ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, November 16

Dr. Cathy Kothari, Assistant Professor, WMed
DAY-TO-DAY STRESSORS, INCLUDING DISCRIMINATION, IMPACTS HEALTH

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Kalamazoo County Birth Records, 2008-2014

- 77% women of color (49,540)
- 23% women of color

- 38% of white women
- 62% of white women

- Under $40,000 / Medicaid
- $40,000+ / Private insurance
Day-to-Day Income Stressors
(n=121 lower-income survey moms)

- 75% women of color
- 35% of white women
- Under $40,000 / Medicaid

We...
- Don’t have enough to eat (8%)
- Rent (66%) or live with other family (22%)
- Do not have good childcare (19%)

Neighborhood...
- Neighbors don’t help each other (25%)
- Isn’t welcoming (17%)
- Isn’t safe (12%)

Larger community...
- Does not take good care of my neighborhood (54%)
Stress Changes Biology (Ong et al, 2017)

- Increases cortisol levels
- Increases blood pressure
- Changes metabolism (lipid / glucose)
- Increases Inflammatory response
- Agitates the sympathetic nervous system

Poverty doubles chances of infant dying

Estimated Infant Mortality Rate:
Kalamazoo County, 2010-2016*

*Unofficial Rates: # deaths per 1,000 births (N=128).
NOTE: Income was defined by whether delivery was paid by Medicaid ($) or private insurance ($$$).
Unfair treatment is a stressor
(n=254 survey moms)

45% of surveyed mothers report being regularly discriminated against

Doubles stress levels
Survey Moms Reporting Unfair Treatment
-% with monthly or more frequent-

White
- 52.8%
- (53)

of Color
- 66.2%
- (68)

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Living in Kalamazoo as a person of color triples chances of infant dying

*Unofficial Rates: # deaths per 1,000 births (N=128).
NOTE: Income was defined by whether delivery was paid by Medicaid ($) or private insurance ($$$).
Every baby lost is a future lost...

...they are also a marker for child health & community well-being