

# Childhood Family Instability and Adult Health

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# Family instability

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- Intended to capture dynamic trajectory of family experience

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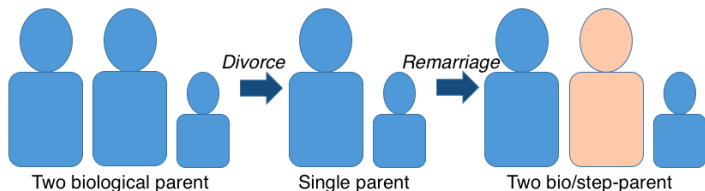
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- Exposure to stressors in early life has lasting health consequences
- Existing research documents negative consequences for childhood cognitive and behavioral outcomes
- No existing research on long-term health association
  - ▶ **Prediction: family instability will be associated with increased health risk**

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- Analytic sample : 9,347 individuals

## Measures - Family instability

- Annual family structure measure from birth to age at Wave II
  - 1 Parent - union history
  - 2 Parent - current union status
  - 3 Adolescent - household roster
  - 4 Adolescent - nonresident biological parent questions



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### **Distribution of family instability**

<i>Number of changes</i>	<i>Percent</i>
No changes	66%
One change	18%
Two changes	11%
Three or more changes	5%

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- Metabolic syndrome
  - ▶ 3 or more high risk values out of 5 markers - hypertension, glucose, HDL cholesterol, triglycerides, and waist circumference

### Descriptive Statistics

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean/Percent</i>	<i>SE</i>
hsCRP	2.01	1.10
BMI	29.12	7.29
Hypertension	19%	
Metabolic syndrome	15%	

## Measures - Control variables

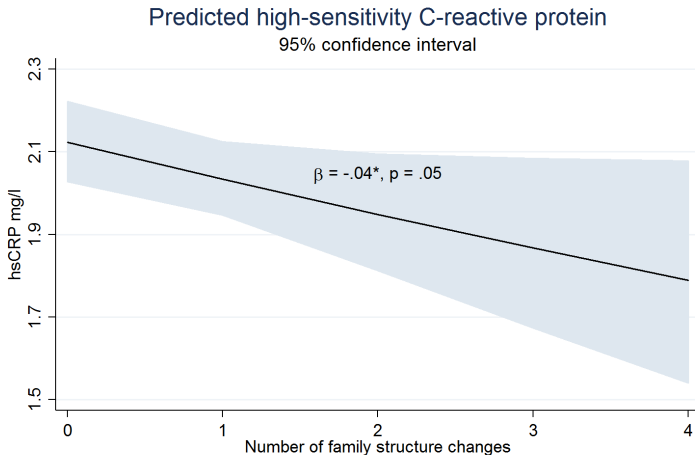
- Age
- Sex
- Race/ethnicity (White non-Hispanic, Black non-Hispanic, Asian, Hispanic, Other)
- Two biological parents at birth
- Breastfed
- Family income at adolescence
- Parent's education
- Adult education

# Methods

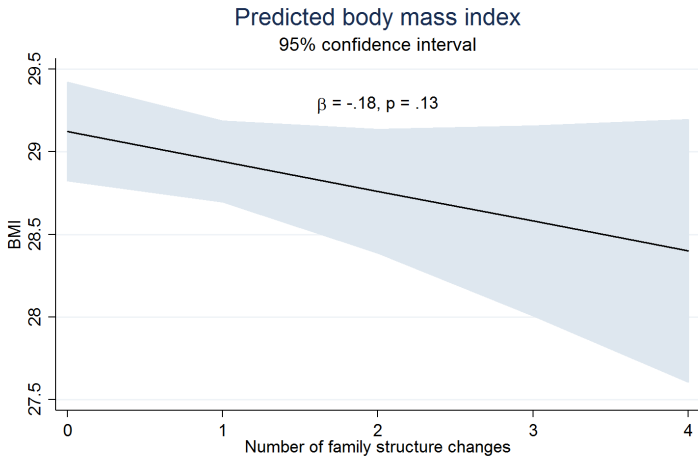
- CRP and BMI - Linear regression
- Hypertension and metabolic syndrome - Logistic regression
- Sample weights
- Clustered standard errors

# Results

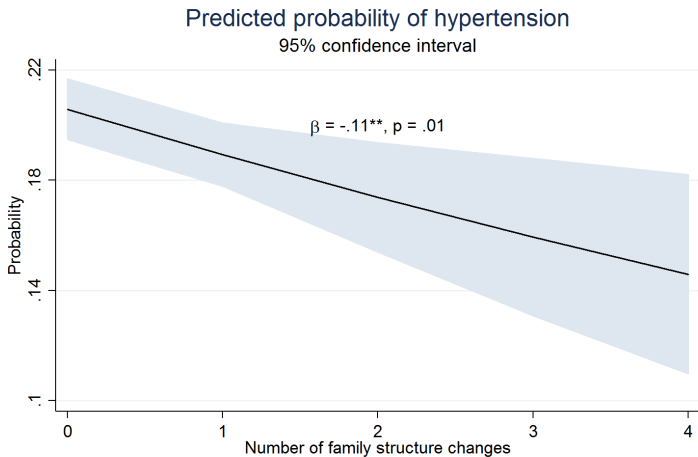
# Results - High-sensitivity C-reactive protein



# Results - BMI

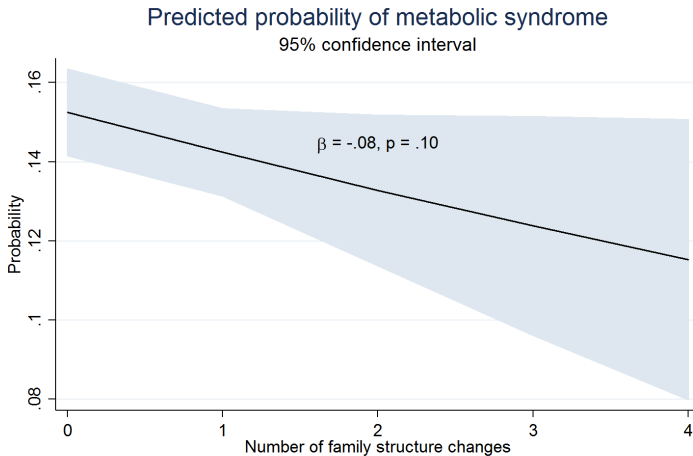


# Results - Hypertension



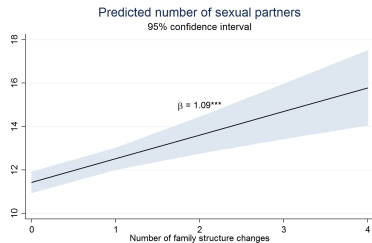
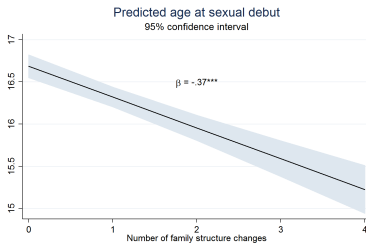
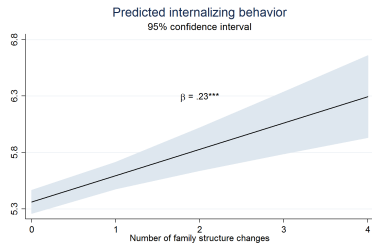
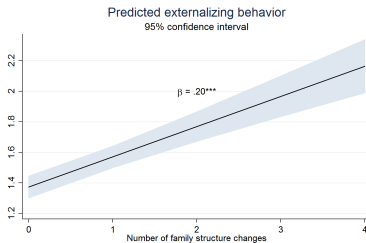


# Results - Metabolic syndrome



## Robustness - Validating family instability

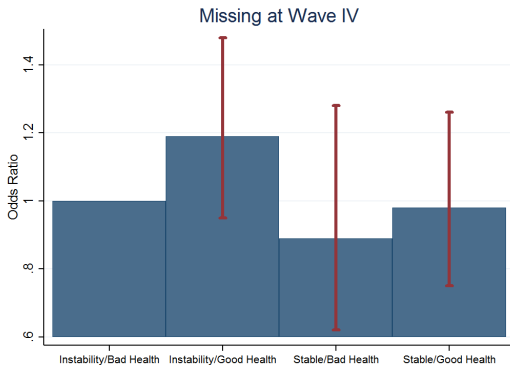
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- Are respondents with high family instability and poor health more likely to be missing?



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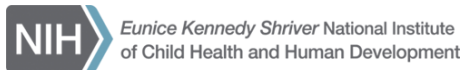
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# Thank you!

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