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**Abteilung für Förderpädagogische und
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Similarities and differences between selective mutism and autism spectrum disorder – online study

We appreciate your interest in our study!

This page contains briefly and shortly all important information.

A brief overview of our study:

In our study, we investigate the similarities and differences of two mental disorders, Selective Mutism and Autism Spectrum Disorder, using different questionnaires. This is particularly important for diagnostics, but also when it comes to providing the affected children with the best possible therapeutic support. We are also interested in surveying parents of children without mental illness to determine the differences between children with Selective Mutism, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and children without these conditions. The study involves six questionnaires (**approximately 40 minutes**) that are completed online. We look forward to your help!

You can participate in this study if ...

... you are at least 18 years old and

... if you have a child aged **4-12 years** with an existing diagnosis of Selective Mutism/Autism Spectrum Disorder or

... you have a child aged **4-12 years** *without* a mental / neurodevelopmental disorder

Objective & background of the study

In our study, we want to find out how Selective Mutism differs from Autism Spectrum Disorder. We are particularly interested in whether the situation has an influence on certain symptoms, for example, whether symptoms occur just as frequently at home in a familiar environment as in an unfamiliar



environment.

A symptom could be described as a sign by which a particular mental illness can be identified. In general, mental illnesses are associated with various symptoms. Therefore, in order to recognize a mental illness, it is essential to know as many symptoms as possible and to know how often and when they occur. Also in distinguishing it from other illnesses and from neurotypical people without mental illness. If we learn more about the symptoms, we can also improve the therapy accordingly. For this purpose we need your help!

Symptoms often differ from situation to situation- so it is of particular interest for us to examine certain symptoms in different situations.

What's ahead for you?

If you agree to participate, you will be redirected to the questionnaire package. First, we will ask you general questions about your child. Afterwards, you will reach a questionnaire that generally asks about things that children and adolescents may have problems with. Questionnaires follow that give us an indication of the presence of Selective Mutism and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder. There is also a questionnaire that asks about what is called "behavioral inhibition" in their child. The last questionnaire contains individual symptoms whose occurrence in your child you should evaluate. Here we distinguish between public space (e.g., at the doctor's office) and private space (e.g., at home). Then you have completed all the questionnaires and have reached the end of the survey. Please answer the questions as intuitively as possible, there is no "right" or "wrong" - your judgment as a parent is important!

Legal background

Voluntariness and anonymity

Participation in the online questionnaire study is voluntary. You may end your participation in this study at any time and without explanation, without any disadvantages for you. This is also possible if you have already given your consent to participate. To do so, simply close the browser.

All of the collected data is treated anonymously. This means that it is not possible for anyone to associate the collected data with your name. As a participant in this study, you consent to the further use and publication of your data, in completely anonymized form, for research purposes.

Benefits and risks

The surveys that are conducted do not involve any risks.

The results of the study aim to examine similarities and differences between Selective Mutism and Autism Spectrum Disorder compared to children and adolescents without mental illness. From this, we can identify the symptoms that can be used to recognize selective mutism in children. In addition, the results can be useful for therapeutic methods. However, this is only possible if we have the help of willing participants like you, even though the surveys may not provide any personal benefit to you. Results of the questionnaires are not reported back individually.

We are very happy to receive your support!

This subject information is also available for download at

<https://www.uni-giessen.de/en/faculties/f06/psy/departments-1/clinical-psychology-and-psychotherapy/psychology/research/similarities-and-differences-in-selective-mutism-and-autism-spectrum-disorder>.

If you have any questions about the study, you can contact the responsible project manager (see contact information).

Informed consent

I have received, carefully read and understood the subject information about the objectives and procedure of the study as well as study-related requirements and possible side effects. I had plenty of opportunity to contact the responsible investigators, and to the extent that I asked questions, they were answered in an understandable manner and to my satisfaction. I had enough time to decide whether or not to participate in this study. I had the opportunity to download the subject information and this consent form at:

<https://www.uni-giessen.de/en/faculties/f06/psy/departments-1/clinical-psychology-and-psychotherapy/psychology/research/similarities-and-differences-in-selective-mutism-and-autism-spectrum-disorder>

By pressing "Next", I declare that I have understood the intention and the information and that I am voluntarily participating in the study. I understand that by not pressing "Next" I am not participating in the study and that I will not suffer any disadvantage as a result. I am aware that the primary purpose of this study is to increase knowledge and that, if applicable, it may not provide any personal benefit to me. I understand that results of the online study cannot be reported back even if there are any anomalies. I agree that my data will be collected, stored and processed in compliance with the Hessian Data Protection Act. I agree that my anonymized data will be stored for at least 10 years after the end of the study.

Contact information

Responsible for data processing is Justus Liebig University Giessen, Ludwigstraße 23, 35390 Giessen, represented by its President. Data protection officers are:

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Thank you for your support!

By clicking on "Next" you acknowledge that you have read these pages thoroughly and consent to participate in the study under the stated privacy policy.