

Echo from the Chair

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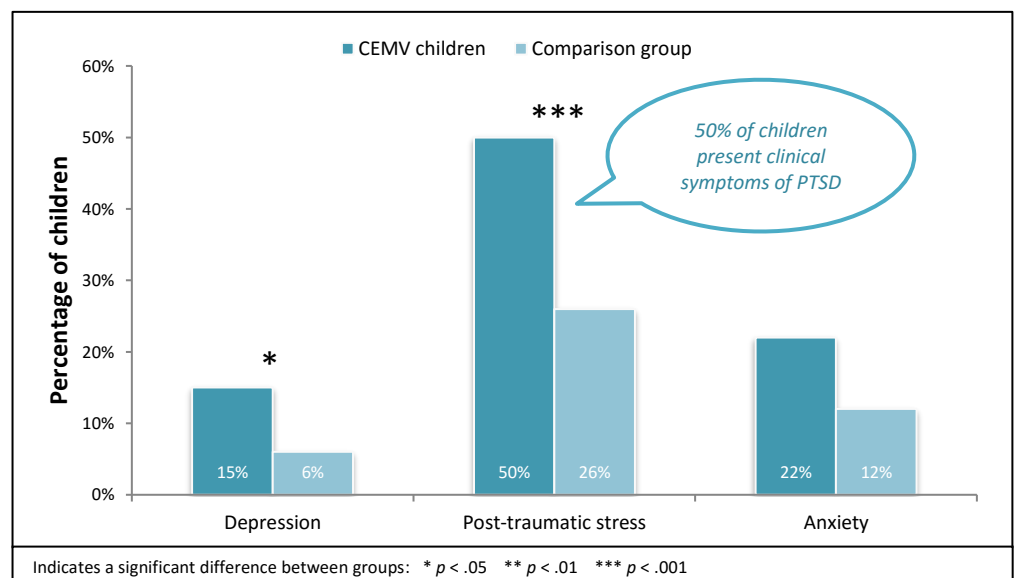
Martine Hébert & Mireille Cyr

Symptoms of school-aged children consulting the Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent

One hundred seventy-seven (177) sexually abused children, 121 girls and 56 boys, were met as part of a pre-treatment evaluation, during the first five years of the Centre's service. The comparison sample consists of 74 children who were not sexual abuse victims, recruited in a primary school.

The charts illustrate the proportion of children whose results reach clinical level for each dimension evaluated. Clinical symptoms are susceptible to interfere with the child's functioning, and this, in different spheres of life (family, school, peers).

Symptoms reported by the children



Some definitions of the symptoms assessed by children

Symptoms of **depression** are characterised by a sad mood, difficulties to experience pleasure, a negative self-evaluation and withdrawal in interpersonal behaviors. **Post-traumatic stress disorder** refers to the presence of symptoms related to reliving the trauma (e.g., nightmares, "flashbacks"), avoidance behaviors (e.g., avoiding reminders of the event) and hyperarousal (e.g., difficulty sleeping, hypervigilance). Symptoms of **anxiety** manifest themselves through feelings of apprehension or dread (fears, nervousness) or hypersensitivity.

- The Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent (CEMV) offers services for children aged 12 and under who are victims of sexual abuse.

- The Marie-Vincent Interuniversity Chair conducts a research program related to the CEMV's clientele that aims to:

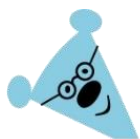
- Evaluate the needs and capacities of children and their families;

- Evaluate the services offered at the CEMV;

- Study the different developmental trajectories of children.



FONDATION
MARIE-VINCENT



CENTRE D'EXPERTISE
MARIE-VINCENT

Marie-Vincent Interuniversity Chair on sexual abuse towards children

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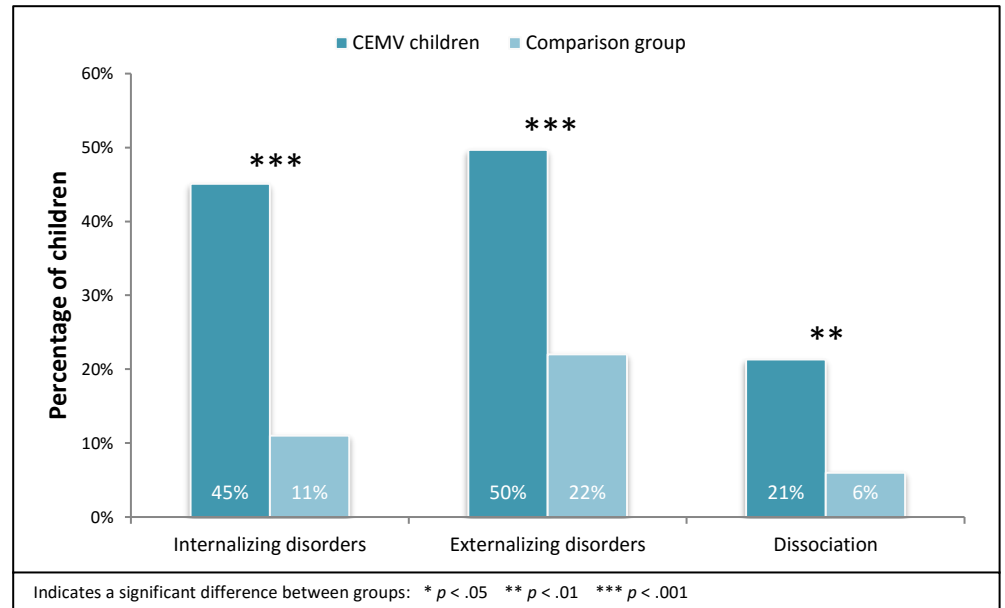
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Marie-Vincent Foundation
<http://marie-vincent.org/>

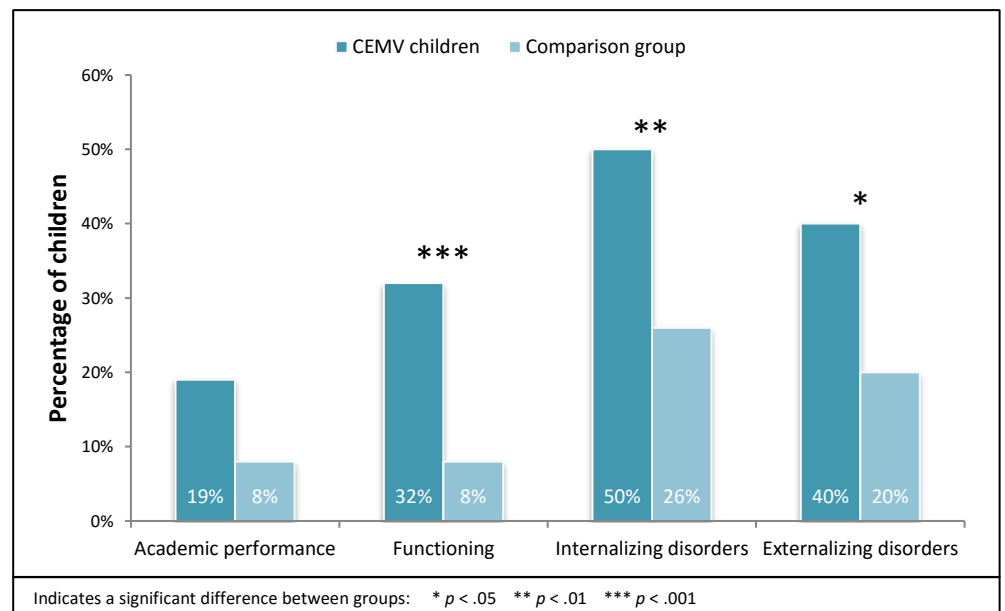
Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent
<http://www.ceasmv.ca/>

*" Child sexual abuse
victims attending the
CEMV are more
numerous in
presenting clinically
significant symptoms
than those not
having experienced
sexual abuse. "*

Symptoms reported by parents



Symptoms reported by teachers



Manifestations of symptoms assessed by adults

Internalizing behaviour problems refer to symptoms of anxiety, depression and sadness, dependence, social withdrawal and somatization. **Externalizing behaviour problems** include conduct disorders (lying, stealing or lack of guilt) and aggressive behaviors (unjustified aggressive words and actions towards others, intimidation, destruction). Symptoms of **dissociation** include alterations of identity, disturbances of consciousness, identity, memory, or perception. **Academic performance** refers to grades obtained in main disciplines (French / English, mathematics, second language, science and technology), whereas **functioning** describes the child's ability to adapt to the classroom environment (learning, working, behaving properly).