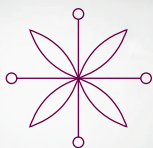


The Abstract Book of the 22nd European Conference on Developmental Psychology



August 25-29, 2025
Vilnius, Lithuania

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RESILIENCE DEVELOPMENT UNDER ADVERSITY: A LONGITUDINAL STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF MALTREATMENT IN ADOLESCENCE

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Background. Adolescence is a developmental stage that might be marked by a higher risk of adverse life experiences and psychopathology. However, the role of various forms of maltreatment on changes in resilience in adolescence is still unknown.

Objective. The study aimed to investigate the trajectories of resilience in adolescence and explore its' associations with maltreatment exposure and mental health difficulties.

Method. The study was part of a large longitudinal project "Stress and Resilience in Adolescence" (STAR-A). The three-wave study, with two-year gaps between time points, took place in various schools in Lithuania. The study sample comprised 1295 adolescents at baseline, $n = 329$ at the second wave and $n = 849$ at the third wave. Based on baseline data, 57.4% were females; the sample mean age was 15.35 ($SD = 1.53$) years. The main measures included the Resilience scale-14 (RS-14), the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), and a questionnaire on exposure to maltreatment. The latent growth modeling approach was used to identify resilience trajectories.

Results. The two resilience latent classes were indicated: stable relatively high (91.4%) and stable relatively low (8.6%). Adolescents in the lower resilience group were more frequently exposed to at least one form of neglect, verbal abuse, physical abuse, or internet sexual abuse. The lower resilience group was at three times higher risk for mental health difficulties than the higher resilience group.

Conclusions. The longitudinal study of Lithuanian adolescents extends our understanding of what contributes to the stability of resilience in adolescence. This study suggests that maltreatment experiences may contribute to the development of stable low resilience. However, further investigations are needed on the role of child abuse and neglect on resilience and mental health in adolescence.