Association of ADHD and Executive Functioning With Childhood Depression.

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE:
Despite its association with increased severity and treatment resistance, relatively little is known about the correlates of early-onset childhood depression. ADHD and executive functioning (EF) are each related to depression. Given their covariation, we tested the independent association of ADHD dimensions (i.e., inattention, hyperactivity) and EF with childhood depression using structural equation modeling to identify potential targets for intervention.

METHOD:
Participants were 225 five- to 10-year-old children (68% male) with (n = 117) and without (n = 108) ADHD. Youth completed laboratory assessments of EF, and parent, teacher, and youth reports of depression were gathered.

RESULTS:
With control of EF and anxiety, across informants, inattention, but not hyperactivity, was positively related to child depression. EF was positively associated with depression according to parent ratings only.

CONCLUSION:
We consider the association of inattention and EF with childhood depression, including implications for intervention and prevention from a developmental psychopathology framework.