

Child's negative automatic thoughts as a mediator in the relationship between mother's and child's social anxiety symptoms

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Abstract

There is a high aggregation of anxiety in families. The aim of the current study was to investigate the role of negative automatic thoughts in the transmission of anxiety from mothers to their offspring. Participants were one-hundred-twenty-eight children and adolescents recruited from several Romanian schools and their mothers. We tested a mediation model, in which negative automatic thoughts significantly mediated the relationship between mother's and child's social anxiety symptoms. Our findings show that negative automatic thoughts can be an important mechanism that could explain the tendency of anxiety disorders to run in families. Finally, the clinical implications of such findings in the current treatments of children' and adolescents' anxiety disorders are discussed.

Keywords

social anxiety; automatic thoughts; familial transmission; child anxiety