

Public Abstract

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Title:The Moderating Role of Maternal Supervision in the Social Ecology of Children's Unintentional Injuries

Unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death for young children in the United States. Unfortunately, we lack a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to children's injuries, particularly with regard to the role of maternal behaviors. Gaining a better understanding of the ways in which maternal behaviors relate to children's injuries may help researchers develop effective strategies for preventing childhood injuries.

The present study examined whether levels of maternal supervision mitigated the effects of child and family injury risk factors (i.e., male gender, young child age, high child activity level, maternal psychological problems, external maternal locus of control, low socioeconomic status, marital conflict, poor mother-child relationship quality, maternal stress) on children's injury frequencies and severities. 170 mothers from the community were interviewed biweekly for a period of 6 months about their children's daily injuries. Closer maternal supervision was related to lower injury severities for boys but not for girls. Higher supervision did not appear to mitigate the effects of other risk factors on children's injury frequencies or severities.