

Special Issue

Down Syndrome: Understanding Cognitive and Behavioral Functioning across the Lifespan

Message from the Guest Editors

In recent decades, there has been significant advancement regarding the research on Down syndrome (DS). Evidence so far has demonstrated that individuals with DS have unique neurocognitive and neurobehavioral profiles across their lifespan that distinguish them from individuals with other types of intellectual disabilities (ID). In addition, researchers now agree that individuals with DS should not be treated as a homogeneous group, since individual differences can be seen across multiple domains, including biological, cognitive, and behavioral features. Given the significant increase in life expectancy for individuals with DS, a focus on individual differences across individuals with trisomy 21 provides an opportunity to explore genotype/phenotype relations in DS and identify risk and protective factors for co-occurring conditions such as Alzheimer's disease (AD). Additionally, an emphasis on the development of psychometrically sound cognitive and behavioral outcome measures is essential to accurately assess development and decline in DS, as well as to measure treatment efficacy in novel therapies.

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Addressing the environmental and public health challenges requires engagement and collaboration among clinicians and public health researchers. Scientific discoveries and advances in this research field play a critical role in providing a rational basis for informed decision-making toward control and prevention of human diseases, especially the illnesses that are induced from environmental exposure to health hazards.

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