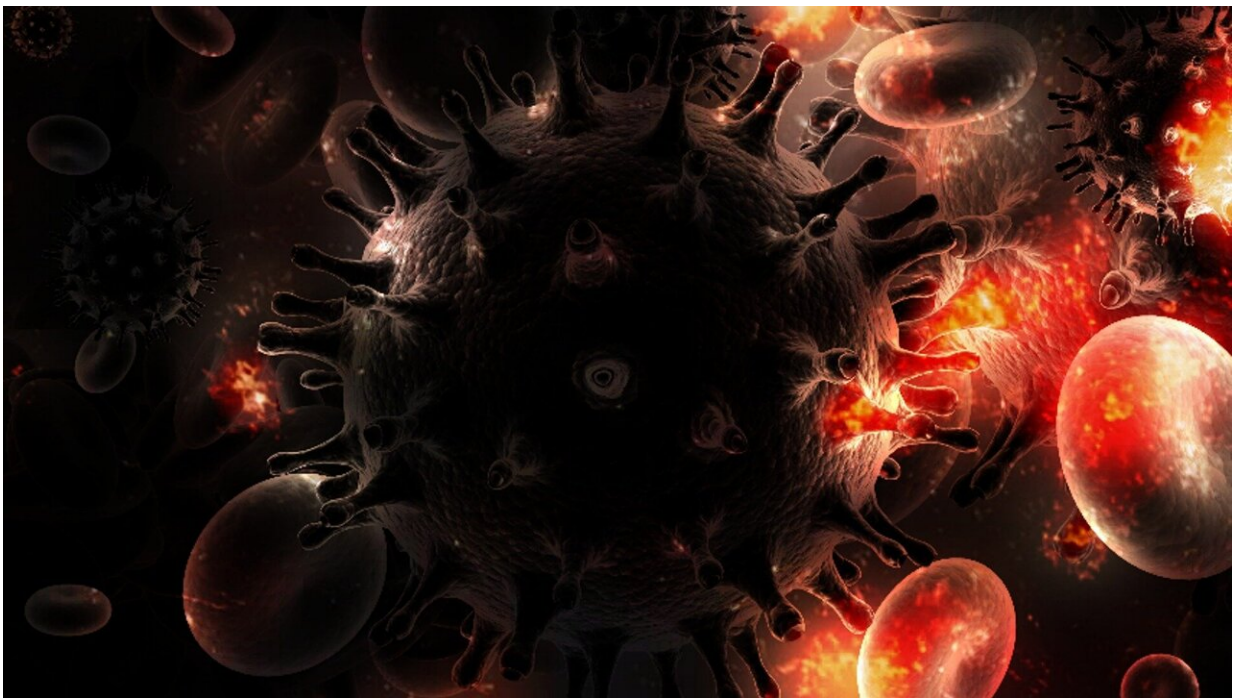


# State-level earned income tax credit linked to reduction in high-risk HIV behavior among single mothers

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UCLA research finds that a refundable State-level Earned Income Tax Credit (SEITC) of 10% or above the Federal EITC was associated with a 21% relative risk reduction in reported behavior that could put single mothers at high risk for becoming infected with HIV during the previous

year. Also, a 10 percentage-point increase in SEITC was linked to a 38% relative reduction in the same reported high-risk behavior the previous year.

[Previous research](#) has found a relationship between poverty and sexually transmitted infections such as HIV. Poverty, low-wage jobs, [income inequality](#), and other economic structural factors may spread sexually transmitted infections by creating high-risk partner pools, facilitating transactional sex, and undermining women's sexual agency.

The researchers used data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (2002-2018) and state-level data from the University of Kentucky Center for Poverty Research to conduct a multi-state, multi-year analysis.

These findings demonstrate the impact of anti-poverty policy interventions such as providing cash aid to those in need. In this case, the reduction in HIV risk behavior was what would be expected for two or more hours of intensive HIV risk-reduction counseling, which few [low-income](#) single mothers can readily access. Thus, SEITC policy may be a strategy to reduce HIV among women with low socioeconomic status, particularly [single mothers](#).

**More information:** Kimberly Danae Cauley Narain et al, Evidence for the Role of State-Level Economic Policy in HIV Risk Reduction: State Earned Income Tax Credit Generosity and HIV Risk Behavior Among Single Mothers, *AIDS and Behavior* (2022). [DOI: 10.1007/s10461-022-03754-x](#)

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