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### The Combined Impact of Maternal Major Depressive Disorder and Individual Major Depressive Disorder Results in Increased Amounts of Dependent Stress

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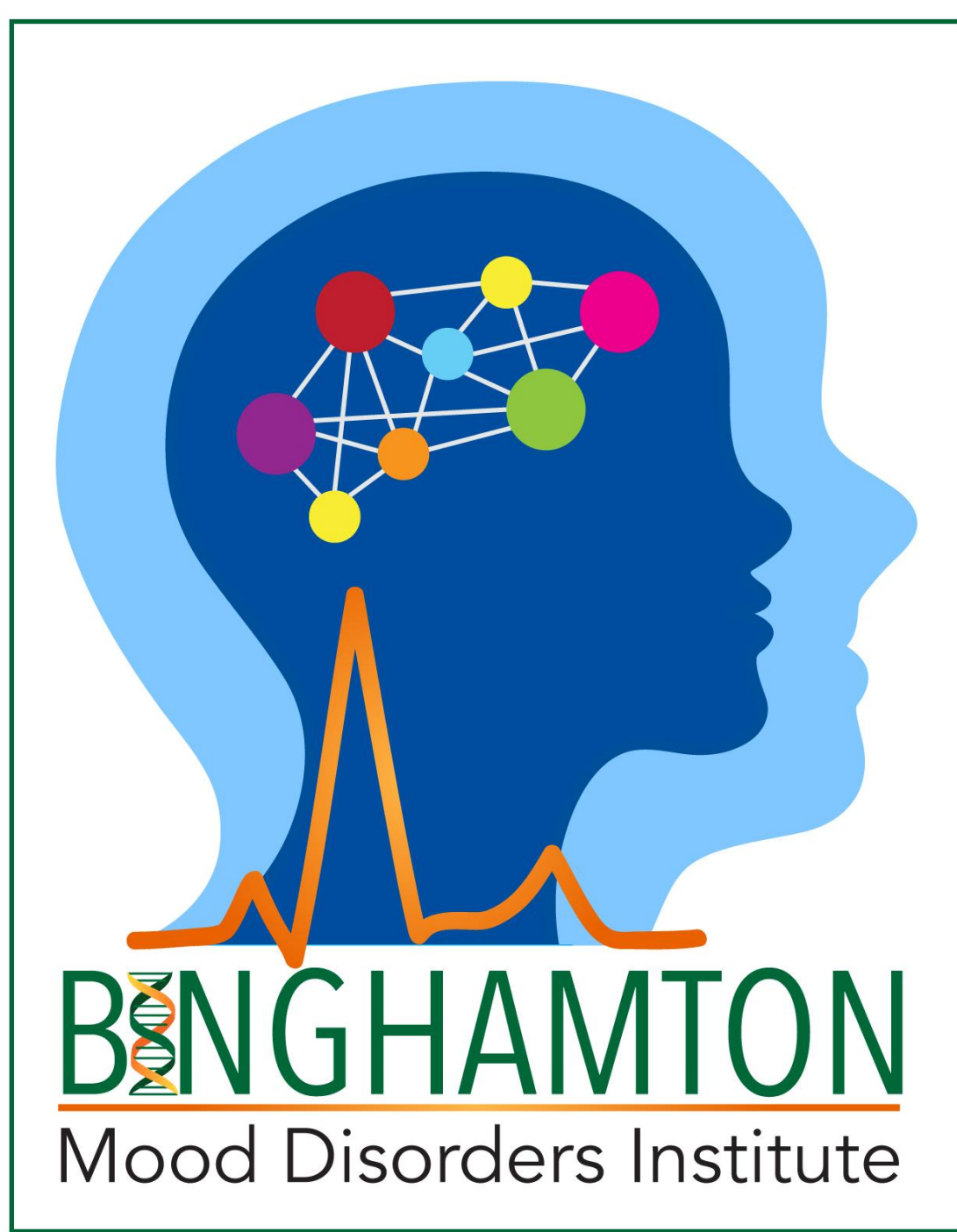
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# Combined Effect of Individual MDD and Maternal MDD Results in Greater Levels of Dependent Episodic Stress

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## Background Information

- Symptoms of depression can contribute to the occurrence of negative events in an individual's life, this phenomenon is known as the stress generation theory of depression
- Dependent Stress occurs when a stressful event is caused by an individual's own actions
- Children of mothers who have depression are at a higher risk of experiencing depression themselves

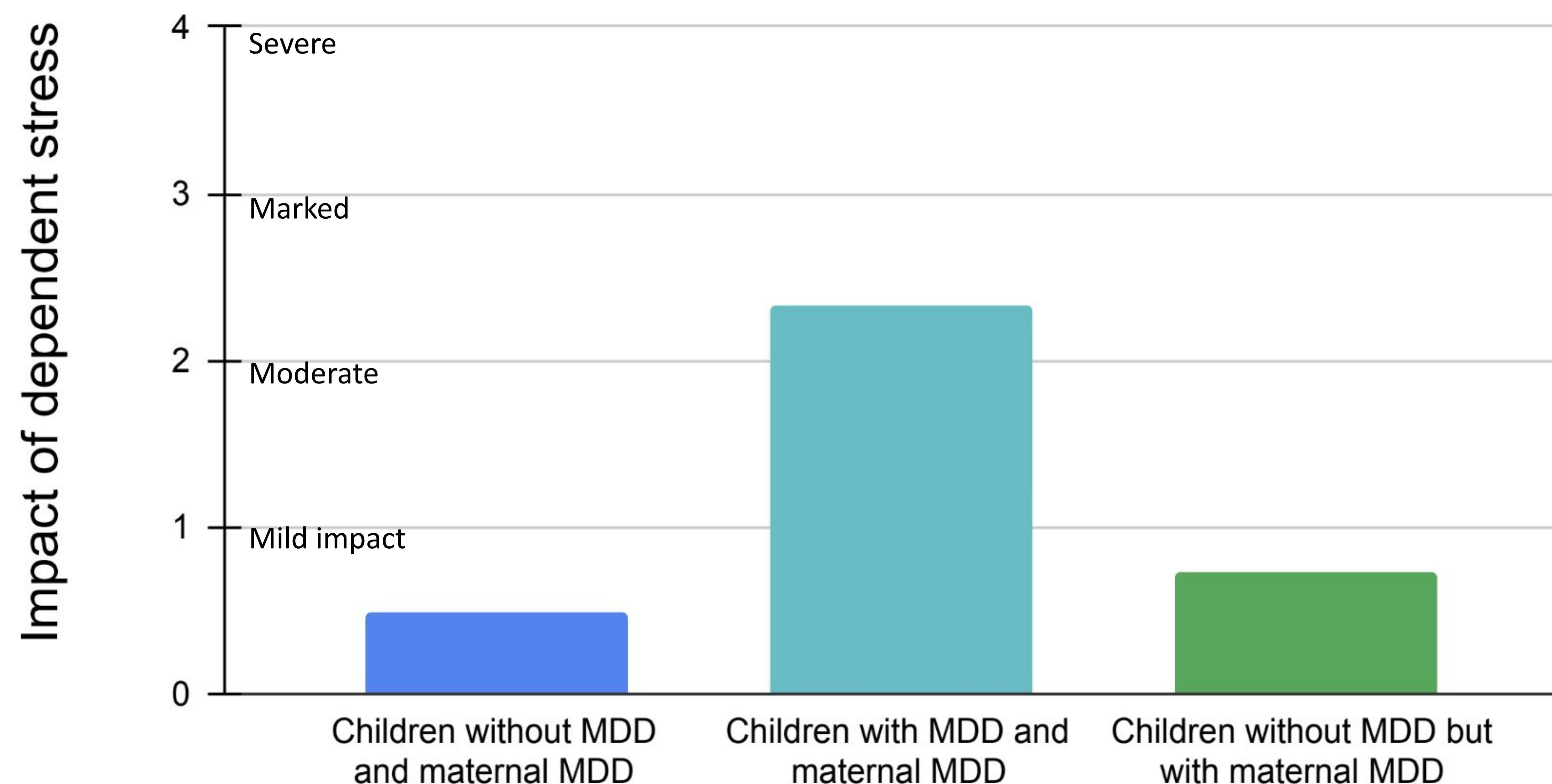
## Aims

Because individuals with current and past depression have been found to have increased amounts of dependent stress, **this study investigates the combined effect of maternal depression and individual depression on the amount of dependent stress in children's lives**

## Procedure

- Children in this study were assessed for depression using the Kiddie Schedule for Affective Disorders and Schizophrenia
- Mothers were assessed for depression using the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM disorders
- Children's levels of chronic and episodic stress were assessed with the UCLA Life Stress Interview for Children

## Effect of Combined Individual MDD and Maternal MDD on Dependent Stress



The impact of dependent stress indicates the “threat” of the stressful event based on the context of the event and the age of the child

If a child reports a fight with a friend, the impact could be very severe if their friendship is over, but if it occurred over a trivial matter, it has less of an impact

## Participants

- 255 children between the ages of 8 and 14 and their biological mothers were recruited from the community for participation in this study
  - If more than one child was eligible, they were chosen at random
  - Mothers were chosen based on their history of MDD
- Characteristics
  - Mean child age: 10.89 years
  - Child gender: 53% female
  - Child race: 81% caucasian
  - Mean mother age: 40.36 years
  - Mother race: 87% Caucasian
  - Mother marital status: 73.5% currently married, 17.7% separated or divorced.

## Results

- Children with MDD whose mothers also have MDD exhibited significantly higher levels of dependent stress than other groups
  - The impact of dependent stress averages 2.325 out of 4
  - These children's stress had between a moderate and marked impact
- The other groups experienced less dependent stress on average, with scores between no impact and mild impact
  - The average impact on children without MDD whose mothers also did not have MDD was .491 out of 4
  - The average impact on children without MDD whose mother did have MDD was .732 out of 4

## Discussion

- The results of this study are consistent with past research findings
  - Maternal MDD correlates with increased levels of stress in offspring
  - Individual MDD correlates with greater amounts of dependent stress according to the theory of Stress Generation

## REFERENCES

