

Poster presentation

Effects of physical activity on children's behavior

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Background

This study was conducted to determine whether there is a correlation between organized physical activities and behavioral disorders in children.

Materials and methods

Sample consisted of 1831 children aged between 4 and 10 who responded to a Likert-type behavior-assessment questionnaire, as well as to a questionnaire on physical activity. Independent variables in this analysis are examinees' gender and age (preschool or elementary school beginner, depending on which institution examinees attended at a time of analysis).

Results

Results showed that children of preschool age are less involved in organized physical activities, and also that girls of all ages have a lower participation rate than boys in organized physical activities. Factor-analysis isolated four contributors to aberrant behavior in children: negativity, anxiety, lack of adjustment, and lack of established controls. Relation of these four factors to participation in physical activity was also analyzed. A structure of aberrant behavior points to a strong interconnection between neurobiological and cognitive mechanisms and socio-emotional aspects of behavior in children.

Differences in exhibition of socially incompetent behavioral modules in children included in physical activity, versus those that weren't, are most evident in following traits: stubbornness, unruliness, being spoiled, maudlin, as well as in being aggressive, grabbing toys, throwing

things around and breaking them. Children engaged in physical activities also exhibit differences in behaviors that manifest anxiety.

Conclusions

The established correlation of factors leading to aberrant behavior and engagement in physical activity point to a prospect that by correctly choosing and directing physical activities, we can prevent behavioral disorders and contribute to children's mental health and well-being.

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