



Childhood Rituals: Typical to Atypical

David W. Evans, Ph.D.

Thursday, March 11, 2010, 9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Rituals, habits and routines are an essential part of human behavior. At certain points in development, young children become particularly ritualistic; they develop elaborate bedtime and mealtime routines, insist on sameness in daily routines, and become aware of minute details and changes in their local environment. While these behaviors are common in young children, they also play an important role in a variety of disorders, such as obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and autism spectrum disorders (ASD). For the past 15 years, Dr. David Evans' work has examined the normal and atypical development of rituals, routines and other compulsive-like behavior. This course (appropriate for professionals at all levels) will provide the participant with an understanding of the normal development of ritualistic, compulsive-like behavior, and will explore its emotional, cognitive and neuropsychological correlates. The course will also examine the manifestations of compulsive behavior in a variety of disorders, including OCD, tic disorders and autism spectrum disorders.

GOALS

Participants will have:

- 1) An appreciation for the normal spectrum of ritualistic, compulsive behavior in children
- 2) An understanding of the links between compulsive-like behavior and emotional, cognitive and neuropsychological development in typically and atypically developing children

OBJECTIVES

- 1) Describe the nature and development of normal repetitive, ritualistic, compulsive-like behavior in children
- 2) Review the atypical manifestations and co-morbidities of other kinds of repetitive behavior, including clinical compulsions, tics, and stereotypic motor movements

- 3) Present recent research that highlights the essential similarities between typical and atypical repetitive behavior, including research with both human and non-human animals
- 4) Consider the possible adaptive and evolutionary origins of ritualistic behavior as a way of better understanding other common phenomena such as superstitious beliefs and behaviors

COURSE TIME OUTLINE

9:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.	Defining the broad range of repetitive behaviors: Psychopathology
10:15 a.m. - 10:25 a.m.	Break
10:25 a.m. -12:00 p.m.	Theories and research findings on atypical repetitive behavior
12:00 p.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Retrieve Lunches
12:15 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Working Lunch: Video Presentation highlighting typical-atypical links
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	The normal development of repetitive behavior: Recent research and theory
2:00 p.m. - 2:10 p.m.	Break
2:10 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.	Toward a unified developmental and evolutionary model