

Lifetime victimization in children and adolescents with ADHD

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Objectives: To analyze the association between type of victimization and the severity of ADHD symptoms in a clinical sample of children and adolescents with ADHD who were treated at our Child and Adolescent Mental Health Centers and to determine whether any comorbid disorder of ADHD is associated with victimization.

Methods: The sample was composed of 118 children and adolescents with an ADHD diagnosis according to DSM-IV criteria. The exclusion criteria consisted of comorbidity with mental retardation, autism, psychosis and organic brain disorders. Socio-demographic and clinical variables that could affect the results were controlled.

Symptom severity was measured by the Conners-3 scale¹. ADHD and comorbid diagnostics were evaluated by the Mini Kid interview². The experiences of victimization were evaluated using the Juvenile Victimization Questionnaire³. Pearson correlations were performed to determine the association between symptom severity and type of victimization. We performed a linear regression to determine the strength of the association between subtype of victimization and symptom severity. The χ^2 test was performed to analyze the differences between types of victimization and comorbid diagnoses.

Results: A history of conventional crime, child abuse and peer victimization were significantly associated with symptom severity. The presence of any comorbidity and depression was associated with a history of child abuse and indirect victimization.

Conclusion: Episodes of victimization should be considered in the treatment of children with ADHD.

1. Conners CK. *Conners' Rating Scales – Revised: Technical Manual*. Toronto: Multi-Health System; 2000.
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 3. (Finkelhor D, Hamby SL Ormrod R & turner h (2005). The Juvenile Victimization Questionnaire: reliability, validity and national norms. *Child abuse & Neglect*, 29 (4): 383-412).
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