FUTURE PLANS TO HAVE CHILDREN: ATTACHMENT TO ONE’S OWN PARENTS AND CAREGIVING IN EMERGING ADULTHOOD. EARLY FINDINGS FROM THE LONGITUDINAL ATTACHMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS STUDY (LARS)

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The current study aims to fill a gap in intergenerational attachment and caregiving research during the preconception period. This poster presents early cross-sectional findings from the first 500 participants in The Longitudinal Attachment and Relationships Study (LARS).

Method: Investigation began in 2018 with the current cohort during emerging adulthood and will culminate in early parenthood. To date, LARS consists of 500 emerging adults who have participated in the first wave of data collection. Emerging adulthood (18-25 years) is the developmental stage immediately preceding peak childbearing age in the developed western world. Of these, 300 have consented to be contacted for follow up surveys about their relationships and future pregnancies. Emerging adulthood typically incorporates major life transitions and experimentation with relationships (Arnett, 2000), providing an ideal starting point for investigation of these issues. Data collection will take place over the next seven years, beginning with phase one in emerging adulthood (2018-2020). Following participants through time, phase two (2020-2021) will investigate stability and change in adult attachment over time, and in preparation for parenthood. Phase three (2021-2024) will investigate perinatal attachment themes, and phase four (2024-2026) will investigate caregiving and early attachment in the next generation.