WORKING MEMORY DIFFERENCES IN PEDIATRIC MODERATE AND SEVERE TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

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Traumatic brain injury is one of the leading causes of disability and impairment in children and adolescents. This study sought to determine the effects of severity on verbal working memory and verbal short-term memory. It was hypothesized that increased severity of injury would be associated with decreased performance on working memory tasks. Participants, aged 6-16 years, were tested 6 to 12 months after injury. The sample was comprised of 12 children and adolescents who had sustained a severe TBI and 11 children and adolescents who had sustained a moderate TBI. Results indicated that there were no significant differences between the moderately injured group and subjects with severe injuries on tasks of verbal working memory or verbal short-term memory. However, inspection of the data indicated that children in the severe group performed in the Low Average range, while children in the moderate group performed in the Average range. Results may be limited by the small sample size.