

Early Crying, Sleeping, and Feeding Problems and Trajectories of Attention Problems From Childhood to Adulthood

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Abstract

This study investigated if crying, sleeping or feeding problems that co-occur (multiple regulatory problems [RPs]) or are persistent predict attention problems and diagnoses of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in childhood and adulthood. Participants were 342 individuals who were assessed at 5, 20, and 56 months for crying, sleeping, and feeding (RPs) and at 6, 8, and 28 years for ADHD diagnoses, attention problems, and attention span. Infants/toddlers with multiple/persistent RPs had an increased risk of receiving an ADHD diagnosis both in childhood and adulthood compared to those who never had RPs. Multiple/persistent RPs were further associated with a high-decreasing attention problems trajectory from childhood to adulthood. Interventions to alleviate early RPs may prevent the development of attention problems.