



CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

FIGURES

TABLES

ABBREVIATIONS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	PART I THEORETICAL BACKGROUND.....	3
2.1	PRENATAL STRESS.....	3
2.1.1	Stress	3
2.1.1.1	Definition of Stress and Theories of Stress	3
2.1.1.2	Biological Components of Stress – HPA and SNS.....	4
2.1.1.3	Psychological Components of Stress	6
2.1.1.4	First Wave and second Wave	7
2.1.2	Prenatal Stress	8
2.1.2.1	Pregnancy	8
2.1.2.2	Complication of Pregnancy and their Treatment.....	11
2.1.2.3	Treatment with Tocolytics and Glucocorticoids	11
2.1.2.4	Operationalisation of Prenatal Stress.....	12
2.1.2.5	Different Hypothesis about Mechanisms of Prenatal Stress	16
2.1.2.6	Shortterm Effects of Prenatal Stress	18
2.1.2.7	Longterm Effects of Prenatal Stress	20
2.2	PSYCHBIOLOGICAL STRESS REACTIVITY.....	31
2.2.1	Psychbiological Stress Reactivity	31
2.2.1.1	Psychological Parameters of Stress Reactivity	32
2.2.1.2	Cortisol.....	33
2.2.1.3	Alpha-Amylase	36
2.2.1.4	Heart Rate.....	37
2.2.2	Trier Social Stress Test for Children (TSST-C)	38
2.3	ANXIETY	44
2.3.1	Definition of Anxiety.....	44
2.3.2	Anxiety and Development.....	44
2.3.3	Anxiety and Psychopathology.....	44



2.4 CONCLUSION.....	46
3 STUDY IDEA, QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS.....	48
4 PART II EMPIRICAL STUDY.....	53
4.1 PRENATAL GLUCOCORTICOID EXPOSURE IS ASSOCIATED WITH AN ALTERED PSYCHOBIOLOGICAL REACTIVITY TO ACUTE PSYCHOSOCIAL STRESS IN 10-YEAR- OLD CHILDREN.....	53
4.1.1 Introduction.....	53
4.1.2 Methods and Materials.....	54
4.1.2.1 Study Participants.....	54
4.1.2.2 Procedure.....	55
4.1.2.3 Measures.....	56
4.1.3 Results.....	58
4.1.4 Discussion.....	64
4.2 ANXIETY IN PRENATALLY GLUCOCORTICOID EXPOSED 10-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN: SELF- AND PARENTAL REPORTS.....	67
4.2.1 Introduction.....	67
4.2.2 Methods and Materials.....	69
4.2.2.1 Study Participants.....	69
4.2.2.2 Procedure.....	70
4.2.2.3 Measures.....	70
4.2.3 Results.....	72
4.2.4 Discussion.....	75
5 PART III - GENERAL DISCUSSION.....	79
5.1 SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY.....	80
5.1.1 PRENATAL GLUCOCORTICOID EXPOSURE IS ASSOCIATED WITH AN ALTERED PSYCHOBIOLOGICAL REACTIVITY TO ACUTE PSYCHOSOCIAL STRESS IN 10-YEAR- OLD CHILDREN.....	80
5.1.2 ANXIETY IN PRENATALLY GLUCOCORTICOIC-EXPOSED 10-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN: SELF- AND PARENTAL REPORTS.....	80
5.2 INTEGRATION OF CURRENT FINDINGS.....	81
5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	88
5.4 CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	89
6 REFERENCES.....	91