

Mental health study in two cohorts of schoolchildren from west Santiago. III: Early predictors of behavioral and cognitive problems Estudio de salud mental en dos cohortes de niños escolares de Santiago Occidente. III: Predictores tempranos de problemas c

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Introduction. Longitudinal predictive studies regarding children s mental health are reviewed, emphasizing that they are very scarce in Latin America. Objectives. To study the continuity of behavioral and cognitive problems in a population of schoolchildren and to detect first grade predictors for problems observed in sixth grade. Method. This study used a developmental epidemiologic format to obtain teachers 'and parents' ratings of first graders' aggressive/disobedient behaviors, shyness, cognitive/concentration deficits, emotional immaturity and hyperactivity. Students were re-evaluated in sixth grade to determine the course of behavioral development and early predictors for later outcomes; self-esteem was also measured at this time. 1279 children were assessed in first grade; 535 students who remained in the same schools and had not been retained were re-evaluated in sixth grade. Results. Logistic regressions found stability and continuity in teacher and parent ratings. Many early