Internalizing Disorders

Psychology 311
Abnormal Psychology

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Background
- Are often overlooked
- Disorders are usually mood or emotional
- Are unique to children only in the DSM
  - Separation Anxiety Disorder
  - Generalized Anxiety Disorder
  - Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
  - Depression

Separation Anxiety Disorder
- Show excessive anxiety or panic when not with a major attachment figure
  - May not stay in a room alone
  - May not go to school
  - Greatly exaggerated fears of
    - Animals, Monsters, Kidnappers
  - May complain of nausea, headaches, tummy aches, rapid heart rate
  - Older children have reaction when just thinking of future separation

More Characteristics
- Is the lasting quality that distinguishes this disorder
- Decreases sharply with age

Social Phobia
- Is a related disorder
- Found in childhood and adulthood
- Excessive shrinking from contact with unfamiliar people
- Avoid being around anyone except family
- Anticipate embarrassment and humiliation
  - Becomes stronger in adolescents
- Highest in African Americans, lowest in Hispanic Americans

Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Need to be affected by symptoms for 6 months
- Is related to situations that
  - Involve pressure for performance
  - Carry risk of loss of self esteem
- Seek out dependent relationships and are very eager to please others
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School
• Is a huge stressor
• Example
  • Child in 4th grade
  • Very emotionally sensitive to what is going on around here
  • Cannot read the teacher
  • Is on nails
  • Result - High Anxiety
    • Begs not to go to school

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Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
• Persistent unwanted thoughts and ritualistic behaviors
• Usually have multiple obsessions
  • The younger they begin, the more likely they continue into adulthood
  • Usually see most diagnoses between 10 – 21
• Boys seen with it two times more than girls
• Adults about the same

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Symptoms
• Children may experience tics with the disorder
• Adults may have mood or anxiety disorders
• Some rituals are common
  • Getting ready for bed
• Some games are not maladaptive and normal for children
  • E.g., avoiding sidewalk cracks
• Children with this disorder may have severely impaired functioning
• Most common is dirt contamination

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Treatment
• Antidepressants
  • But only are mildly effective
• Cognitive behavioral treatment
  • With the family and Individual is the most effective treatment

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Depression
• DSM does not have a special section for depression in children
• Instead uses the adult category with minor modifications

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Testing and Treatment
• Ways to determine depression in children
  • Children’s Depression Inventory
• Treatment
  • Antidepressants are not effective
  • Cognitive behavior is most effective
    • Give them skills and awareness to see they have choices and control
Conclusion

- Several internalizing disorders
- Many respond well to treatment