

CS016. EMOGENIUS: PROMOTING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN PORTUGUESE PRE-SCHOOL

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As the benefits of social-emotional learning (SEL) have become clear, schools have seen a blossoming of programs that aim to equip students with fundamental emotional and interpersonal skills. Designing intervention programs to support young children's social-emotional development requires not only that we consider effective intervention practices but, that we also consider how to operationalize those practices in different contexts, given the range of educational settings in which young children are integrated and the qualifications of professionals in those. Professional development has been identified as a key competency driver in implementing science frameworks. Research has demonstrated that when early care and education teachers receive coaching on effective practices, including performance feedback, children receive interventions implemented with fidelity, which results in improved social-emotional skills for young children who engage in challenging behaviour. Emogenius is an original social-emotional learning Portuguese program for 4- and 5-years old children created by a multidisciplinary team of psychologists and pediatricians. The main goal is to promote social-emotional skills, with a special focus on the mind and body connection, and mindfulness exercises. This program also aims to establish ecological validity, by involving parents and the school community. In this communication, we present the implementation of this program in a sample of 62 preschoolers, across two schools, through eighteen sessions. During the sessions, four basic emotions were the focus: anger, fear, sadness, and joy. Every session started and ended with mindfulness exercises. This kind of intervention illustrates the importance of professional development since it requires specific training and monitoring of preschool teachers and other members of the school community to implement the program.

S05. ANXIETY SYMPTOMS IN CHILDREN AND EARLY ADOLESCENTS

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Children and youth feel worried and anxious at times, just as adults do. Children can feel anxious around different things at different ages. Although, a majority of these worries are normal during development, others are not. Anxiety becomes maladaptive for children when it starts to interfere in daily life activities. Anxiety is one of the most prevalent (15%-20% lifetime; 6.5% worldwide) and earliest (median age of onset = 11 years) form of psychopathology, deeply linked to several mental disorders later in life. The main goal of this symposium is to shed light on awareness of anxiety symptoms in Italian children

and early adolescents adopting a self- and other-informants' perspective, in non-clinical as well as clinical settings. Implications for prevention and intervention programs are discussed. The first contribution offers a picture of levels of anxiety symptoms as perceived by children aged 8-13 years taking into account age and gender differences. Nearly 1300 community-based youths were enrolled in the study and filled in self-report questionnaires on a) anxiety proneness and b) the six anxiety dimensions described in the DSM-IV. Moreover, first findings about levels of anxiety experienced by hospitalized children are discussed. The second communication deepens on multi-informant assessment, looking at parent-child agreement on anxiety symptoms in 1000 community-based families (i.e., mother, father and child). The third contribution deals with the association between parental and offspring separation anxiety symptoms. Mothers and fathers were asked to rate their own and their child's levels of separation anxiety in order to assess perception and transmission of anxiety symptoms. Furthermore, links between parents' separation anxiety and parenting style were evaluated. The last presentation explores anxiety symptoms in children involved in a healthy lifestyle intervention for overweight/obesity. Self- and parent-reports about anxiety were compared

CS017. ANXIETY-PRONENESS AND SYMPTOMS IN NON-CLINICAL ITALIAN CHILDREN AND EARLY ADOLESCENTS

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Nowadays studies on anxiety in children and early adolescents are quite common, this underlines the importance of assessing the correlates of anxiety symptoms during childhood. A growing body of studies have documented that girls are more susceptible to anxiety than boys beginning in childhood, and foreshadowed higher rates of anxiety in females compared to males from adolescence to adulthood, suggesting that gender and age differences are important factors to be considered for better assessment. The current study aims to evaluate anxiety disorder in children and early adolescents. 1328 non-clinical Italian children and early adolescents aged 8 to 13 years completed measures of anxiety proneness (State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children-Trait version, STAIC-T) and anxiety symptoms as described in DSM-IV (Spence Children's Anxiety Scale, SCAS). Results of STAIC-T indicated a gender difference with girls scoring significantly higher than boys, but no age differences as well as interaction effect between gender and age were found. The mean scored of overall SCAS is below the Italy normative range documented in prior studies, children mean scored higher than adolescents, girls mean scored higher than boys. In detail, children scored higher than adolescents in the separation anxiety (SAD), panic and agoraphobia (PA), obsessive-compulsive disorders (OCD) and fears of physical injury (PHY). Girls showed higher level of anxiety than boys in separation anxiety (SAD), social phobia (SOC), panic and agoraphobia (PA),