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An Implementation Science Approach to Address Early Family Environmental Risk Factors for Poor Health Outcomes

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Family environmental stressors, such as interparental conflict and child maltreatment, are not only linked with increased risk for childhood mental health disorders, they are also linked with risky health behaviors and chronic diseases during adulthood. Parenting programs represent one evidence-based approach for prevention at the public health level. Despite evidence that parenting programs can improve children's mental health and reduce child maltreatment, there are large gaps in dissemination and scaling up of interventions, particularly in low resource settings. Using the RISE project as an example, I present a series of studies to systematically adapt, optimize and evaluate a parenting program, Parenting for Lifelong Health, in three middle income countries by applying the RE-AIM implementation science framework and the Multiphase Optimization Strategy (MOST). The first study illustrates the Preparation Phase with a pre-post pilot feasibility study and process evaluations for adapting the program in new settings. The Optimization Phase involves a randomized factorial trial to determine the most effective and cost-effective intervention for further testing. The Evaluation Phase involves a multi-site RCT of the optimized intervention. Results from all three phases will be discussed in relation to embedding of the program within the existing service organizations to increase reach and sustainability.

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