

Special Issue

Vulnerability and Adaptation in Brain Development

Message from the Guest Editors

Multiple factors influence the development and maintenance of the nervous system. Stresses at critical windows during brain development are detrimental as the deficits are severe, irreversible and long lasting, leading to later life disorders. The consequences of stress are dependent upon the time at which an individual encounters it. Prenatal stressors (such as maternal immune activation, malnourishment, obesity, smoking, alcoholism, drug/toxin exposures, diabetes, HIV, hepatitis and more), post-natal stressors (such as defective childbirth, injury, poor hygiene, infections, malnourishment, parental separation, violence, etc.) contribute to compromised brain development, abnormal cellular networking, cellular degeneration, inflammation and more. Such changes may lead to the development of mood and anxiety disorders, depression and poor cognitive development: the hallmarks of neurological disorders like Schizophrenia, Alzheimer's, bipolar disorders and even accelerated aging. We need to identify the factors that influence the functional and structural plasticity of the developing brain influencing its adaptability to perinatal challenges.

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