

Washington University in St. Louis

## Washington University Open Scholarship

---

Spring 2017

Washington University  
Senior Honors Thesis Abstracts

---

Spring 2017

### Teacher-Child Relationship Quality and Development of Depression from Preschool to Late Childhood

Julia Winemiller

*Washington University in St. Louis*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/wushta\\_spr2017](https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/wushta_spr2017)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Winemiller, Julia, "Teacher-Child Relationship Quality and Development of Depression from Preschool to Late Childhood" (2017). *Spring 2017*. 120.

[https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/wushta\\_spr2017/120](https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/wushta_spr2017/120)

This Abstract for College of Arts & Sciences is brought to you for free and open access by the Washington University

Senior Honors Thesis Abstracts at Washington University Open Scholarship. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spring 2017 by an authorized administrator of Washington University Open Scholarship. For more information, please contact [digital@wumail.wustl.edu](mailto:digital@wumail.wustl.edu).

# TEACHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIP QUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF DEPRESSION FROM PRESCHOOL TO LATE CHILDHOOD

*Julia Winemiller*

*Mentor: Andy Belden*

Early teacher-child relationships can protect against or exacerbate risk factors for a variety of academic and mental health outcomes. While there is evidence that strong teacher-child relationships in adolescence protect against depression, to our knowledge there are no studies that have investigated associations between early teacher-child relationship quality and depression in preschool through late childhood. The current study used prospective data from a longitudinal study of  $N = 305$  preschool students recruited with an overrepresentation of depressive symptoms, a non-depressed psychiatric group (ADHD/ODD, Anxiety), as well as healthy typically developing group. Conflict in the teacher-child relationship one year after baseline mediated the relationship between depression severity at baseline and depression severity seven years after baseline. Teacher-child closeness and depression severity one year after baseline were not significant mediators. Given that chronic stress is a major risk factor for depression, these results might be explained by the chronic stress experienced in a conflictual teacher-child relationship. These results have important implications for future research on the development of depression as well as interventions involving early teacher-child relationships.