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EARLY NEGATIVE LIFE EVENTS DURING CHILDHOOD AND SOCIAL ANXIETY IN ADULTHOOD

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Background: Although there is considerable evidence on the impact of negative life events during childhood on the etiology of psychiatric disorders, little is known about the specific influence on the social anxiety disorder. The objective of the study was to examine this association.

Method: In a cross-sectional survey in 571 university students we analysed the association between loss of someone close, emotional abuse, physical abuse, family violence and sexual abuse with social anxiety assessed by the Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale.

Results: Twenty percent of the sample had social anxiety and 50,6% had an early negative life events in childhood. After controlling for family psychiatric history and gender only family violence was associated with an increased risk of social anxiety (OR= 4.63; 95%CI= 1.13-18.9).

Conclusions: This study found childhood family violence associated with social phobia in university students.