

Public Abstract

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Title:Peer Difficulties in Children with Epilepsy: Association with Medical, Neuropsychological, Academic, and Behavioral Factors

Research indicates that compared to healthy children or children with other health conditions (i.e., asthma or diabetes), children with epilepsy experience more peer difficulties. Unfortunately, very little research has examined what factors are associated with peer problems in children with epilepsy. Using a developmental psychopathology framework, the present study examined if behavioral (i.e., anxious and inattentive behaviors), academic, neuropsychological, and medical (i.e., age at epilepsy onset, seizure status) factors were related to peer difficulties in children with epilepsy and the potential mechanisms by which the relations occur.

Results indicate that the behavioral, neuropsychological, and medical factors were all related to peer difficulties in children with epilepsy. Moreover, behavioral factors mediated the relation between the neuropsychological and peer difficulties and the medical and peer difficulties factors.

Findings imply that behavioral factors may be an important route for intervention in children with epilepsy who are experiencing peer difficulties. Likewise, treatment should also consider the potential indirect role of medical and neuropsychological factors on peer problems in children with epilepsy.