

## Why growing up poor could hurt your brain in old age

In 2004, a study titled “The Long Arm of Childhood” found that whether children were rich or poor could influence their health in adulthood. Now a new paper out in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) suggests that childhood has an even longer arm, reaching well into old age. Someone's economic status as a child, this study suggests, could influence his or her memory and brain health after age 50.

The study's authors looked at a database of 24,066 people over 50 whose cognitive functioning had been measured every two years from 2004 to 2015.

...

It turned out that those who had grown up in the wealthier homes were sharper, mentally, in old age. Compared with the people who were least advantaged growing up, people who were most advantaged remembered, on average, 1.27 more words from a list of 10 that was read to them, and when asked to name as many animals as they could think of in a minute, they were able to name an average of five more animals.

...

To protect against these effects, poor children should be steered into higher education, they say, and in general be lifted out of poverty.

**Read full, original post:** [A Poor Childhood Could Hurt Your Memory in Old Age](#)