MCHB Meeting Abstract:

Title: Mediators of Cyberbullying Behavior in ADHD Youth

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Background:

Cyberbullying is an increasingly prevalent public health issue affecting children and adolescents. Studies estimate it affects 10% to 40% of children, peaking at the start of middle school, and is associated with increased physical and psychological consequences including loneliness, isolation, academic difficulties, and suicide. Studies have shown that children with ADHD are at significantly higher risk of traditional bullying victimization but there are limited studies examining rates of cyberbullying behavior among ADHD youth. ADHD youth are known to have co-occurring externalizing and internalizing symptoms and social skill challenges but it is unclear if these affect the relationship between ADHD youth and cyberbullying.

Objective:

The study will measure cyberbullying behavior (bully or victim) prevalence among youth with significant ADHD symptoms. We will examine if elevated social impairment, internalizing problems, or externalizing problems mediate the association between ADHD and cyberbullying.

Methods:

We will conduct secondary data analysis using longitudinal data from the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development study which measures health outcomes in youth ages 9 - 10 years at baseline (T1), 1 year (T2) and 2 years (T3). Cyberbullying participation (T3) will be measured among youth with clinically significant ADHD symptoms on the Child Behavior Checklist Attention Problem subscale (T1). Linear regression analysis will examine possible mediating effects of high social impairment on the Social Responsiveness Scale (T2) and CBCL subscale externalizing or internalizing problems (T2) in cyberbullying participation.