

Psychosocial functioning of adolescents with and without paediatric Bipolar Disorder
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While there has been a growing interest in the presentation of paediatric Bipolar Disorder (BD), few studies have investigated the psychosocial functioning of these individuals and its relationship to trauma and suicidal ideation. Adolescents aged 13-17 participated: 39 controls and 24 with BD. Group allocation and histories of trauma and suicidal ideation were obtained using the K-SADS-PL and WASH-U-KSADS. Adolescents completed questionnaires covering negative life events, self-esteem, hopelessness, regulation of anger, locus of control and coping. More traumatic events and negative life experiences were reported by the BD group with over 50% of the BD sample indicating a history of trauma compared with 10% of the controls. The BD group reported lower self-esteem, more hopelessness, more negative life events, a more external locus of control and greater difficulties regulating emotion in anger-provoking situations. They were also found to have poorer coping strategies than controls. Histories of trauma did not differentiate those with and without psychosocial problems. Comorbidity could not account for differences found. This is the first study to document the widespread psychosocial difficulties facing youth with BD, highlighting these issues as important ones to explore during assessment and treatment, particularly in management of affective storms and suicidal risk.