

Stowkowy, J., & Addington, J. (2011, in press). Maladaptive schemas as a mediator between social defeat and positive symptoms in young people at clinical high risk for psychosis. *Early Intervention in Psychiatry.*

Aim: Social defeat may be the mechanism that links past social adversities with the development of psychosis. In depression research, it is accepted that adverse early social experiences can lead to enduring cognitive vulnerabilities, characterized by negative schemas about the self and others. The aim of this study was to examine whether negative beliefs about the self and others link social defeat to early signs of psychosis.

Methods: Data from a sample of individuals at high risk for developing psychosis (n=38) were assessed using measures of social defeat and schemas.

Results: High levels of social defeat and negative evaluations of the self and others were displayed. Negative beliefs mediated the relationship between social defeat and early symptoms, offering some support for the notion that maladaptive self-beliefs play a role in the onset of psychosis.

Conclusions: These results have implications for prevention because these maladaptive schemas are malleable factors for which we have effective psychological interventions.