**INTRODUCTION**

- Being a mother can be a challenging role for even the most successful, educated, or invested woman (Luthar & Cicola, 2015).
- Mothering can be particularly demanding for single women who are both the primary caregivers and primary wage earners for their children.
- High levels of both financial and emotional stressors result in single mothers having a high risk for emotional distress and disruptions in parenting, which contributes to their children being more vulnerable to adjustment problems (Taylor & Conger, 2014).
- Vulnerabilities highlight the importance of identifying ways to effectively intervene in promoting positive adjustment for single mothers and their children across the range of economic circumstances.

**PURPOSE**

- Identifying processes and mechanisms that help single mothers function well, despite the challenges they face, may be the best approach to improving the lives of children in single mother families.
- Resilience literature consistently finds that having a warm, competent parent protects children against adversities.
- Model highlights two resilience factors implicated in the well-being of single mothers. Factors are associated with single mothers’ adjustment, are amendable to interventions, and appear to apply equally to single mothers regardless of income or ethnicity.
- **Social support:** Subjective belief that a person has a caring and available social network that values and takes care of them.
- Vital to healthy psychological well-being, coping with stress.
- Single mothers with higher social support: higher positive parenting, which protects children against adversities.
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**Internal Strengths:** Dispositional optimism, self-efficacy, self-esteem

- Optimistic individuals report less distress across a range of stressful circumstances, have better social networks, higher mental health and well-being, more effective coping strategies (Carver et al., 2010).
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**IMPACTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Interventions that target the well-being of single mothers are needed.
- We propose that a strength-based multicomponent group intervention that provides peer support in a group environment, and that additionally combines elements of cognitive-behavioral training, would be highly effective at improving adjustment in single mothers.
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**Figure 1. Conceptual Model**

- Note: Our conceptual model hypothesizes that perceptions of social support and internal strengths are positively associated with mothers’ well-being in single mothers, which in turn, affect coping strategies (paths c and d). Additionally, it is likely that mothers’ social support and internal strengths are directionally related (paths a and b). Although not discussed in the present study, our overall hypothesis is that facilitating well-being in single mothers will positively contribute to child outcomes (path e) and that the selected resilience processes may have direct effects on child outcomes (paths f and g).

**References**