennifer Warmingham,

Elizabeth Handley, Fred Rogosch, & Dante Cicchetti