ATTENTIONAL SIGNATURES OF AUTISM IN INFANCY

Featuring Dr. Katarzyna Chawarska
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Open Parking Available in Lot T

ABSTRACT

Due to familial factors, younger siblings of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are at an increased risk for developing the disorder. Although behavioral symptoms of ASD typically emerge during a child’s second year, recent work on younger siblings demonstrates that prodromal features of ASD are present already within the first months of life. These features include atypical attention toward stimuli relevant to social engagement, such as faces and speech sounds. Similar deficits were observed in clinic-referred toddlers suggesting continuity of social attention impairments in ASD from prodromal to early syndromal stages. This presentation will review: (1) the methodological underpinnings of prospective high-risk sibling studies and findings on early expression of autism in infancy, and (2) experimental studies on selective attention to multimodal social stimuli conducted during prodromal and early syndromal stages of the disorder.

ABOUT DR. CHAWARSKA

Dr. Chawarska is the Associate Professor in the Child Study Center and of Pediatrics (General Pediatrics); Director, Yale Toddler Developmental Disabilities Clinic; Director, Yale Early Social Cognition Laboratory; Co-Director, Technology and Innovation Laboratory. Her research interests focus primarily on two lines of inquiry: research leading to a better understanding of the early phenotypic expression of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and examining mechanisms that underlie gaze and face processing abnormalities observed in infants and toddlers with ASD.