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Question:

Are children who are exposed to maternal cocaine use during pregnancy at greater risk of developing a decrease in their learning ability and focus in a classroom setting than children who were not exposed to maternal cocaine use during pregnancy?

Summary:

While there is not a lot of research on long-term effects of children from maternal cocaine use during pregnancy, the extent of adverse effects of cocaine use during pregnancy has been overestimated much of the time (Pereira et al.). Some adverse effects of cocaine use during pregnancy include placental abruption, premature birth, and small for gestational age infants. These adverse effects can have a great impact on a school-aged child. Premature infants are at high risk for developing behavioral and psychological problems, as well as developmental delays. Children born prematurely should be evaluated at a young age to determine what, if any, cognitive delays they may have. This will aid in ensuring that by the time they are of age to go to school, they will have proper education and accommodations in the classroom setting. Many preterm infants struggle staying on task in school, organizing their work, and may have other cognitive defects that would need to be addressed in the classroom setting. The risks of an infant developing these problems in the classroom setting increases greatly if they are exposed to cocaine while in utero.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the use of cocaine during pregnancy does put the child at greater risk for developing learning disabilities such as behavioral and psychological problems in school aged children. With that being said, it is crucial for us to understand that there are maternal and fetal repercussions of cocaine use during pregnancy and for us to recognize and modify the problem as soon as possible. It is also necessary for us to broaden the discussion on how to identify, perform follow-ups, and intervene in cases as soon as possible in effort to reduce the use of cocaine during pregnancy (Pereira et al.). With us understanding the adverse effects and broadening our knowledge on how to identify cocaine use during pregnancy, it can help us reduce the number of children who have long term affects from the use of maternal cocaine use during pregnancy.

Work Cited

Primary Article:

Pereira, C., Pacagnella, R., Parpinelli, M., Andreucci, C., Zanardi, D., Souza, R., . . . Cecatti, J. (2018, September). Drug use during pregnancy and its consequences: A nested case control study on severe maternal morbidity. Retrieved February 16, 2021, from https://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=S0100-72032018000900518&script=sci_arttext

Secondary Article:

Dance, A. (2020, June 02). Survival of the littlest: The long-term impacts of being born extremely early. Retrieved February 16, 2021, from <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-01517-z>

Tertiary Article:

Forray, A. (2016, May 13). Substance use during pregnancy. Retrieved February 16, 2021, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4870985/>