

speed and fluency, difficulties in reading comprehension, as well as severe difficulties in structuring text and in orthography. Due to his difficulties and the high levels of anxiety they generated, Pedro tended to persistently avoid reading and writing exercises. Weekly individual sessions were conducted to promote reading and writing processes. An increase in child's reading fluency was observed, as well as in reading comprehension. Additionally, he developed strategies to better structure and link ideas in his texts and to monitor orthography, leading to a significant decrease in orthographic mistakes. Pedro also appeared to be more confident when dealing with reading and writing exercises. The intervention proved to be effective in promoting reading and writing processes, as well as decreasing anxiety levels generated by learning disabilities.

C098. CHALLENGING THE GAP BETWEEN ASPIRATIONS AND REALITY: AN ADOLESCENT DEFINING VOCATIONAL CHOICES, WHILE STRUGGLING WITH COGNITIVE DIFFICULTIES

Rowcliffe, S., Sousa, M., Alves, D.

Facultad de de Psicologia e Ciências de Educação da Universidade do Porto (FPCEUP), Porto, Portugal

An intellectual development disorder may significantly hinder the individual's functioning and autonomy. The damaging effects of cognitive difficulties on children and adolescents' academic and social adjustment often lead to social exclusion. Therefore, it is important to design interventions to help adolescents dealing with these difficulties to define academic and professional choices that promote their autonomy and inclusion. An intervention aiming to help Catarina, a 16-year-old girl, attending the 10th grade, with an intellectual disability, to define a vocational pathway appropriate to her cognitive profile was developed. A cognitive assessment with Wechsler Intelligence Scale, 3rd edition (WISC-III) was conducted. Additionally, reading and writing processes were assessed as structural dimensions of learning. A mild intellectual development disorder compromising Catarina's learning was identified. After her cognitive and functioning profile were assessed, Catarina was encouraged to explore some vocational pathways appropriate to her idiosyncrasies and to the promotion of her social inclusion. Catarina identified some vocational pathways appropriate to her interests and competencies. She progressively became more confident about her vocational choices and her skills to deal with the transition to the labour world. The intervention proved to be effective in helping the adolescent develop coping skills to deal with the transition into working life, as a way to promote her autonomy and inclusion.

C099. STRUGGLING IN MATHEMATICS: A CASE STUDY

Moreira M., Rocha T., Alves D.
University of Porto, Porto, Portugal

Many students fall below the expected level of mathematics achievement and learning, despite its

importance on our society. Indeed, mathematics is difficult and entails mastering many cognitive processes. This struggle with mathematics is, in many cases, more than holding a grudge against a difficult and demanding subject. It may be due to environmental or child factors, school curriculum, and many others contributing to development and sustaining mathematical learning disabilities. Math skills are often cumulative in nature and unfortunately, so are the effects of mathematical learning disabilities. In these cases, a comprehensive intervention is required, aiming to optimize the contexts of learning and the child's mathematical performance. The main purpose of this presentation is to explore the development of mathematical learning disabilities and the interventions implemented in different moments of the school trajectory, using a clinical case as an illustration. The processes of assessment and intervention were based on a bioecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1995). Assuming the different levels of child functioning, the psychologist assesses and intervenes in the confluence of micro and mesosystems. We will present a case of an eight-year-old girl, attending the 3rd grade, referred by her parents, due to behavior and learning difficulties, specifically in mathematics. The first assessment was in the beginning of the 2nd grade. Difficulties in counting, arithmetic and basic mathematical facts retrieval have been identified. Her performance has been monitored until the end of the 3rd grade. The interventions strategies applied showed improvements in those three domains accordingly to the Portuguese educational curriculum for mathematics.

C100. PREVENTION RESPONSE: HELPING YOUNG CHILDREN TO DEVELOP EMERGENT LITERACY SKILLS

Alves, D.(1), Tavares, C.(2), Amorim, D.(2), Sá, H.(2)

(1)FPCEUP, Porto, Portugal, (2)FAPFeira, Aveiro, Portugal

Emergent literacy refers to the reading and writing knowledge and behavior of children who are not yet conventionally literate. Preschool children who are experiencing difficulties in emergent literacy development are on increased risk for entering elementary school without an adequate literacy foundation. The project «O Crescer do ler» was developed under the framework of a partnership between the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of the University of Porto and the Federation of Parents' Associations of Santa Maria da Feira, and with the support of the municipality. This project was implemented with 5 years old children, attending public kindergarten and schools of Santa Maria da Feira. This project aims to: 1) promote emergent literacy skills to increase formal reading and writing learning, and 2) identify children with reading and writing difficulties. The project was designed based on Response to Intervention (RTI). The operationalization of the RTI requires differentiated and increasingly selective levels of intervention. These levels were defined based on the data gathered in the universal screening developed with each child. The universal screening and the different levels of intervention focused on dimensions associ-