Objective and Subjective Help Seeking Behaviors in Children
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Background
- Help-seeking is a multi-faceted process in which an individual must make decisions about whether to ask for help, what type of help to ask for, and who to seek help from (Karabenick & Newman, 2006).
- Previous research has used objective measures of help-seeking during a cognitive task (Huet et al., 2011) while other research has used subjective self-reports of help-seeking through questionnaires (Karabenick & Knapp, 1991).
- The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between objective measures of help-seeking measured during a memory task and self-reported help-seeking measured through a questionnaire.
- We predicted that there would be a small to moderate relationship between children’s self-report of their help-seeking behaviors and the objective measure of help-seeking during the task.

Method
- 42 children ages 8 to 13-years-old (26 females, 15 males, 1 non-binary, mean age = 10.7).
- This is a virtual study conducted via Zoom. Participants completed two one-hour sessions approximately 24 hours apart.
- Session 1: Objective help-seeking was measured through a memory task.
- Session 2: Subjective help-seeking was measured using a help-seeking questionnaire adapted from Karabenick (2003) and Ryan & Shim (2012).
- The methods presented are apart of a larger ongoing study (https://osf.io/mb8ug).

Method Continued

Objective Help-Seeking

Encoding Phase
- Children learned 36 facts about how animals eat, see, and move.

Help-Seeking Phase
- Children took a practice test on animal facts with the option to seek help.
- Help-seeking was measured as the number of times participants asked for help and how frequently they asked for help in the form of a hint versus answer.

Subjective Self-Report Questionnaire
- Questions were answered via a 5-point Likert scale and divided into categories of adaptive and avoidant help-seeking.

Adaptive Examples
- If I needed help, I would ask for an explanation, not just the answer.
- If I needed help, I would ask for hints or clues rather than the answer.

Avoidant Examples
- I would rather do worse on a task than ask for help when learning.
- If I didn’t understand something, I would guess rather than ask for help.

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation Matrix</th>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Report Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Report Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Report Adaptation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objective Help Sought</td>
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<td>ObjectiveHints</td>
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Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

• A numeric positive association between self-reported help-seeking and objective help-seeking was found such that children who asked for help more frequently in the memory task were also the ones who self-reported more adaptive help-seeking.
• Children who self-reported engaging in less adaptive help-seeking also self-reported avoiding seeking help.
• Children who sought more help during the memory task also sought more answers compared to hints.

Conclusion
• Overall, these results suggest that children can self-reflect about their general help-seeking intentions.
• The relation between objective and self-reported measures were small, suggesting these measures may capture different aspects of help-seeking.

References