

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND PREVENTIVE MEDICINE
RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

Urban Mothers' Assessment of Problem-Solving Competence

Heather Paradis, MD

Transition to motherhood is a ubiquitous phenomenon. Early experiences and skills influence how well a mother navigates this transition. The parenting patterns that develop in the first weeks to months after a child's birth often persist, and maladaptive parenting can have lasting detrimental effects on children. A daily parenting challenge involves maternal problem-solving: how the mother identifies, formulates, and acts on issues that arise with her infant. It is important to identify those mothers who are less confident and/or skilled with infant problem-solving and to provide appropriate assistance. Support from within the medical and health professional community may facilitate the maternal transition process. However, the needed support or intervention likely depends on maternal characteristics.

Formative studies to develop a maternal transition model and to form a tool for self-analysis have focused largely on Caucasian, middle class mothers. The *How I Deal with Problems Regarding Care of My Baby Questionnaire*, a result of prior research, is a 15-item self-report measure of parental problem-solving (PPS). This validated measure has not previously been applied to a low-income population, and little is known about how self-reported problem-solving differs among mothers of other socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. This proposal seeks to use previously-collected baseline data from a clinical trial of a parenting education intervention to examine the validity and group differences of the PPS measure among women who are socially and economically disadvantaged. This research will contribute to the body of knowledge about maternal transition to inform new clinical interventions, better target those that already exist, and identify a potentially useful measure within this population.

Committee Chair:

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Wednesday, September 30, 2009

12:00PM – 12:30 PM

Helen Wood Hall, Room 4W301

EVERYONE IS WELCOME