

P03-389

AN EVALUATION STUDY OF THE EPWORTH SLEEPINESS SCALE ADAPTED FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS: A TOOL FOR CASE FINDING OF PEDIATRIC EXCESSIVE DAYTIME SLEEPINESS (EDS)

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Child and adolescent sleepiness is an important public health issue with potentially serious consequences on attention, learning, behaviour, and quality of life. For some individuals, sleepiness may be due to a sleep disorder which requires clinical investigation and subsequent treatment. A reliable measure of child and adolescent sleepiness is needed and a version of the Epworth Sleepiness Scale has been adapted for use in child and adolescent populations.

The adapted Epworth Scale is a questionnaire which aims to identify the chance of falling asleep in 10 different situations. This questionnaire is normally used in a clinical context as a diagnostic tool. The objective of this study was to investigate whether the adapted Epworth Scale could be used to screen for sleep disorders in a similar manner to the adult scale. This presentation describes a validation study of the adapted Epworth Scale in a population of college students. 9,005 Parisian college students (50.4 % female) completed an on-line questionnaire. The mean age was 12.7 years (sd = 1.35). The response rate was greater than 95 % for each item of the adapted Epworth score. The mean score was 8.6 / 30 (sd = 4.62).

We suggest that the adapted Epworth Scale could be used as a tool for case finding of excessive daytime sleepiness in schools. If the adapted scale is to be used for this purpose, subjects with high scores should be offered investigation to exclude underlying sleep disorders such as narcolepsy, primary hypersomnia or ADHD.