



## Special Issue on Child and Adolescent Anxiety Disorders

**Dr Allison Waters**

*School of Applied Psychology, Griffith University, Australia*

It is with great pleasure that I introduce this special issue of Psychopathology Review focused on anxiety disorders in children and adolescents. This special issue was motivated by two major objectives. The first was to focus on areas within the field for which comprehensive reviews are either few in number or are in need of an update. As a great deal of research has focused on anxiety disorders in middle childhood, we have included two reviews focusing on anxiety in very young children and in adolescents. In the first of these papers, **Simon, Van der Sluis, Muris, Thompson and Cartwright-Hatton** comprehensively review the literature on the continuity of anxiety symptoms and behavioural inhibition in young children, demonstrating that these problems are highly likely to continue into later childhood, adolescence and beyond. They also review the significant in-roads made to date in the treatment of anxiety disorders in young children and the challenges that have hampered further progress. In the second paper, **Waite, Wittington, and Creswell** provide a systematic review of the evidence regarding parent-child interactions in adolescents with anxiety disorders, identifying that parental control and anxious rearing behaviours are strongly associated with adolescent anxiety whereas the evidence regarding parental rejection and lack of warmth is less consistent. Finally, **Knight, Hudson, McLellan, and Jones** bridge the literatures on clinical presentation and treatment outcomes by systematically reviewing the literature on pre-treatment predictors of child and adolescent anxiety treatment outcome, including child demographic, child diagnostic and parental factors. Although no consistent pre-treatment predictors were identified, social phobia diagnosis, greater symptom severity, externalising comorbidity, and parent psychopathology were identified in more than one study reviewed.

Knight et al.'s review paper nicely sets the scene for the second major aim of the special issue, which was to bring together a collection of reviews focused on latest advances in the treatment of childhood and adolescent anxiety disorders. Considerable evidence has accumulated that documents the efficacy and effectiveness of cognitive-behaviour therapy (CBT) and selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) in the treatment of anxiety disorders in children and adolescents (see Essau & Ollendick, 2013). However, a substantial number of children either do not respond at all or fail to achieve sustained improvement (e.g., Ginsburg et al., 2014) while many others do not have access to efficacious treatments (see Kendall, Settiani, & Cummings, 2012).

In this special issue, three approaches to advancing treatment outcomes and/or accessibility are reviewed. In the first paper, **Donovan and March** provide a systematic review of computerised therapy for youth anxiety disorders. Their review highlights that computerised programs comprising a variety of CBT anxiety management strategies, greater therapist assistance, and which include exposure therapy are able to produce significant reductions in anxiety severity. On the flip side, they also reveal that computerised programs utilising a single CBT strategy or that target both anxiety and depression are less successful in reducing anxiety symptoms, highlighting numerous important directions for further research. In the second paper, **Byrne, Farrell, Storch and Rapee** review the emerging evidence for pharmacological augmentation of CBT outcomes with D-Cycloserine (DCS). This paper integrates evidence from basic science research with rodents and humans on fear extinction and DCS, reviews emerging evidence in favour of DCS for enhancing treatment outcomes for childhood obsessive-compulsive disorder and specific phobias, and also considers parent attitudes to the use of medication in the treatment of young children. Finally, in a series of short communications co-edited with Professor Thomas Ollendick, the evidence regarding brief, high intensity interventions for six major anxiety disorders is briefly reviewed. Professor Ollendick provides an engaging editorial within the body of the special issue to introduce these six papers, all of which highlight the exciting potential of intensive, time-limited treatments for child and adolescent anxiety disorders.

In closing, my sincere thanks to all of the authors who have contributed their work to this special issue for their enthusiasm and commitment in preparing their papers in such a timely manner. I also thank the reviewers who have given generously of their time and expertise in the evaluation of these papers. Last, my sincere thanks to Professor Ollendick for his innovation and vision in conceptualising the review of high intensity treatments as a series of short communications, and for his invaluable contribution as co-editor of this series. I am confident that the readers of Psychopathology Review will find this special issue to be highly informative and engaging.

## Dr Allison Waters

*Associate Editor, Psychopathology Review*

## References

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