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Autism: Problem behaviours are they due to poor theory of mind or could it be the non-generalization of 'object permanence'?

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This presentation concerns children with autism and their understanding of what's 'here, now, permanent, on-going and so on, even when it's out of sight. For example, one 4 yr. old & one 7yr. old girl with autism know their drinks bottles are in their lunch bag, even when they can't see them, BUT, they don't know that Mummy (or some other person/thing/event) are still available, happening and so on, even though out of sight. How is it they know one concept, but not the other?

Could it be connected to lacking in a more generalised understanding of Object Permanence (OP)? If so, maybe this challenges aspects of 'lacks in theory of mind' in autism? As in, could failure of theory of mind tasks actually be explained by lacks in object permanence? If so, it explains so much of the fear and possibly subsequent stress support needs we see in these children.

So, this presentation explores autism in children and adolescents with regard to problem behaviours often thought to be due to poor theory of mind. But, the author will argue that such behaviours are in fact connected to non-generalization of Object Permanence.

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