Parental Mental Health

Sarah Guth, MD
Vermont Center for Children, Youth and Families
The Impact

• Maternal Depression in the perinatal period is predictive of
  – Child internalizing problems in adolescence
  – Children’s behavioral problems in childhood and adolescence
  – Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder
  – Childhood Obesity
  – Short Stature
  – Compromised Social Emotional health at age
  – Lowered IQ (As well as underachievement in math)
  – Altered Gray Matter in the Brain
  – Lifetime Cost: £75,728 $100,461.00- 2016
Paternal Depression in the perinatal period is predictive of

– Increased developmental problems
– Increased behavioral problems
– Infants and increased crying
– Toddlers and increased oppositionality
– School-aged children and increase in psychiatric disorders

The Impact
The Prevalence

Women:
Depression 9 to 15% of women develop depressive episode in perinatal period (between 24-47% lower socioeconomic groups)
Anxiety 6-8%
OCD 4%¹¹

Men:
Depression 14.1–25.5% in the US vs. 8.2–13.2% internationally¹⁰
Screening

Why do we screen?
About 50% of post-partum depression goes unrecognized.¹¹

Where should we screen?
Pediatric offices (many visits in first year) vs. Obstetrics Office (one visit)
90% of women screened in Peds reported feeling comfortable answering the questions

How do we screen?
Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale; PHQ

What do we do with the results?
Make a list of referral options. Warm handoffs. Office point person Social work? Designated RN?
Don’t Ever Stop

Parental Depression affects kids of all ages

- Preschool kids may be most affected
- Mental illness in parents can inhibit effective treatment of mental illness in kids
- Parents seeking help can improve children’s health without any direct treatment of the kids
References