



Approaches to Overcoming Selective Mutism in Children and Youths

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Message from the Guest Editor

Dear Colleagues,

Children with selective mutism (SM) constantly avoid speaking in specific social situations. Often, they remain silent in school/kindergarten, while speaking normally to parents and siblings at home. SM is an anxiety disorder. These children's fear of talking, together with their resistance to pressure to speak, is similar to children with specific phobias. Just as resistance to the feared object of a phobia can be reinforced by well-intentioned attempts to make the child confront it, selectively mute children's resistance to speaking can become stronger by well-intentioned initiatives to challenge the child to speak. The condition interferes with learning and social communication and gets more and more ingrained the longer it lasts. Social interactions and participation in the classroom/kindergarten are crucial in overcoming SM. This Special Issue aims to explore approaches enabling children and youths with selective mutism to participate in learning activities and social interactions in kindergarten/school and in their spare time.

