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Abstract

Attention Bias Modification Treatment Effects on Children's Negative Interpretation Biases

It has been found in research that children and adults with anxiety have a bias toward interpreting ambiguous situations as threatening. This bias is thought to consequently maintain many symptoms of anxiety. An emergent computer treatment system called Attention Bias Modification Training (ABMT) has been used to try to reduce this bias. It is essential to understand whether this bias can be reduced with ABMT because of its feasibility and cost effective nature of treatment. In the current study, interpretation bias is measured using the Children's Opinions of Everyday Life Events (COELE). The ABMT treatment is given to children once a week for an hour and their answers to the COELE are recorded before and after treatment. The recorded procedures are transcribed by undergraduate students working at the Child Anxiety and Phobia lab, and then scored. Each of the situations of the COELE are rated 0 being neutral or 1 threatening interpretation of the situation. The hypothesis is that ABMT will reduce the negative interpretation bias in children over the course of 4 weeks of treatment. The study is still in the collection and transcription of data phase, and will expect to have analytical conclusions in the start of spring 2015.