



Newsletter

Fall 2024

### WHAT'S NEW WITH APRON?

#### Happy Thanksgiving!

We wish you and your loved ones a Happy Thanksgiving! This season of gratitude reminds us of our incredible good fortune to work with you and so many other wonderful APRON mothers, children, and families. Your ongoing participation is invaluable to the work we do, and we are deeply thankful for your ongoing support. We hope you enjoy celebrating and spending time with family this Thanksgiving!



#### APrON Data Collection Update



Our new wave of data collection will begin soon after your APrON youth turns 15. More information about how to complete the 15-year follow-up will be included in the email invite sent shortly after your youth's 15th birthday.

Our goal for this upcoming data collection is to understand how early life shapes mental health by age 15, with a consideration of the role of prenatal to school-age factors in depression and resilience. We will also explore how these factors influence gene expression, and will be collecting DNA cheek cell samples from youth to understand the biological underpinnings of early experiences. We will also be sending cheek swab kits to APrON youth participants at this time.

Please [click here](#) to watch a video which explains the grant objectives.

Please email APrON ([apron@ucalgary.ca](mailto:apron@ucalgary.ca)) if your contact information has changed or will be changing.

#### APrON Knowledge Mobilization / Knowledge Translation Plan

In April, our team sought to increase the knowledge mobilization and translation of APrON research in order to share our findings with a broader audience. As such, we have taken to social media to share ongoing news, showcase publications, and share APrON research findings. Tune into our social media for daily posts and our mini series such as our Mythbusting Mondays, Factual Fridays, and Resource Roundups!

Follow us on our platforms! @apronstudy on X and Instagram, [click here](#) for our Facebook, [click here](#) to see our LinkedIn!

#### We want to hear from you!

We are always looking for feedback and would love your thoughts on our recent knowledge mobilization/knowledge translation strategies. Head over to our social media platforms and take a look! Feel free to comment or reach out to us with any feedback, thoughts, or ideas you may have.



#### Join the new APrON's Youth Advisory Committee

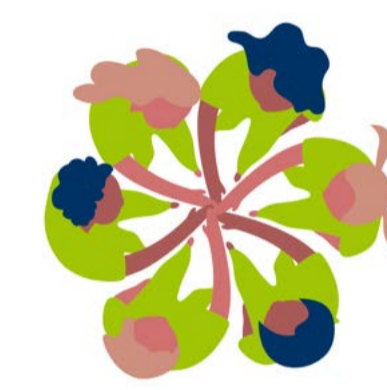


The APrON team would like to invite your youth to participate in our new youth advisory committee that we will be launching! Our goal is to engage more of our youth participants that are interested in the study. In this committee, we would love to hear from youth about how to best engage them in our social media platforms, in the study, and gather feedback to understand what they are interested in finding out! If you would like to learn more about this exciting opportunity, please contact us by email at [apron@ucalgary.ca](mailto:apron@ucalgary.ca).

#### Join APrON's Parent Advisory Committee

The APrON team is always looking for parents to join our advisory committee meetings and we want you to be a part of it! There will be a parent advisory committee meeting and grant update in late October 2024.

Share your ideas on how we can keep parents, like you, engaged and interested in our research. We want to hear from you. If you would like to learn more about this exciting opportunity, please contact us by email at [apron@ucalgary.ca](mailto:apron@ucalgary.ca).



### RESULTS

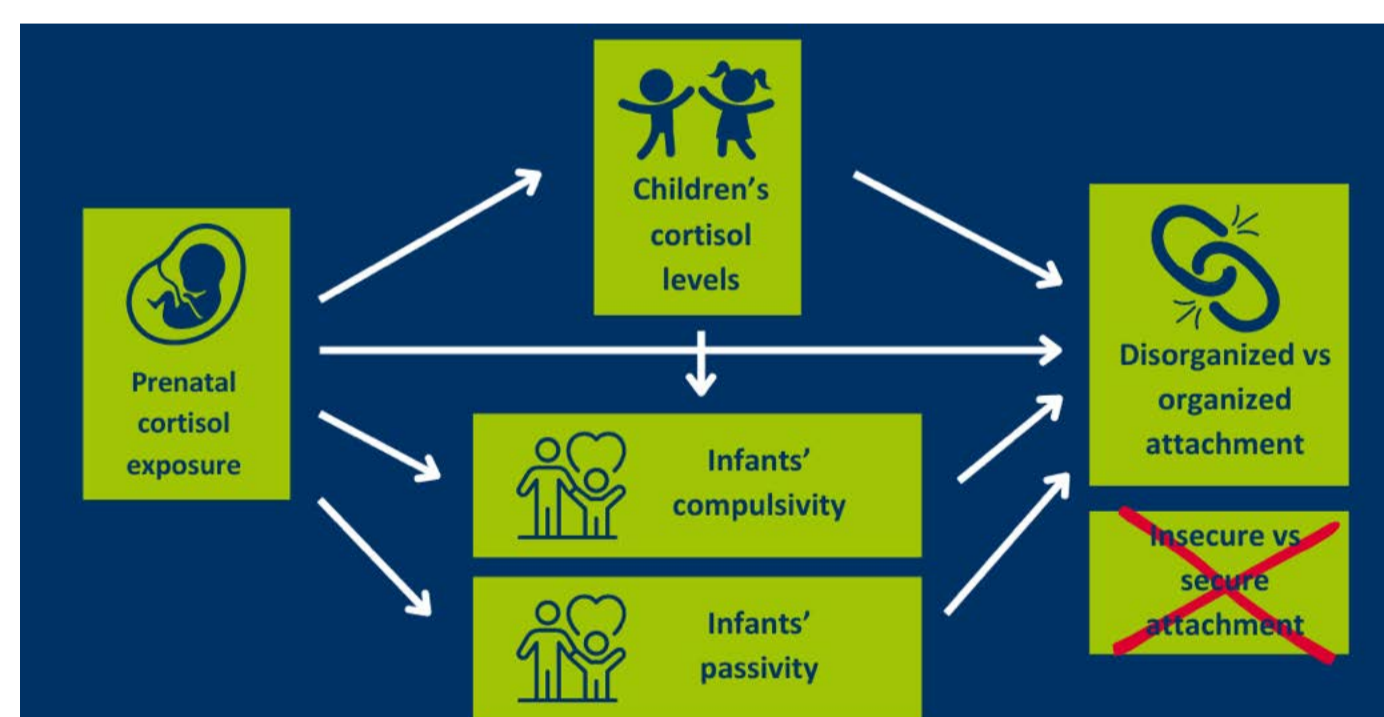
#### Perinatal Predictors and Mediators of Attachment Patterns in Preschool Children: Exploration of Children's Contributions in Interactions with Mothers

This APrON study looked at how early experiences between children and their caregivers/parents can affect a child's long-term health in terms of attachment. Insecure and disorganized attachment (a weak or inconsistent emotional bond) in childhood can lead to negative health outcomes later in life.

There were two aims of this study:

1. To examine factors during pregnancy that might influence a child's attachment style.
2. To explore how factors after birth, such as child's behaviour during interactions, may affect the relationship between these prenatal factors and child attachment.

The study included mother-child pairs from the APrON study ( $n = 214$ ). Findings showed that high levels of cortisol (a stress hormone) in mothers during pregnancy were linked to children having disorganized attachment styles. The children's behaviours, like passivity and compulsivity during interactions with their mothers, played a role in this link. Additionally, findings showed that mother's cortisol levels predicted her child's cortisol levels, which in turn influenced the child's compulsive behaviours and, ultimately, their attachment style.



These findings suggest that both prenatal stress and a child's behaviour during interactions with their caregiver are important factors that contribute to the development of disorganized attachment. Interventions that are focused on parent-child interactions should also consider the child's role in shaping those interactions.

**Reference:** Kurbatfinski, S., Woo, J., Ntanda, H., Giesbrecht, G., & Letourneau, N. (2024). Perinatal Predictors and Mediators of Attachment Patterns in Preschool Children: Exploration of Children's Contributions in Interactions with Mothers. *Children (Basel, Switzerland)*, 11 (8), 1022. <https://doi.org/10.3390/children11081022>

#### We want to hear from you!



We have greatly valued the contributions of participants to the APrON study over the last 15 years. We would like to take this opportunity to ask participants about data collection strategies that have increased their engagement and recommendations for improvement. This will be especially important as 15-year data collection is about to begin. We would greatly value your feedback to questions related to participant engagement.

**Share your thoughts and feedback through [this 5 minute survey!](#)**

If you have any comments or questions about the APrON Newsletter, we want to hear them! We would also like to hear your ideas for future newsletters. Please contact us at [apron@ucalgary.ca](mailto:apron@ucalgary.ca). We truly value your feedback!

**To request the above or any other APrON publication please contact us at [apron@ucalgary.ca](mailto:apron@ucalgary.ca)**

[Click here](#) to view all of the APrON publications to date.

#### Help Keep Our Files Up-To-Date

Staying in touch with our participants is a key part of our work. When we lose touch with people we lose our ability to answer important health questions. If you have moved, changed your phone number or have a new email address, please take a moment to let us know of these changes. Keep in mind that we can send you surveys and keep you up-to-date with the APrON Leaflet no matter where you live, even if you are outside of Alberta or Canada.



Growing Together, Thriving Forever



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Questions? Email us at [apron@ucalgary.ca](mailto:apron@ucalgary.ca)

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