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Exposure to Alcohol Before Birth Linked to Social Skills Problems in Childhood

Children whose mothers drank during pregnancy are more likely to have problems with social skills, compared with their peers whose mothers did not drink while pregnant, according to a new study.

A mother's drinking during pregnancy was also found to be associated with significant emotional and behavioral issues in their children, according to HealthDay.

The study, published in *Child Neuropsychology*, included 153 children ages 6 to 12. Of these children, 97 had a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

The researchers evaluated the children's thinking, as well as their emotional, social and behavioral development. They found children whose mothers drank alcohol during pregnancy had more social problems, even after their IQ was taken into account.

They were less able to connect past experience with present actions, or understand why people do what they do. They received lower scores on tests of planning and organizational skills, attention and working memory.

Parents of children with prenatal alcohol exposure said the children showed more inattentiveness, hyperactivity and impulsive behavior. These children were more likely to have symptoms of depression.

The researchers from the University of California, Los Angeles, said their findings indicate a great need for early detection and treatment of social problems in children that result from prenatal alcohol exposure. Intervening early is important, they said, because children's developing brains have an ability to change and adapt as they learn.

Click here to learn more about ***Alcohol and Pregnancy - Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE).***