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Childhood individual differences

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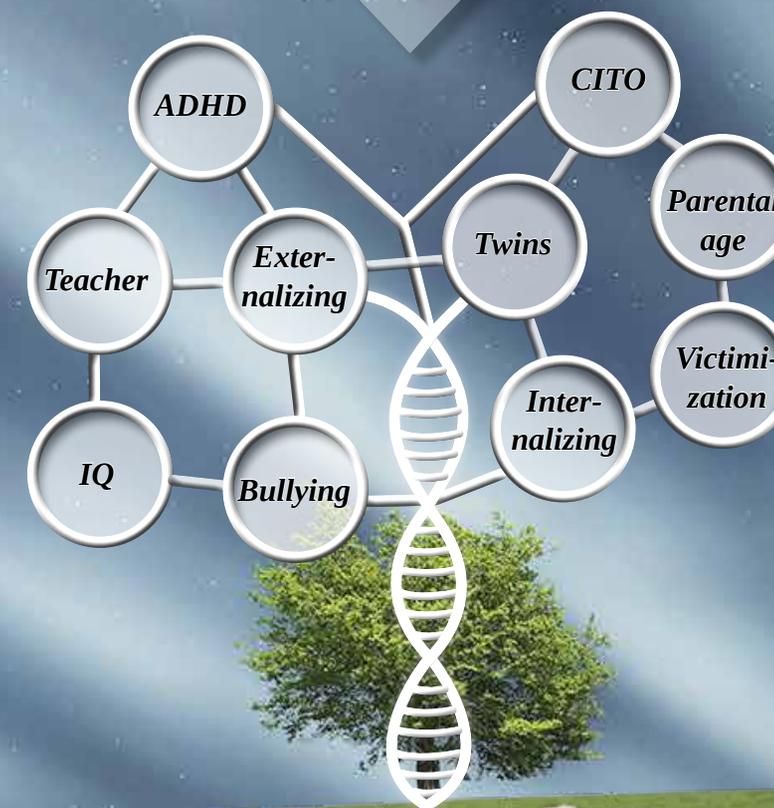
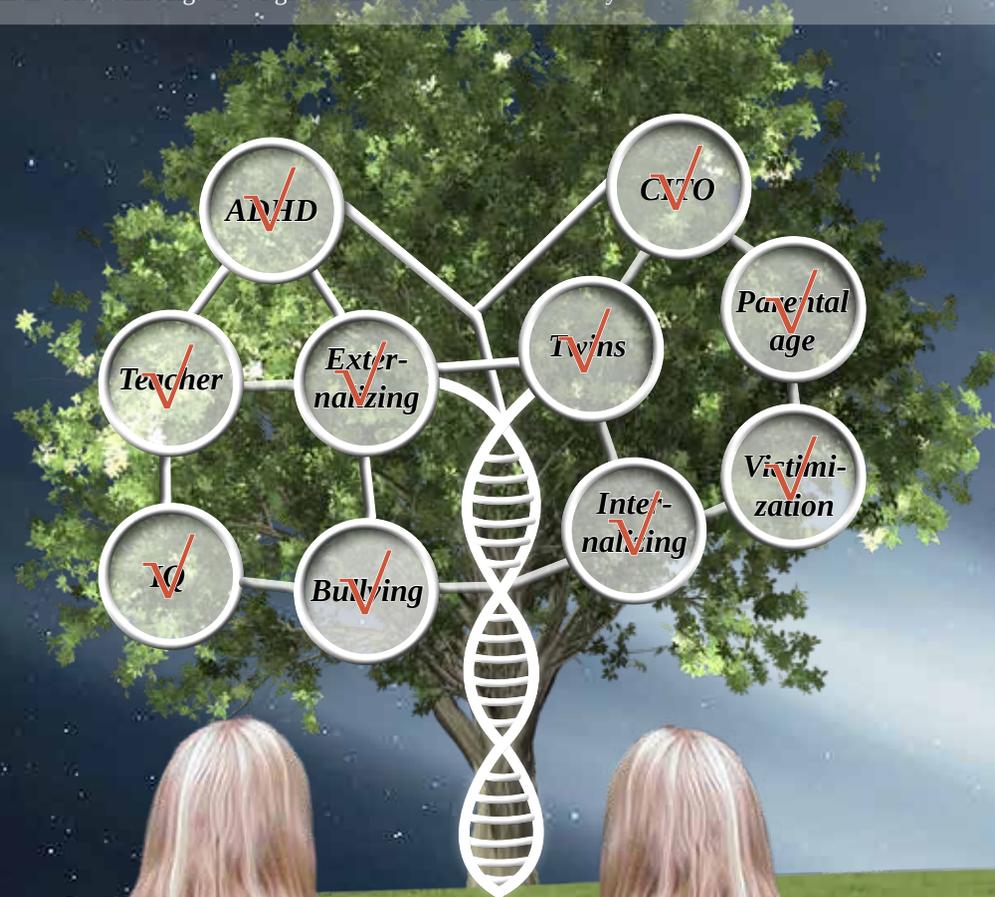
Childhood developmental problems, like being bullied or having attention problems, are common and can have serious lifelong consequences. It is therefore of global concern to investigate what makes some children vulnerable to face difficulties and makes other children resilient. A broad range of candidate factors were investigated by using twin and population cohorts. The studies presented in this thesis focused on two important domains in the field of childhood development: bullying in primary school and the influence of parental age at birth on offspring's development. For the first domain, I investigated the influence of various risk and protective factors on bullying perpetration and bullying victimization. Moreover, I investigated whether bullying runs in families due to shared genetic liabilities or due to the shared family environment. I concluded that some children are at increased risk for being a perpetrator or victim of bullying mostly due to their genetic liability. Regarding the second domain, I examined the influence of parental age on children's social-emotional and cognitive development. I employed advanced statistical approaches to four large Dutch cohorts and found that advanced parental age has no negative effects on children's development. These findings are of great value to research and society.



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Sabine Veldkamp



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Risk and protective factors
in twin and population cohorts