

Using Genomics to Understand the Link Between Maternal and Child Depression

Depression impacts millions of children in the United States. Researchers have long established a relationship between parental and childhood depression, suggesting a genetic link. However, little is known about how this genetic risk is inherited by the child, especially given that depression is a polygenic disorder that is also influenced by the child's environment. This study will apply cutting-edge genetic methods to a causal framework to examine how a mother's genetic risk for depression might impact her child's depression through their home environment (i.e., her parenting behaviors). Results from this study will have the potential to uncover the causal link between maternal and childhood depression, as well as shed light on the treatments that will be most effective.