**RATE OF OCCURRENCE AND PREDICTORS OF PROBLEM BEHAVIOURS IN CHILDREN DIAGNOSED WITH ASD AND/OR ID**

Rebecca Spiegel, Jeffrey Esteves, Adrienne Perry

York University, Toronto, ON

**Objective**

Challenging behaviour including stereotypy, aggression, and self-injurious behaviour (SIB) can interfere with a child’s ability to learn and engage in meaningful community involvement. Currently, the literature presents a wide range of prevalence estimates for these behaviours in children diagnosed with various developmental disabilities (DD) but child characteristics associated with these behaviours are poorly understood and research is inconsistent.

The current study examines the parent-reported rate of occurrence of stereotypy, aggression, and self-injurious behaviour in a large sample of Canadian children with DD. First we will report the rates of the 3 behaviours and their relationship with 4 child factors (age, sex, adaptive level, and diagnosis of ASD+ID). Second, using logistic regression analyses, we will report on predictors of the occurrence of each of the 3 behaviour problems, testing the hypotheses that ASD+ID and adaptive level will be significant predictors for all 3.

**Methods**

This study utilized data from the Great Outcomes for Kids Impacted by Severe Developmental Disabilities (GO4KIDDS), survey (Perry & Weiss, 2008)completed by 372 parents of children with a severe DD. The children and youth ranged in age from 4 to20 years (*M* = 11.3), and had either a diagnosis of Intellectual Disability (ID only; *n* =167), or ASD+ID (*n*= 205). Following univariate comparisons to examine Research Question 1, logistic regression analysis was conducted to determine the effects of child/youth age, sex, adaptive functioning level and diagnosis on the presence of problem behaviour.

**Results**

There was a high prevalence of problem behaviour, with 308 (83%) children/youth displaying at least one of the problem behaviours, 208 (56%) displaying two or more, and 104 (28%) displaying all three behaviours. Children/youth diagnosed with ASD+ID displayed higher rates of all three behaviours. Diagnosis significantly predicted all three problem behaviours, where children with ASD+ID displayed 7.5 times higher odds of displaying stereotypy, 3.7 times higher odds of displaying SIB, and 17 times higher odds of displaying aggression than children/youth diagnosed with an ID only. Adaptive functioning level significantly predicted occurrence of SIB, where the odds of displaying SIB increased by 1.4 times for each point decrease on a scale measuring adaptive functioning. There was also an interesting interaction between diagnosis and adaptive functioning for aggressive behaviour. For children/youth with ASD+ID, the odds of displaying aggressive behaviour increased by 1.5 times for every point *increase* in adaptive functioning. For children/youth diagnosed with ID only the odds of displaying aggressive behaviour increased by 1.2 times for every point *decrease* in adaptive function.

**Discussion/Conclusions**

Children diagnosed with ASD and/or ID display high level of challenging behaviour which can interfere with learning, as well as with engagement in enriching community and social activities. Further, a comorbid diagnosis of ASD as well as lower adaptive functioning seem to result in higher levels of some of the challenging behaviours discussed above. Clinical implications and suggestions for future research will be presented.

**Correspondence**

Rebecca Spiegel, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Toronto, Ontario, M3J 1P3, rspiegel@yorku.ca

Jeffrey Esteves, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Toronto, Ontario, M3J 1P3, jesteves@yorku.ca

Adrienne Perry, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Toronto, Ontario, M3J 1P3, perry@yorku.ca