

Kindergarten Children's Reactions to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Creating a Sense of Coherence

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Abstract : Background and Objectives: The current study focused on how kindergarten children have experienced the COVID-19 pandemic. The main goals were understanding children's emotions, coping strategies, and thoughts regarding the presence of the COVID-19 virus in their daily lives, using the salutogenic approach to study their sense of coherence, and to promote relevant professional instruction. Design and Method: Semistructured in-depth interviews were held with 130 five- to six-year-old children, with an equal number of boys and girls. All of the children were recruited from kindergartens affiliated with the state's secular education system. Results: Data were structured into three themes: 1) the child's pandemic perception as manageable through meaningful accompanying and missing figures; 2) the child's comprehension of the virus as dangerous, age differentiating, and contagious. 3) the child's emotional processing of the pandemic as arousing fear of death and, through images, as thorny and as a monster. Conclusions: Results demonstrate the young children's sense of coherence, characterized as extrapersonal perception, interpersonal coping, and intrapersonal emotional processing, and the need for greater acknowledgement of child-parent educators' informed interventions that could give children a partial feeling of the adult's awareness of their needs.

Keywords : kindergarten children, continuous stress, COVID-19, salutogenic approach

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