

ABSTRACTS

Developmental perspectives on infants' discovery of number

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In four conditions of an experimental, cross-sectional study, 78 infants, aged 5-, 7- and 9- months, observed 28 pairs of visual stimuli representing one, two or three objects while listening simultaneously one, two or three sounds. It was found that after the end of the acoustical stimuli, the infants looked more time at the visual displays corresponding to the number of sounds rather than at the visual stimuli non-corresponding to the number of the acoustical stimuli. It was also found that the discovery of number depends on the infants' age and gender as well as on the kind of the visual stimuli. Results are discussed from a developmental perspective.

Coping and adjustment in women with breast cancer

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the coping modes and the predictors of adjustment in women with breast cancer. The sample consisted of 110 women with breast cancer, attending a private clinic for follow-up examinations or chemotherapy administration. Coping strategies were assessed by COPE questionnaire, while coping style was measured by MAC scale. Participants also completed a series of medical, demographic and psychological instruments, the latter including the Acceptance of Illness scale, Rosenberg Self-esteem scale, and the Life Orientation test. Adjustment was assessed using a 3-item scale, reflecting readiness to return to social and work activities, certainty that everything will run all right and closeness between expectations about the course of the disease and reality. Structural equation modeling was used to examine the impacts and relationships between predictors and latent dependent outcome variables (adjustment). The hybrid model revealed that a dysfunctional coping style characterized by hopelessness/helplessness, anxious preoccupation, fatalism, loss of control and counter-fighting spirit, negatively affected adjustment. The implications of these findings are discussed within the framework of designing psychological interventions to improve patients coping efforts and adjustment to breast cancer.

Stranger Sociability in Infancy

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Stranger sociability of 83 infants, aged 12 to 13 months, was assessed in the Ainsworth Strange Situation (1978). The relationship between stranger sociability and the child's gender, his/her mental development, temperament and his/her attachment to mother was examined. There were significant changes in the strange-related behaviour of the infants across Strange Situation's episodes. No significant correlations were found between gender, mental development, temperament and stranger sociability. Attachment classification was strongly related to resistant and avoidant behaviour toward the stranger. Results are discussed from the perspective of temperament and attachment theories.

Suicide in adolescence

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The present paper deals with the myths involved in the notion of suicide in adolescence. We examine epidemiological issues as well as risk factors which promote the suicidal act. Furthermore, we present prevention measures and therapeutic regimes to deal with suicide in adolescence.

Methodological issues in recent research on the effects of parental divorce on divorcees' offspring, the role of school and the social stigma

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The paper considers methodological issues in recent research focused on the effects (long-term and short-term effects) of parental divorce on divorcees' offspring and indicates links between research findings, the role of school and the social stigma attached to divorce and to individuals involved in it. The main findings of the studies up to date consider the psychological well-being of children of divorced parents, personality, self-concept, self-esteem, disturbed behaviour, educational attainment and occupational life. The sampling technique, the kind of sample (clinical or not clinical) and the methodology followed ('qualitative' or 'quantitative') are discussed as factors which influence the research findings and the 'story the researcher tells'. The paper reports that the shortage of 'qualitative' studies concerning the effects of divorce on divorcees' offspring, the lack of 'discussion, thinking' and research on the relationships and affect in the family after the divorce, the social stigma attached to divorce and the lack of connections between the post-divorce family income and individuals' quality of life are factors which contribute to the development of a negative social representation about the children of divorce. The role of school in the cognitive and emotional development of children of divorce concerning the handling of affect emerging from a fragile family environment are discussed.