



Actual Debate on Comorbidity between Autism Spectrum Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in Children

Guest Editor:

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Deadline for manuscript
submissions:

closed (31 January 2024)

Message from the Guest Editor

ASD and ADHD share some similarities and overlaps, such as difficulties in attention, communication with peers, impulsivity, and various degrees of restlessness or hyperactivity. It has been described that children with ADHD have pragmatic language, emotional recognition, and theory of mind difficulties similar to children with ASD. Both are more common in boys than in girls and have a known genetic pre-disposition.

This being the case, ADHD is mainly characterized by impaired functioning in the areas of attention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity, whereas ASD is specifically defined by social dysfunction, restrictive interests, and repetitive behaviors. Particularly in preschool ages, between 30 and 50% of individuals with ASD manifest ADHD symptoms.

Where is the current debate on the co-existence of ASD and ADHD heading to?

Actual major concerns refer to:

1. Association and overlapping of symptoms.
2. Developmental cascades.
3. Prognosis and treatment.

The topic is particularly stimulating given the high risk of cognitive impoverishment and the need of early specific intervention.

Dr. Carla Sogos

