ABSTRACT

TITLE:	Environmental Stressors: The Effects of Ambient Noise on Child Development in Rural and Urban Areas
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ABSTRACT: People typically characterize environmental issues as physical health or technological problems, but the physical environment can also have adverse psychological, physiological, and developmental impacts. This is especially evident in regards to the effects of ambient noise on developing children. Chronic exposure to environmental noise is considered a stressor because it decreases expectancies for control and increases susceptibility to helplessness, behavioral problems, cognitive issues, and other developmental concerns. Although there has been much research on the effects of noise on child development in both urban and rural environments, it is unclear whether the impacts on children are similar in the two environments. I evaluated a series of case studies from environmental psychology journals to determine if there is sufficient evidence to support the theory that children from urban areas are negatively impacted by surrounding environmental stressors, mainly ambient noise, in terms of their educational development. I found there to be some discrepancy between the case studies, indicating that there are more factors than just ambient noise caused by air and road traffic that play into child development issues. Understanding what factors in the environment play into child development is vital in providing children with the ideal atmosphere to enjoy a life with limited environmental stress while allowing the child to succeed academically.