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My research entails an interdisciplinary approach to identify mechanisms of how early biological and social experiences work together to lead to long term adverse or adaptive outcome. This requires the use of prospective longitudinal studies and I have worked over the last 33 years on initiating, running and funding large longitudinal studies. My particular expertise is in Developmental Psychopathology and how biological factors work themselves out of the skin ¹ (e.g. experience of prematurity, altered brain development) or how experiences work themselves under the skin (e.g., abuse or being bullied by peers: e.g. changing inflammation, altered stress responses, altered cognitive processing and biased perception) ². I developed an interest in the interface of biology and psychology by working in medical settings (e.g. King's College Hospital, the Hospital for Sick Children) working alongside medical specialists and assessing effects of medical risk factors and their psychological sequelae. Our research in the field of early regulatory problems, the effects of preterm birth or peer/sibling social influences and parenting has paved new ground. Our research was one of the first to establish that early regulatory behavior (e.g. excessive crying) has long term adverse consequences³. Our longitudinal research on bullying established that bullying has at least as adverse effects as maltreatment by caretakers into adulthood for victims ⁴. We described a characteristic phenotype of consequences of preterm birth on psychological functioning (e.g. multiple cognitive problems, attention, social problems and autistic features). Whether regulatory problems, preterm birth or bullying experiences, comparison across cohorts in different studies is important to establish whether universal mechanisms are at work ⁵ and thus we work across borders and collaborate with a number researchers worldwide.

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