

Preschool Inhibitory Control Predicts ADHD Group Status and Inhibitory Weakness in School

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Abstract

Objective

Discriminative utility of performance measures of inhibitory control was examined in preschool children with and without ADHD to determine whether performance measures added to diagnostic prediction and to prediction of informant-rated day-to-day executive function.

Method

Children ages 4–5 years (N = 105, 61% boys; 54 ADHD, medication-naïve) were assessed using performance measures (Auditory Continuous Performance Test for Preschoolers-Commission errors, Conflicting Motor Response Test, NEPSY Statue) and caregiver (parent, teacher) ratings of inhibition (Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function-Preschool version).

Results

Performance measures and parent and teacher reports of inhibitory control significantly and uniquely predicted ADHD group status; however, performance measures did not add to prediction of group status beyond parent reports. Performance measures did significantly predict classroom inhibitory control (teacher ratings), over and above parent reports of inhibitory control.

Conclusions

Performance measures of inhibitory control may be adequate predictors of ADHD status and good predictors of young children's classroom inhibitory control, demonstrating utility as components of clinical assessments.