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Conduct Disorder Among Canadian Children 10-15 Years Old

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Abstract

Conduct disorder is the single most common childhood mental health condition. It involves serious and repeated behaviour causing harm to others or to their property. This thesis examines a number of “environmental factors” describing the family circumstances of Canadian children aged 10-15 to establish how these factors correlate with the problem of conduct disorder. The *National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY) Cycle 3 (1998-1999)* was the source of information for this quantitative research project.

This research resulted in a new conduct disorder scale designed to identify children with this disorder from the NLSCY data set. The definition of conduct disorder from the widely accepted *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV)* was the basis for this new scale, which is unique because previous population studies have not used an indicator of conduct disorder based on an accepted clinical definition.

The application of the conduct disorder scale to the NLSCY data allowed a thorough investigation of environmental factors related to conduct disorder. This research concluded that conduct disorder affects nearly ten percent of the population aged 10-15 years old and almost twice as many boys as girls. Factors such as family structure, socioeconomic status, parenting style, and family function have a significant correlation with the presence of conduct disorder.