

## **The relationship between bullying behaviours among preschoolers and early signs of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder**

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The phenomenon of bullying is currently worldwide investigated, primarily among schoolchildren and adolescents. Limited studies focus on preschool years, as it is often difficult to differentiate between normative aggressive behaviours and bullying behaviours. The present research aims to identify bullying behaviours among Greek preschoolers and examine their possible relationship with Disruptive Behaviour Disorders, mainly Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Two hundred mothers of preschoolers (mean age=68.1 months, s.d.=10.1 months), enrolled in kindergartens in Athens, completed a questionnaire conducted by the authors. According to the results, several forms of bullying were reported, most commonly, psychological forms (78%), while verbal (13.8%) and physical (8.2%) forms of bullying were less frequently reported. Approximately 14% of the children have been reported as bullies. Bullies were found to exhibit higher levels of stress and low self-esteem compared to their classmates [ $\chi^2(2,183)=12.9, p<.001$ ]. Also, they were more likely to face attention problems compared to non-bullies [ $\chi^2(1,172)=6.1, p<.05$ ], being at a high-risk group for the manifestation of Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder. To conclude, it seems possible to identify bullying behaviours during the preschool years, especially among children presenting other disruptive behaviours as well, in the framework of a developmental disorder like ADHD. The need for prompt acknowledgment of this kind of behaviours for prevention and early intervention purposes is discussed.