Mental, behavior, developmental disorders up with low-income

December 21 2018

(HealthDay)—Children in lower-income households more often receive

a diagnosis of mental, behavioral, and developmental disorders (MBDDs), according to research published in the Dec. 21 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.*

Robyn A. Cree, Ph.D., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues analyzed data from the 2016 National Survey of Children's Health on MBDDs, risk factors, and use of federal assistance programs.

The researchers found that children in lower-income households more often had ever received a diagnosis of MBDD compared with those in higher-income households (22.1 versus 13.9 percent); in addition, fewer had seen a health care provider in the previous year (80.4 versus 93.8 percent). Seven of 10 children living below 200 percent of the federal poverty level who did not see a health care provider in the previous year were in families receiving at least one public assistance benefit.

"Early identification and treatment of MBDDs could positively impact a child's functioning and reduce the need for costly interventions over time," the authors write. "Public assistance programs hold potential for increasing developmental monitoring and connection to treatment for MBDDs for families living in poverty by collaborating to distribute resources, implementing co-located screening services, or facilitating connections to appropriate treatment and care."

More information: Abstract/Full Text

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