

# Early screening tool IDs PTSD in preschool-aged children

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An early screening tool can be used to identify posttraumatic stress disorder in infants and young children shortly after unintentional injury, according to a study published online Sept. 23 in *Pediatrics*.

(HealthDay)—An early screening tool can be used to identify posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in infants and young children shortly after unintentional injury, according to a study published online Sept. 23 in *Pediatrics*.

Didier N. Kramer, from the University Children's Hospital Zurich in Switzerland, and colleagues examined the effectiveness and selection of predictors of an early screening tool for PTSD in a sample of 87 2- to 6-year olds, six to 14 days after unintentional injury. The screener consisted of an adapted version of the Pediatric Emotional Distress Scale (PEDS), the PEDS-Early Screener (PEDS-ES), and questions on five

additional risk factors. Six months after the accident, the PTSD semi-structured interview and observational record for infants and young children served as a criterion measure. Cases meeting the criteria for full or partial PTSD were considered positive.

The researchers found the best performing [screening tool](#) to be the PEDS-ES, without the additional risk factors. This had 85 percent sensitivity and 63 percent specificity for full or partial PTSD.

"The PEDS-ES allows for successful early screening of preschool-aged children after single accidental trauma," the authors write. "It may be used within a stepped-[care model](#) for early identification of individuals designated for possible secondary preventative interventions."

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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