AN EXPLORATION OF CHILDREN’S STRATEGIES FOR COPING WITH ASTHMA

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Purpose: The objective of this study is to investigate whether differences exist in the ways children cope with asthma. Methods: This study is a secondary analysis using data from Dr. Horner’s longitudinal study (R01 NR007770) conducted between 2003 and 2008 in central Texas. 182 children enrolled in grades 2-5 participated in this study. The children responded to questionnaires including the 26 item Schoolager’s Coping Strategies Inventory to determine which types of coping strategies children utilize when stressed, nervous, or anxious about asthma. Findings: We found that there was a significant difference in problem-focused coping between boys and girls ($p=.023$). Girls’ average weighted subscale score for problem-focused coping was found to be 31.25 while the boys’ mean score was 26.34. We also found that there was a significant difference between white children and Hispanic children for emotion-focused coping ($p=.026$). Hispanic children’s mean weighted subscale score for emotion-focused coping was 5.90 while white children’s average score was 2.38. Conclusions: We found that girls tend to cope with asthma using significantly more problem-focused strategies than boys. We also found that Hispanic children cope with asthma in a more emotion-focused manner than white children.