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STUDY OF THE HOME ENVIRONMENT AND SYMPTOMS OF INATTENTION AND HYPERACTIVITY IN A CLINIC BASED SAMPLE

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The HOME (Caldwell and Bradley) is a well recognised 59 item tool used for assessing the home environment and especially how supportive the home environment is for the child's developmental needs. It is applied in the home and is scored according to rater observations and parent interview answers.

Aims: A recent cross sectional study has shown an association between the HOME score and the severity of ADHD symptoms, especially hyperactivity, in children with ADHD. This study will ascertain if the association between symptoms of hyperactivity and the HOME score is present in children with non-ADHD clinical disorders as well as children with ADHD.

Method: Parents of children aged < 10 years attending the Child Guidance Unit, Mater Misericordiae Hospital from 2006 onwards were invited to partake in the study. The HOME was administered to 100 participants and the child's symptoms of inattention and hyperactivity were assessed by administering the Conners' Parent Rating scale.

Results: A correlational bivariate analysis was performed on parent ratings of inattention and hyperactivity with the total Home score and each subscale. For each set of symptoms, there was a significant and negative correlation with total HOME score: Pearson's $r = -.22$, $p = .028$ for hyperactivity and Pearson's $r = -.33$, $p = .001$ for inattention.

Conclusion: Higher scores of hyperactivity and inattention are associated with a lower total HOME score; therefore there is an association between symptoms of hyperactivity and the home environment in children with non-ADHD clinical disorders as well as children with ADHD.