

**Conclusions:** This modality of assessment can be instructional for parents and may also reduce financial and time costs once provides specific indicators to observe during play.

**Keyword:** Treatment

## EPP0158

### The relationship between executive dysfunctions and quality of life of children and youth with psychiatric disorders

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**Introduction:** The high cognitive abilities named executive functions (EF) are responsible for emotional regulation and for goal-oriented behavior. EF are frequently disrupted in anxiety disorders and negatively affect daily function and quality of life (QoL). Nevertheless, EF evaluation is usually performed in the laboratory using neuropsychological assessments that refer to specific components (such as working memory, inhibition), but lacks a comprehensive profile of EF and the expressions in real life context.

**Objectives:** To elaborate the knowledge about EF in daily life of children/youth with psychiatric disorders, by comparing their EF to those of healthy controls, using an ecological measure that imitates daily life scenarios; To examine the relationship between EF and QoL in the study group.

**Methods:** Participants were 49 children and youth aged 8-18 years: 25 subjects with psychiatric (mainly anxiety) disorders and 24 healthy controls. The children's parents completed a socio-demographic questionnaire, the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) to profile emotional difficulties; The Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Functions (BRIEF) which examines EF components related to meta-cognition and behavioral regulation; and the Pediatric Quality of Life Inventory (Peds-QoL).

**Results:** The study group had more EF difficulties [reduced behavioral regulation ( $F=31.81$ ;  $p<.001$ ) and metacognition ( $F=26.25$ ;  $p<.001$ )], and lower QoL. In the study group, EF difficulties correlated with reduced physical, emotional, social, and school-related-QoL.

**Conclusions:** EF should be evaluated in children/youth with psychiatric disorders, by ecological evaluation that reflect the difficulties in daily life. This may focus intervention on child's specific needs and improve the outcomes in terms of better function, development and QoL.

**Keywords:** quality of life; daily life activities; children and youth; Executive functions

## EPP0159

### Social cognition in adolescents at risk for psychosis: A 2-year follow-up study.

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**Introduction:** Deficits in social cognition have been reported in people at ultra-high risk (UHR) of psychosis exclusively using socio-cognitive tasks and in adolescent and young adult mixed population.

**Objectives:** Aim of this study was (1) to assess subjective experience of social cognition in adolescent help-seekers identified through UHR criteria, (2) to explore its significant correlations with psychopathology and functioning in UHR individuals; and (3) to monitor longitudinally its stability after a 24-month follow-up period.

**Methods:** Participants [51 UHR, 91 first-episode psychosis (FEP), and 48 non-UHR/FEP patients], aged 13–18 years, completed the comprehensive assessment of at-risk mental states and the GEOPTE scale of social cognition for psychosis.

**Results:** In comparison with non-UHR/FEP patients, both UHR and FEP adolescents showed significantly higher GEOPTE total scores. After 12 months of follow-up, UHR individuals had a significant decrease in severity on GEOPTE "Social Cognition" subscore. In the UHR group at baseline, GEOPTE scores had significant positive correlations with general psychopathology, positive and negative dimensions. Across the 2-year follow-up period, social cognition subscores specifically showed more stable associations with general psychopathology and negative symptoms.

**Conclusions:** Social cognition deficits are prominent in UHR adolescents and similar in severity to those of FEP patients at baseline. However, these impairments decreased over time, presumably together with delivery of targeted, specialized models for early intervention in psychosis.

**Keywords:** Ultra-High Risk; adolescence; social cognition; early psychosis

## EPP0160

### An eye-tracking study for measuring the attentional characteristics towards emotional scenes in children with autism spectrum condition

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**Introduction:** The difficulties in social interaction present in individuals with autism spectrum conditions may be related with the abnormal attentional processing of emotional information. Specifically, it has been hypothesized that the hypersensitivity to threat shown by individuals with autism may explain an avoidance behaviour. However, this hypothesis is not supported by research and the underlying psychological mechanisms of social interaction in autism still unclear.

**Objectives:** The aim of the present study was to examine attentional processing biases by administering a computer-based attentional task in a sample of 27 children with autism spectrum conditions and 25 typically developed participants (age 11-15 years).

**Methods:** The initial orienting of attention, the attentional engagement, and the attentional maintenance to different emotional scenes in competition (i.e. happy, neutral, threatening and sad) were measured by recording the eye movements during a 20 seconds free-viewing task.

**Results:** The main findings were: i) children with autism spectrum conditions showed an initial orientating bias towards threatening stimuli; and ii) while typically developed children revealed an attentional engagement and attentional maintenance bias towards threatening stimuli, children with autism spectrum conditions did not.

**Conclusions:** The findings of the present study are consistent with the affective information processing theories and shed light on the underlying mechanisms of social disturbances in autism spectrum conditions.

**Keywords:** autism spectrum condition; emotions; Eye movements; childhood

### EPP0161

#### An antisaccade task for measuring the attentional characteristics of social information processing in children with autism spectrum conditions

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**Introduction:** Autistic Spectrum Condition is often characterized by the presence of deficits in social interaction. An abnormal attentional processing may explain these difficulties, as it has been suggested that individuals with autism spectrum conditions may have problems with orienting attention to socially relevant stimuli and/or inhibiting their attentional responses to irrelevant ones.

**Objectives:** The aim of the current study is to shed light on this issue by the assessment of the attentional orienting and inhibitory control to emotional stimuli (angry, happy, and neutral faces).

**Methods:** An antisaccade task (with both prosaccade and antisaccade blocks) was applied to a final sample of 29 children with autism spectrum conditions and 27 children with typical development.

**Results:** The main findings were: i) children with autism spectrum condition committed more antisaccade error when seeing angry faces than happy or neutral faces, while children with typical development committed more antisaccade errors when seeing happy faces than neutral faces, and ii) latencies in the prosaccade and antisaccade blocks were associated with the severity of autism symptoms.

**Conclusions:** These results suggest that children with autism spectrum conditions show an impaired inhibitory control when angry faces are presented. This bias to negative high-arousal information is congruent with affective information-processing theories suggesting that threatening stimuli induce an overwhelming response in autism. From a clinical perspective, therapeutic strategies that focus on shifting attention to emotional stimuli may improve autism symptomatology and their social functioning.

**Keywords:** inhibitory control; autism spectrum condition; antisaccade task; eye-tracker

### EPP0162

#### Use of repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation in an adolescent with autism spectrum disorder and comorbid major depression disorder with anxiety symptoms: A case study.

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**Introduction:** Psychiatric comorbidities, including depressive and anxiety disorders, are common in individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Use of conventional therapies for treating depression and anxiety are of limited efficacy in individuals with ASD making treatment a challenging field. Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS) is a safe and efficacious technique in major depressive disorder, and a similar approach could yield therapeutic benefits in ASD.

**Objectives:** The aim of this case study is to present the effectiveness of rTMS in a 17 year old patient diagnosed with ASD and comorbid major depression disorder with anxiety symptoms.

**Methods:** This is a case study of a male adolescent aged 17, diagnosed with ASD and comorbid major depression disorder with anxiety symptoms, suicidal ideation and aggressive behavior. The protocol applied was 4 weeks of daily rTMS sessions. This involved rTMS to the left dorsomedial prefrontal cortex (10 Hz, 3,000 pulses/120% motor threshold) to treat depressive symptoms and to the right (50Hz, 600 pulses/ 120%motor threshold) to treat anxiety symptoms. Assessments were conducted using the BDI, PHQ-9 and GAD-7 scales at baseline and one month follow up. Suicidal ideation and aggressive behavior were assessed by a clinician at same intervals.

**Results:** Patient showed overall improvement in scores both in depression and anxiety scales. Suicidal Ideation and aggressive behavior showed significant reduction. No side effects were recorded during therapy.

**Conclusions:** Our findings suggest that the use of rTMS therapy in adolescents in the autistic spectrum and comorbid major depression disorder and anxiety symptoms is an efficacious and safe therapeutic treatment option.

**Keywords:** r-TMS; major depression disorder; autism spectrum disorder

### EPP0163

#### The relationship between bullism, depression and suicidal thought in adolescents in albania

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