



CONGRESS REPORT

7th Congress of the Association for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions of Serbia – DEAPS: Mental Health of Children and Adolescents - Trauma Within and Around Us; 29 May – 1 June 2025, Sabac, Serbia

The seventh DEAPS congress was held in Sabac, a beautiful city in Sumadija and Western Serbia from 29 May to 1 June 2025. The main topic of the Congress was "Mental Health of Children and Adolescents - Trauma Within and Around Us". Several distinguished international and Serbian speakers presented the contemporary findings within the field of trauma in children and youth and yielded lively discussions with the audience after each presentation. The Congress attendees were professionals from various professions associated with children and youth mental health (psychiatrists, psychologists, pediatricians, social workers, special education and rehabilitation therapists, nurses) working in different sectors (such as healthcare, education, social welfare, and others).

The opening day of the Congress started with the pre congress workshop on "*Recognizing and responding to violence against children: Evidence-based strategies for health professionals*", held at the Institute of Mental Health Belgrade, by Berit Kieselbach (World Health Organization) and moderators from the Institute of Mental Health. After the workshop, the audience moved to Sabac, to the first symposium of the congress, dedicated to "*Children and youth – perpetrators and victims of criminal offenses*", moderated by Natasa Ljubomirovic and Ivana Milosavljevic Djukic. Within this symposium, Natasa Ljubomirovic presented the topic "*Conduct disorders, where does it lead?*". The second presentation was given by Vesna Trbovic on the topic of "*Social welfare system response to conduct disorder*". The third presenter, Marija Maljkovic, spoke about "The evidence-based programs", whereas the fourth speaker Ivana Milosavljevic Djukic presented the data on "*Shelter for urgent protection of maltreated children*".

After the symposium, the opening ceremony started with the greeting words of Milica Pejovic Milovancevic, the president of DEAPS, Ana Kesic, the secretary general of DEAPS, Miodrag Stankovic, the vice president of DEAPS, Snezana Vukovic, the representative of the national Ministry of Education, and Aleksandar Pajic, the mayor of Sabac. Milica Pejovic Milovancevic gave a plenary lecture on "*The prevalence of mental disorders in children and youth in Serbia*", which was followed by the musical performance of talented Lenka.

Following the opening ceremony, the first session of the DEAPS Early Career Corner: Meet-the-Expert was held. The young colleagues from different mental health professions



had the opportunity to meet Professor Dennis Ougrin from the UK and participate in the open discussion (moderated by Marija Mitkovic Voncina).

The next day of the Congress consisted of morning and afternoon sessions. It started with the UNICEF symposium "*Youth Minimum Service Package (YMSP)*", moderated by Milica Pejovic Milovancevic and Stanislava Vuckovic. The first speaker, Stanislava Vuckovic (UNICEF), spoke about "*The program of mental health and psychosocial support for children, adolescents and youth*". The second speaker, Marija Mitkovic Voncina gave the presentation on the Minimum service package for psychosocial support for youth. This was followed by the presentations on "*Telehealth*" by Ana Munjiza Jovanovic, the "*YMSP from the role of trainer*" by Ljubisa Jovanovic, the "*YMSP from the role of mentor*" by Maja Todorovic, and the short video on the *Experiences of the professional implementing the YMSP in the education setting* (Nevena Stepanovic).

The second symposium, moderated by Milica Pejovic Milovancevic and Jelena Radosavljevic Kircanski, was dedicated to the topic "*The systems response to the May tragedies*". The first presentation on "*Trauma in children and youth*" was given by Tijana Mirovic. The next speaker Jelena Radosavljev Kircanski spoke about the "Integrative response of the support systems to May tragedies in Serbia". The third speaker, Snezana Vukovic, gave the presentation on "The Ministry of Education response to May tragedies". Further on, Aleksandra Parojcic presented the topic "The helpers – organization of activities, challenges and support". The last topic "The role of media" was presented by Snezana Mrvic and Hana Korac.

The central part of the day was dedicated to the two plenary lectures, "*Providing psychosocial care to youth after mass trauma*" by Lise Eilin Stene from Norway, and "*The health sector response to violence against children*" by Berit Kieselbach from Switzerland.

The plenary sessions were followed by the sponsored symposium (Johnson & Johnson) on "*Living with ADHD*", comprising the presentations "*Diagnosis and treatment of ADHD*" given by Ana Kesic, "*ADHD in Serbia*" given by Milica Pejovic Milovancevic, and "*ADHD – transitioning to adulthood*" given by Vanja Mandic Maravic.

The next session was a symposium on "*Selected topics in child and adolescent psychiatry*", moderated by Svetlana Ivanovic Kovacevic and Jelena Kostic. The first presenter was Svetlana Ivanovic Kovacevic who spoke on "*The challenges and the dilemmas in child forensic psychiatry*". The next speaker Miodrag Stankovic spoke about "*School murders: how to recognize, how to prevent?*". Finally, Jelena Kostic gave presentation on "*The negative childhood experiences and disorders in the spectrum of schizophrenia*".



The following symposium was dedicated to the topic of "*Trauma and psychotherapy*" and moderated by Vojislav Curcic and Sanja Zivotic. Tijana Mirovic presented "*Complex PTSD*", while Danilo Pesic spoke about "*The group and trauma*". The next speaker Bojana Trivuncic spoke about "*The psychological support to highly traumatized refugees*", followed by Sanja Zivotic and Snezana Kecojevic presenting about "*Working with parents of traumatized children*". Olga Borovnica gave a presentation on "*Losing a parent in childhood*", followed by a final presentation of Vladimir Borovnica who spoke about "*The evidence-based approaches to trauma*".

The next symposium, moderated by Aleksandra Stojadinovic, Miodrag Stankovic and Jelena Zajeganovic, was dedicated to the topic "Trauma in early childhood / The role of parents in chronic stress prevention". The first presenter was Aleksandra Stojadinovic, who spoke about the "*Neurobiological effects of trauma in early childhood*". The following was the presentation "*Corporal punishment as a factor of child traumatization*" given by Roberto Grujicic. The final presentation, given by Ivana Mihic, was on the "*Responsiveness of parents and emotional security of children*".

Following the symposia, the second session of the DEAPS Early Career Corner: Meet-the-Expert was held. The young colleagues from different mental health professions had the opportunity to meet Professor Andrea Danese from the UK and join the open discussion (moderated by Marija Mitkovic Voncina).

The day ended with the General Assembly of DEAPS.

On the next day, the morning sessions started with two plenary lectures from distinguished international speakers from the UK. The first speaker was Andrea Danese who gave a lecture on "*Childhood adversity and psychopathology – Bridging from population science to clinical practice*". The second speaker was Dennis Ougrin who spoke on "*Therapeutic Assessment for young people with self-harm*".

This was followed by the next symposium, on the topic "The face and the inside of trauma", moderated by Jasminka Markovic and Ana Kesic. The first presenter was Dusko Stupar, speaking on "All the faces of trauma". This was followed by Ana Kesic speaking on "Trauma from a different perspective". Further on, Jasminka Markovic gave presentation on "How to help a traumatized helper". The final presentation was "Model of supporting and protecting children and youth mental health in community" given by Jasmina Bogdanovic.



The following two plenary sessions were the Innovation-in-Learning session, "*The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health (ACAMH): Sharing Best Evidence and Improving Practice*", given by Gordana Milavic (UK), and the News-in-the-Region session "*Strategic Framework for Advancing Child and Adolescent Mental Health in North Macedonia: Development of the National Action Plan (2024-2030)*", given by Stojan Barjaktarov (North Macedonia).

This was followed by a round table "*The limits of criminal liability; Institutionalization of child forensic psychiatry and education of workforce*". This session was moderated by Aneta Lakic and Svetlana Ivanovic Kovacevic, and the speakers were Aneta Lakic, Svetlana Ivanovic Kovacevic, Ana Kesic, Natasa Ljubomirovic, Zeljka Kosutic, Bojana Dunjic Kostic, Katlin Brasic, Gorjana Mircic Calukovic.

The session program of the day was closed by the Case Report session, moderated by Vladimir Borovnica and Dusko Stupar, presented by Olivera Leksic Hil, Aleksandra Parojcic, Birta Sasa, Milos Sremcev, Ilija Bozic, and Jelena Kolarov, and the Poster session moderated by Jelena Kostic, Olivera Aleksic Hil and Ivana Milosavljevic Djukic.

After that, a poster session followed (moderators: Jelena Kostić, Olivera Aleksic Hil, and Ivana Milosavljevic Djukic), during which 24 posters were presented, and awards were given for the top three places. First place was awarded to Elena Stevanovic et al. for the topic "The link between early maladaptive experiences and the tendency toward suicide attempts". Second place went to Gojran Tasevski et al. for the poster titled "Lifetime prevalence of traumatic experiences and symptoms of trauma in Slovenian adolescents admitted to the only Slovenian secure psychiatric unit for minors due to self-harm", and third place was awarded to Neda Tasic et al. for the topic "Effects of digital detox in psychiatrically hospitalized adolescents."

The day ended with the gala dinner.

On the last day of the congress, the panel session "Local PORI teams" was moderated by Mirjana Djordjevic, Spela Golubovic, Jelena Petkovic and Dunja Civric, and included the speakers Mirjana Djordjevic, Spela Golubovic, Jelena Petkovic, Dunja Civric and Jovana Jovanovic. This session was followed by the closing ceremony.

The congress gave a portfolio of the findings on the most significant facets of trauma in children and youth, from various perspectives. 180 participants took part in lively discussions, idea exchange and brainstorming for the future. From international to national speakers, from experienced to early career colleagues, from scientific to social program – Sabac, Serbia was the place to be.