

P-319 - EMOTION REGULATION AND COGNITIVE COPING STRATEGIES IN CHILDREN DIAGNOSED WITH ANXIETY DISORDERS

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Introduction: Currently there are no developed theories supported by evidence on the emotion role in development and psychopathology. By elucidating the psychological and biological mechanisms involved in the occurrence of anxiety disorders in children, effective programs for prevention and early intervention can be developed.

Objectives: To investigate the emotion regulation strategies in children diagnosed with anxiety disorders and their parents compared with healthy ones.

Aims: To examine the relationship between the emotion regulation mechanisms and the presence of psychopathology.

Methods: Data were obtained from 45 children aged 10-18 years diagnosed with anxiety disorders according to DSM IV-TR and healthy subjects, comparable in age and sex. For diagnostic procedures, assessment of internalizing/externalizing symptoms and anxiety disorders we used specific standardized psychometric instruments.

Results: The group of children diagnosed with anxiety disorder showed an increased frequency and intensity of emotional reactivity with intense negative emotions, reassessment use deficits in negative emotional situations and self efficiency, frequent use of avoidance strategy, the use of cognitive coping strategies significantly less adaptive as response to adverse events (e.g. high scores on catastrophe and rumination strategies and low scores on positive reassessment).

Conclusions: The description of the mechanisms by which external or internal variables influence the appearance of the anxiety disorders can contribute to the identification of the anxiety etiological models. Changing the regulation and emotional reactivity pattern can have important clinical implications, particularly therapeutic. Preliminary results of the studies on the therapy that includes the emotional component effectiveness are positive for both children and adults.