

Propositions accompanying the doctoral thesis

**Mind the Gap: Socioeconomic Health Inequalities in Early Life**

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1. Persistent early-life health inequalities exist in the Netherlands, with the highest burden observed in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas. (This thesis)
2. Neighbourhoods are dynamic environments that can experience improvement or decline and these changes are related to health outcomes at birth. (This thesis)
3. Neighbourhood socioeconomic conditions have the potential to affect early-life health via social characteristics that could be modifiable by policy. (This thesis)
4. The adverse effects of extreme temperature events on health at birth are more pronounced among disadvantaged populations, likely contributing to increased health inequalities in the face of climate change. (This thesis)
5. Policies can show differential effects on health outcomes among distinct socioeconomic groups, which can result in health disparities (at least in the short term). (This thesis)
6. Broadening our research focus to encompass not only measurable physical characteristics but also intangible aspects of the environment, i.e., those related to social processes, is vital for a comprehensive understanding of how the environment influences health.
7. The general public is genuinely interested in the procedure researchers have followed to reach their conclusions; we need to place more attention on communicating to the wider audience the methodology used in our studies along with the assumptions being made.
8. “Language” barriers across disciplines have hindered progress to address complex issues; there is a need to continue the efforts to raise awareness about differences in terminology and definitions that have discouraged researchers from reading each other’s work and collaborating.
9. Competing research approaches should not be immediately disregarded on the basis of research traditions.
10. “Causal vocabulary was virtually prohibited for more than half a century. And when you prohibit speech, you prohibit thought and stifle principles, methods, and tools.” (Judea Pearl)
11. “Yet this seemingly impossible task [causal inference in social epidemiology] is exactly what we have chosen to do for a living.” (Jay Kaufman)