

Farrow, C.V., & Blisset, J. (2007). The development of maternal self-esteem. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 28*, 517-535.

Although an important theoretical concept, little is known about the development of maternal self-esteem. This study explores the significance of maternal cognitions, psychopathological symptoms, and child temperament in the prediction of prenatal and postnatal maternal self-esteem. During pregnancy 162 women completed measures assessing their unhealthy core beliefs, psychopathological symptoms, and self-esteem. At 1 year postpartum 87 of these women completed measures assessing their self-esteem and their child's temperament. Overall maladaptive maternal core beliefs and psychopathological symptoms during pregnancy explained 19% of the variance in prenatal maternal self-esteem. Forty-two percent of the variance in maternal self-esteem at 1 year could be explained by a combination of prenatal maternal self-esteem, mental health symptoms, maternal core beliefs, and more unsociable infant temperament. Underlying maternal cognitive structures may be important in determining the development of maternal self-esteem.