



Application number/Title: 44521 - Do childhood circumstances predict later life loneliness?

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Keywords provided by the Applicant PI to describe the research project:
adverse childhood experiences, child health, loneliness, social isolation

Application Lay Summary:

The aim of this research project is to understand whether circumstances and experiences from childhood can be linked to loneliness and social isolation reported in adulthood. If these childhood factors are seen to play a role, we further examine the channels through which they may plausibly be linked to loneliness, such as poorer educational attainment or health. Loneliness and social isolation have been shown to be associated with premature mortality and poorer physical and mental health: it is therefore important to understand their risk factors, and looking back into one's childhood circumstances may aid in designing more targeted interventions or early preventive strategies, towards alleviating this societal problem more efficiently. Moreover, recent research shows 'nature' (genetic heritability) to play a very small role in social interaction, suggesting 'nurture' (environment including circumstances and experiences) may play at least a small part in later life loneliness and social isolation.

This project is expected to take up to 1.5 years: results from Biobank data will be used in conjunction with findings from other UK-based data sets (Millennium Cohort Study and English Longitudinal Study of Ageing) for the overall research project.