

Update of a tentative model of selective mutism

Pablo J. Olivares-Olivares y José Olivares Rodríguez

University of Murcia (Spain)

Selective mutism is a disorder of early-onset behavior (usually between 3 and 5 years) consisting in a resistance to speech or its inhibition in specific social situations, characterized by the presence of strangers, people who are not spoken to or to whom the child has stopped talking, places where the child doesn't speak or where the child thinks he/she can be heard by unwanted people, etc. Its low prevalence makes it a rare behavior disorder and the review of the literature confirms that anxiety is the prominent alteration in those who present it, which has led to the result that in the last edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM-5) the behavior has been reclassified as an anxiety disorder. This fact, as well as the advances in its research and the challenges that it poses regarding its evaluation and treatment, make it necessary to review and update the existing explanatory proposals. This is the framework of the work presented here.