

Title: Prevalence of Mental Health Conditions among Non-Latino White and Latino Children with Neurodevelopmental Disorders

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Introduction: Individuals with neurodevelopmental disorders (ND) are often diagnosed in early childhood. As individuals with ND mature, many are also diagnosed with mental health conditions. A recent study found that 58% of children with an ND had a co-occurring mental health condition, with anxiety disorder reported as the most common co-occurring mental health condition (Hansen et al. 2018). In the United States, racial/ethnic minority populations often have additional stressors that increase their risk for mental health conditions (Contrada et al. 2001). However, little is known about the rates of co-occurring mental health conditions among racial/ethnically diverse children with ND in the United States. This current study will examine the rates of co-occurring mental health conditions (Anxiety, Depression) among non-Latino, White and Latino children with NDs (i.e., Intellectual Disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder).

Method: The National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) 2017-2018 was used as the data source. The NSCH is a parent-report survey that captures a nationally representative sample of children between 0 and 17 years of age in the United States. We focused our research on children who were non-Latino White ($n = 4315$) or Latino ($n = 634$) and who were reported to have an Intellectual Disability (ID, $n = 434$), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD, $n = 1152$), or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD, $n = 4184$). Co-occurring mental health conditions were based on parent-report of anxiety or depression.

Results. Initial analyses were conducted to examine similarities and differences between non-Latino White and Latino children with NDs. These analyses found that Latino children with NDs were more likely to have a foreign-born parent (31.2%) than non-Latino White children with NDs (3.7%), $X^2(1, n = 4868) = 730.79, p < .001$. Latino children were also less likely to have a primary caregiver with some college or higher education, $X^2(1, n = 4949) = 187.08, p < .001$ and more likely to reside in households with less than 200% of the federal poverty level, $X^2(1, n = 4949) = 245.63, p < .001$, when compared to non-Latino White children with NDs. No differences were found between groups on having adequate and continuous insurance coverage, $X^2(1, n = 4941) = 0.41, p = .828$. We first examined the prevalence of mental health conditions across NDs overall. Chi-square analyses found that the prevalence of parent-reported anxiety and depression among children with NDs were not significantly different across non-Latino White and Latino children with NDs (all p 's $> .05$). Further exploration into specific NDs found higher rates of co-occurring depression among non-Latino, White children with ASD (20.6%) than Latino children with ASD (10.2%), $X^2(1, n = 1150) = 22.56, p = .008$. No other group differences were found in co-occurring mental health conditions in children with ID or ADHD, all p 's $> .05$.

Discussion: Overall, there were few differences in parent-reported mental health conditions among Latino and non-Latino, White children with NDs, with the only difference found in depression among children with ASD. Some factors that could account for these results could include Latino parents' understanding of mental health and how it might appear differently in children with ASD. There may be cultural differences in the perception of depression and the accessibility of mental health services. This study highlights the need for continuing research concerning co-occurring conditions in Non-Latino White children and Latino children with NDs. Further research can examine the role of social determinants of health on the mental in NDs.

References:

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