



A Curious Incident of TikTok "Psychosis" in a Patient with Intellectual Disability

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Conflict of Interest

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BACKGROUND

- Intellectual Disability (ID) is a condition characterized by impaired cognitive ability and adaptive functioning.
- Patients with ID may have developmental ages that are younger than their chronological ages.
- Optimal evaluation and treatment of psychiatric illness in ID requires the clinician to collect a detailed developmental history.

CASE REPORT

- This is a 17 year old AA female with GLUT-1 Deficiency, epilepsy, and ID admitted for agitation, stereotyped movements, and self-talk.
- Baseline labs were unremarkable, and a video EEG did not demonstrate epileptiform activity. Neurology determined that movements were inconsistent with previous seizure semiology.
- Psychiatry was consulted for psychosis. During the evaluation, the patient paused to make gestures and mouth words as though she was arguing with someone. She returned her attention to the conversation when redirected.
- The patient was estimated to have the developmental level of a toddler (**Figure 1**). Review of the video EEG revealed stereotypies found on TikTok (**Figure 2**).

Developmental Timeline

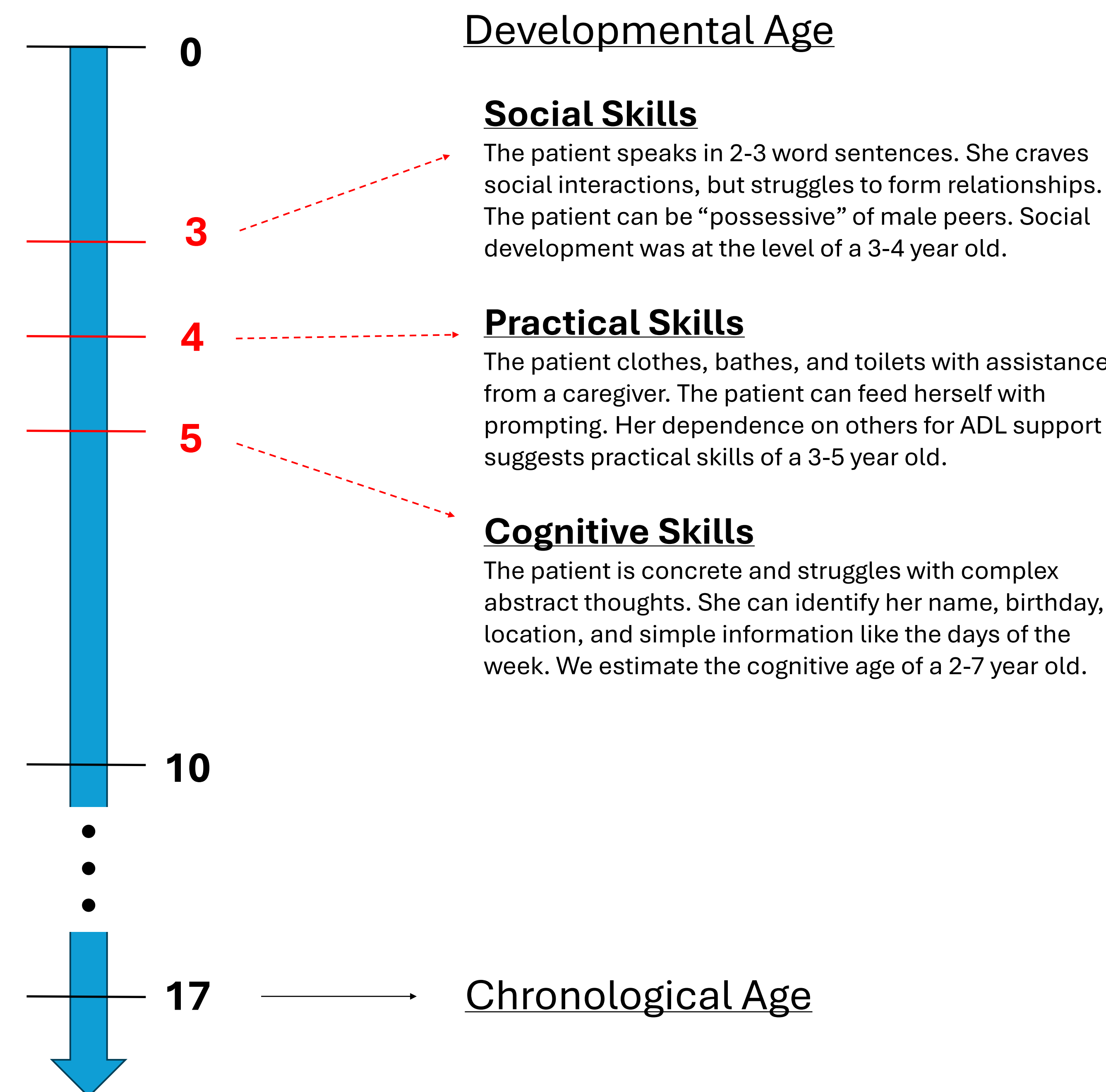


Figure 1. The chart above provides estimates for the patient's social, practical skills, and cognitive developmental ages (colored in red). The patient's developmental age (3-5 years old) was notably younger than her chronological age (17 years old).

SCAN ME



Figure 2. The patient's family reported that she enjoyed using social media, and was especially interested in TikTok. During the clinical assessment, the patient displayed stereotyped movements similar to those observed in the video above.

DISCUSSION

- Patients with ID may display behaviors that are consistent with a younger developmental age.
- Symptoms that seem bizarre in older children (magical thinking, personification, or mimicry) may be appropriate in individuals with ID.¹
- Certain demographics of patient, particularly those with African or Latino heritage, are more likely to be diagnosed with psychosis.²
- The patient's developmental age suggested that she was using mimicry and self-talk to process difficult situations.

CONCLUSIONS

- Individuals with ID have a higher risk of being misdiagnosed with psychotic disorders.
- Careful attention to developmental history, culture, and caregiver report are used to assess psychosis in ID.³ Awareness of social media can be diagnostically useful.

REFERENCES

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