

**ENVIRONMENTAL-RISK (E-RISK) LONGITUDINAL TWIN STUDY  
CONCEPT PAPER FORM**

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Provisional Paper Title: Socioenvironmental risks for adolescent psychotic experiences: exploring biomechanisms in a UK longitudinal cohort.

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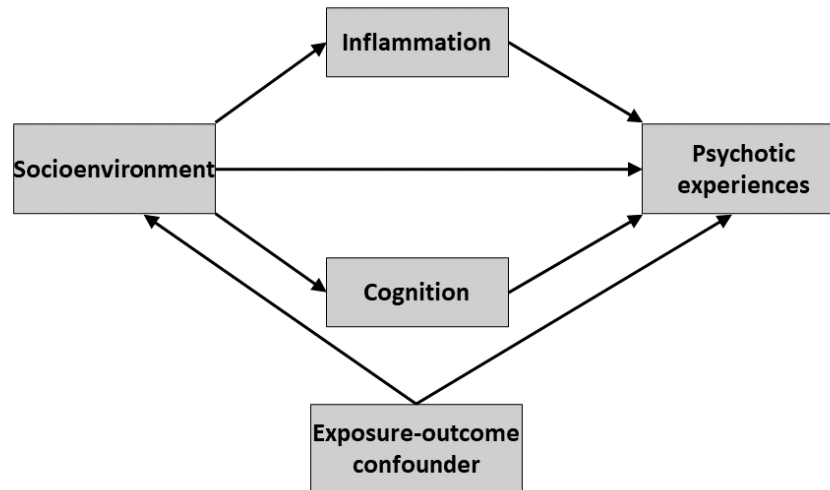
**Objective of the study and its significance:**

**Background**

Over the past three decades, socioenvironmental factors such as overcrowding, poverty, pollution and disorder [1-5] have been repeatedly associated with psychotic disorders like schizophrenia. More recently these associations have been replicated for subclinical psychotic experiences among children and teenagers [6-11], such as hearing voices that others cannot hear (hallucinations) and extreme feelings of paranoia (delusions). Psychotic experiences signal elevated risk for later mental health problems including psychotic disorders, making them a useful research paradigm and an important target for intervention. However, very little is currently known about how socioenvironmental exposures might increase risk for psychosis. Improving our understanding of the biological mechanisms could ultimately inform preventative interventions. This study will investigate the roles that cognitive function and inflammation play in the association between socioenvironmental exposures in childhood and psychotic experiences in adolescence.

Cognition and inflammation are useful starting points because they provide markers of dynamic processes in the body and brain. Individual differences in cognitive ability are associated with differences in brain structure and function [12-14]. For instance, fMRI and lesion studies implicate connectivity within the frontoparietal network in fluid intelligence and cognitive control [15]. As such, tests of cognitive ability, usually obtained via pen and paper or computer tasks, provide non-invasive proxy measures of neurological functioning. Furthermore, peripheral inflammatory markers obtained from blood samples provide a snapshot of inflammatory and disease processes. Inflammation forms part of a complex arsenal used by the immune system to protect the body from infection and malignancy [16], but chronic inflammation is toxic and, contrary to historical opinion, is now known to damage the blood-brain barrier and adversely affect the brain [16].

## Example of one mediation model that will be tested



On one side of the mediation model, socioenvironmental exposures such as overcrowding, poverty, and pollution could influence cognitive function and inflammatory processes via both direct, physical pathways, as well as indirect, psychosocial pathways. Physically, inhaled air pollutants may enter the bloodstream and cross the blood-brain barrier [17, 18], where they may then promote inflammatory processes in the body and brain [19]. Air pollution exposure could therefore stunt and alter the developing brain, with downstream effects on cognition and psychopathology. In addition, the psychosocial aspects of overcrowding, poverty, and disorder, could indirectly influence cognition and inflammation by promoting stress. Chronic stress can lead to lasting disruption of the HPA axis [20], the peripheral limb of the body's stress system, and lead to neuroinflammation and neuronal death [21, 22] as well as aberrant interactions with neurotransmitters. [23]. Thus, by increasing stress, adverse neighbourhood social conditions could influence inflammation and cognition.

On the other side of our mediation model, impaired cognitive function is recognized as a core feature of psychosis [24]. Longitudinal research shows that children with deficits in cognitive ability are more likely to subsequently develop subclinical psychotic phenomena [25] and psychotic disorders [26], which highlights that cognitive problems precede the onset of psychosis and are not just a byproduct of the illness. The process(es) by which cognitive problems might lead to increased risk for psychosis is not fully known. However, shared neural underpinnings including smaller brain structure volumes (e.g., the hippocampus) and abnormal synaptic development and pruning are plausible [27-29]. Likewise, growing evidence suggests a role of inflammation in the aetiology of psychotic disorders [16, 30]. In relation to subclinical psychotic experiences, reports from the ALSPAC study show that children with higher serum concentrations of interleukin-6 (IL-6), a key inflammatory cytokine, have twice the risk for psychotic experiences and disorders by age 18 [31]. In the E-Risk cohort, inflammation levels are significantly higher among victimized children with psychotic symptoms compared to victimized children without psychotic symptoms [32]. Again, the process(es) by which circulating inflammatory markers might increase risk for psychosis is unconfirmed, but might plausibly include neuroinflammation, neurodegeneration, and interactions with neurotransmitters [16].

Notably, it is likely that infants and youth are most vulnerable to adverse socioenvironmental exposures because their brains and immune systems are still developing [33]. However, no studies have combined high-resolution data on socioenvironmental exposures with high-quality data on cognition and inflammation in a longitudinal cohort of children and adolescents to test whether these processes mediate the relationship between socioenvironmental risks and psychotic experiences.

### Objectives

This study aims to test the mediatory roles of cognition and inflammation in the association between the socioenvironmental risks and adolescent psychotic experiences. The specific objectives are:

- 1) To test the longitudinal association of socioenvironmental exposures with cognitive ability and inflammatory markers.
- 2) To test the longitudinal association of cognitive ability with adolescent psychotic experiences (note: associations between inflammation and psychotic phenomena have previously been tested by Trotta et al., in prep [32]).
- 3) To test whether cognitive ability and inflammatory markers mediate the relationship between the urban environment and early psychotic phenomena.

**\*\*\*\*\* Notes about data on socioenvironmental conditions, cognition, and inflammation \*\*\*\*\***

Socioenvironmental conditions: Detailed data on socioenvironmental conditions across upbringing have been collected from multiple sources at several timepoints. Based on our previous work, variables will include urbanicity, air pollution, deprivation, neighbourhood social characteristics, residential mobility, and family disadvantage, and thereby span area-, neighbourhood-, and family-level markers of socioenvironmental disadvantage. These data will also be combined to create a cumulative socioenvironmental risk scale.

Cognition: Overall cognitive ability was measured via tests of general intelligence (IQ) at ages 5, 12, and 18, using a short version of the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-Revised (age 5), a short version of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised (age 12), and a short version of Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-IV (age 18). Subcomponents of IQ, assessing fluid and crystallized cognitive ability, will also be used. In addition, sensitivity analyses will examine associations with specific cognitive domains, including working memory, executive function, and attention, which were measured via neurological testing at age 18 (CANTAB: Cambridge Neuropsychological Test Automated Battery; [www.cantab.com](http://www.cantab.com); CANTAB Eclipse Test Administration Guide, 2006, Cambridge Cognition, Cambridge, UK).

Inflammation: Peripheral inflammation was measured from blood serum obtained at age 18. Inflammatory markers will include C-reactive protein (CRP), interleukin-6 (IL-6), and soluble urokinase plasminogen activator receptor (suPAR). CRP is a sensitive but non-specific marker of acute inflammation that responds rapidly to underlying disease and infection [34]. IL-6 is a key cytokine involved in regulating inflammation and protecting against infection, and it is linked to chronically high inflammation due to its regulatory role [35]. suPAR is a protein that is severed from cell membranes during inflammatory conditions, and provides an overall marker of immune activity and chronic inflammation [36].

### **Research questions and statistical analyses**

- 1) Are socioenvironmental risks associated with cognitive function and inflammatory markers?
  - Test the association between childhood socioenvironmental exposures and cognitive ability at ages 12 and 18 using linear regression.
  - Test the association between childhood socioenvironmental exposures and inflammation at age 18 using multinomial logistic regression.
  
- 2) Are cognition and inflammation associated with early psychotic experiences?
  - Test the association between cognitive ability (overall IQ and subcomponents) at age 12 and psychotic experiences at age 18 using ordinal logistic regression.
  - Cross-lag models will be used to infer the directionality of associations, additionally using cognitive ability at age 18 and psychotic symptoms at age 12.
  - Sensitivity analyses will be conducted to test the cross-sectional associations of the specific cognitive domains at age 18 with psychotic experiences at age 18.
  - Note: Trotta et al (in prep) [19] have previously tested associations of inflammation with psychotic phenomena in E-Risk. This bivariate analysis will therefore not be required, but

associations will be reported.

3) Do cognition and inflammation mediate the relationship between socioenvironmental exposures and early psychotic phenomena?

- Mediation models will be informed by findings in Steps 1 and 2. Causal mediation modelling (supervised by Laura Howe) and/or structural equation modelling (supervised by Ioannis Bakolis) will both be applied to decompose the effects of socioenvironmental exposures on adolescent psychotic experiences into direct (unmediated) effects, and indirect (mediated) effects via cognitive ability at age 12 and inflammation at age 18.

Note: All analyses will control for the non-independence of twin observations. Main confounders (confounders of the exposure-outcome relationships) will include parent educational attainment, family psychiatric history, polygenic risks scores for schizophrenia, polygenic risk for education and polygenic risk for cognitive performance. Confounders for specific models (e.g., E-M confounders) will additionally include, where appropriate, body mass index, waist-to-hip ratio, body temperature, adolescent smoking and substance problems and child/adolescent victimization. Finally, specificity analyses will be conducted by repeating main analyses with age 18 depression as the outcome.

Variables Needed at Which Ages (names and labels):

**NB. highlighted in yellow are those which may not currently be in the data dictionary**

Study: E-Risk & SCOPIC

- familyid Unique family identifier
- atwinid Twin A ID (ex chkdg)
- btwinid Twin B ID (ex chkdg)
- rorderp5 Random Twin Order
- risks Sample Groups
- cohort Cohort
- sampsex Sex of Twins: In sample
- zygosity Zygosity

Age 5

- IQE5 Pro-rated IQ score – Elder
- VERBALE5 Twin's age adjusted vocabulary score – Elder
- PERFE5 Twin's age adjusted block design score - Elder
- seswq35 Social class composite
- HIEDM5 Highest educational qualification (mother)
- HIEDPM5 Highest educational qualification (partner)
- HOHSCM5 HoH Social Class (highest mum/dad)
- ED56M5 Total HHold Income (all sources - before Tax)
- NBENSM5 No. Benefits (ex sickness)
- HTENM5 Housing Tenure
- ED61M5 Household own or have access to a car or van?
- p5cacorn Neighbourhood deprivation at age 5
- ph5code\_num ONS urbanicity (number code 1-10)
- ph5cat\_num ONS urbanicity (categorical least to most urban)
- nprobm5 Perception of local environment
- ncrimm5 Neighbourhood Personal Victimisation
- ncrim2m5 Individual Reports score 2+ on Crime measure
- scohm5 Neighbourhood Social Cohesion

Age 7

- p7cacorn Neighbourhood deprivation at age 7
- ph7code\_num ONS urbanicity (number code 1-10)

- ph7cat\_num ONS urbanicity (categorical least to most urban)

#### Age 10

- p10cacor Neighbourhood deprivation at age 10
- ph10code\_num ONS urbanicity (number code 1-10)
- ph10cat\_num ONS urbanicity (categorical least to most urban)
- nmove1510 Number of residence changes 5 to 10, LHC
- Loc1\_NO2\_P10 NO2 levels at address location 1
- Loc1\_NOx\_P10 NOx levels at address location 1
- Loc1\_PM2\_5\_P10 PM2.5 levels address location 1
- Loc1\_PM10\_P10 PM10 levels at address location 1

#### Age 12

- psysymp01e12 Age-12 childhood psychotic symptoms (Elder)
- psysymp12 Psychotic symptom count (Elder)
- IQ12E Pro-Rated IQ (INF & MR) – Elder
- infe\_ss12 Information Scaled Score, 12E
- mre\_ss12 Matrix Reasoning Scaled Score, 12E
- p12cacor Neighbourhood deprivation at age 12
- ph12code\_num ONS urbanicity (number code 1-10)
- ph12cat\_num ONS urbanicity (categorical least to most urban)
- fhanypm12 Family psychiatric history
- s2cohe SCOPIC 2 social cohesion
- s2ndsrd SCOPIC 2 disorder
- lc5m12 N changes of address – since age 10
- polyve512c Extent of Polyvictim (Truncated @3), 5-12, E-Twin

#### Age 18

- psysymp01e18 Age-18 adolescent psychotic symptoms - elder
- psyexpe18 Age-18 adolescent psychotic experiences full count – elder
- psyexpce18 Age-18 adolescent psychotic experiences categorical – elder
- IQ18E Pro-Rated IQ, (MR, & INF) – Elder
- INFE\_SS18 Information Scaled Score, 18E
- MRE\_SS18 Matrix Reasoning Scaled Score, 18E
- smkcnume18 Smoking current (number of cigarettes), elder
- smkdlye18 Ever a daily smoker, elder
- smkpkyr Smoking, pack years (age12 to 18)
- marjsxe18 Marijuana - Symptom scale - P18 - Elder
- dxmarje18 Marijuana dependency, dsm4 - P18 - Elder
- alcsxe18 Alcohol - symptom scale - P18 – Elder
- dxalcdepe18 Alcohol dependent, dsm4\_based - P18 – Elder
- dxmdee18 Major depression episode, dsm4 - P18 - Elder
- rvpapr18 RVP A-prime - P18 – Elder
- rvpmite18 RVP Mean Latency - P18 – Elder
- rvptface18 RVP Total False Alarms (Categorical) - P18 – Elder
- swmstae18 SWM Strategy - P18 - Elder
- swmteae18 SWM Total errors - P18 - Elder
- swmmlre18 SWM Mean time to last response - P18 – Elder
- sspsple18 SSP Span length - P18 - Elder
- ssprsl18 SSP Span length [reverse] - P18 – Elder

- LCA\_inflam\_LJHR2019 Inflammation latent classes based on CRP/IL-6/suPAR
- CRP\_suPAR Categorical variable stratifying by CRP/suPAR
- IL6\_suPAR Categorical variable stratifying by IL-6/suPAR
- CRP\_IL6 Categorical variable stratifying by CRP/suPAR
- CRPE18\_4SD CRP concentration (mg/L) with outliers removed - P18 – Elder
- lnCRP\_E18\_4SD Log-transformed CRP with outliers removed – P18 – Elder
- CRP\_high Categorical variable stratifying by high or low CRP
- IL6\_E18\_4SD Plasma IL-6 with outliers removed – P18 – Elder
- lnIL6\_E18\_4SD Log-transformed IL-6 with outliers removed – P18 – Elder
- IL6\_high Categorical variable stratifying by high or low IL-6
- suPAR\_E18\_4SD Plasma suPAR with outliers removed – P18 – Elder
- suPAR\_high Categorical variable stratifying by high or low suPAR
  
- waisthip18 Waist Hip Ratio - P18 – Elder
- bmie18 BMI - P18 – Elder
- btemp18 Body temperature, Celsius - P18 – Elder
  
- p18cacor Neighbourhood deprivation at age 18
- ph18code\_num ONS urbanicity (number code 1-10)
- ph18cat\_num ONS urbanicity (categorical least to most urban)
- Location1\_NO2\_E NO2 levels at address location 1
- Location1\_NOx\_E NOx levels at address location 1
- Location1\_PM2\_5\_E PM2.5 levels address location 1
- Location1\_PM10\_E PM10 levels at address location 1
- polyvictzce18 Polyvictimisation 4 cat (0,1,2,3+) - P18 - Elder
- neighrhde1218 Neighbourhood address across phases 12 and 18 – Elder
- cohabe18 Twins living together at age 18 – Elder

#### PRS data

- SchzPGS2018\_Twins\_Feb2020\_Clumpe participant polygenic risk scores for schizophrenia using new Pardini et al 2018 score
- zr\_PGI\_CPsingle\_twins Cognitive Performance, SSGAC 2020 (twins)
- zr\_PGI\_EAsingle\_twins Educational Attainment, SSGAC 2020 (twins)
- zr\_PGI\_CPsingle\_mum Cognitive Performance, SSGAC 2020 (mums)
- zr\_PGI\_EAsingle\_mum Educational Attainment, SSGAC 2020 (mums)

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## Data Security Agreement

Provisional Paper Title	Socioenvironmental risks for adolescent psychotic experiences: exploring biomechanisms in a UK longitudinal cohort
Proposing Author	Joanne Newbury
Today's Date	12/05/21

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- JN I am familiar with the King's College London research ethics guidelines (<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/research/support/ethics/about/index.aspx>) and the MRC good research practice guidelines (<https://www.mrc.ac.uk/research/policies-and-guidance-for-researchers/good-research-practice/>).
- JN My project has ethical approval from my institution.
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- JN I will not post data online or submit the data file to a journal for them to post. Some journals are now requesting the data file as part of the manuscript submission process. The E-Risk Study cannot be shared because the Study Members have not given informed consent for unrestricted open access. Speak to the study PI for strategies for dealing with data sharing requests from Journals.
- JN Before submitting my paper to a journal, I will submit my draft manuscript and scripts for data checking, and my draft manuscript for co-author mock review, allowing three weeks.
- JN I will submit analysis scripts and new variable documentation to project data manager after the manuscript gets accepted for publication.
- JN I will delete the data after the project is complete.
- JN **For projects using location data:** I will ensure geographical location information, including postcodes or geographical coordinates for the E-Risk study member's homes or schools, is never combined or stored with any other E-Risk data (family or twin-level data)
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## CONCEPT PAPER RESPONSE FORM

### A. To be completed by the proposing author

Proposing Author:

I have read the E-Risk data-sharing policy guidelines and agree to follow them

Provisional Paper Title: Socioenvironmental risks for adolescent psychotic experiences: exploring biomechanisms in a UK longitudinal cohort

Potential co-authors: Louise Arseneault, Terrie Moffitt, Avshalom Caspi, Candice Odgers, Laura Howe, Ioannis Bakolis, Aaron Reuben, Andrea Danese, Line Rasmussen, Antonella Trotta, Antony Ambler

Potential Journals:

Intended Submission Date (month/year): 10/21

***Please keep one copy for your records and return one to Louise (louise.arseneault@kcl.ac.uk)***

### B. To be completed by potential co-authors:

Approved     Not Approved     Let's discuss, I have concerns

Comments:

Please check your contribution(s) for authorship:

- Conceptualizing and designing the longitudinal study
- Conceptualizing and collecting one or more variables
- Data collection
- Conceptualizing and designing this specific paper project
- Statistical analyses
- Writing
- Reviewing manuscript drafts
- Final approval before submission for publication
- Acknowledgment only, I will not be a co-author

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