

Neuropsychology Abstracts

Title: CLINIC-BASED SERIAL MONITORING OF NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTIONING IN YOUTH WITH SPINA BIFIDA

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Background: Neuropsychological assessment has become a key component in the care of individuals with potentially unstable neurologic conditions such as Spina Bifida. Unfortunately, many youth with SB have limited access to comprehensive neuropsychological assessment due to high cost, limited insurance coverage, and/or lack of available neuropsychologists. Use of clinic-based questionnaires and abbreviated assessment models, however, may increase the availability of neuropsychological assessment and monitoring to youth with SB.

Method: This presentation will provide an overview of several clinic-based neuropsychological assessment instruments that can be used to quickly and efficiently screen and monitor aspects of functioning. Relevant research literature will be briefly summarized for this presentation. Moreover, the author's original research findings using these instruments in a Spina Bifida clinic will also be presented and discussed.

Results: Specific methods of quick and efficient clinic-based screening and monitoring of the following neuropsychological domains will be presented:

- Executive functions: Results of parent- and self-report of executive functions obtained during adolescence and adulthood using the Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Functions (BRIEF).
- Adaptive Functions: Results of parent-report of adaptive functioning obtained during childhood and adolescence using the Adaptive Behavior Assessment System – Second Edition (ABAS-II).
- Processing Speed/Working Memory: Results of repeated performance-based assessment of youth with SB using selected subtests from the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – Fourth Edition (WISC-IV).

Conclusion: Collection of neuropsychological data via questionnaires and abbreviated assessment models has the potential to expand the availability of neuropsychological assessment to a broader audience of individuals with SB. Dissemination of clinic-based normative information regarding typical and atypical findings on these types of measures will increase their clinical utility and also help clinicians avoid erroneously interpreting test results as pathological. This presentation will include data obtained via the financial support of a Young Investigator Award provided by the Spina Bifida Association (SBA).