Nejra Bešić is a researcher in developmental psychology affiliated with the Center for Developmental Research at Örebro University, Sweden. She earned her master's degree in Music and Psychology at Örebro University. Her main research area is shyness in early adolescence, and the effect it has on adolescents' social relationships with significant others. Other areas of interest include the development of social identity, as well as links between online and offline problem behavior in early adolescence.

In most Western societies today, where boldness and good self-esteem are valued, socially fearful behaviors are viewed as a disadvantage. During adolescence, social participation requires a good deal of self-confidence and social skills, specifically when it comes to acquiring and spending time with friends, getting romantically involved, or having a meaningful relationship with parents. Adolescents go through a number of physical and emotional changes that make them more vulnerable for developing shyness compared with individuals in other phases of life. The effects of shyness on social relationships in adolescence and vice versa have, nonetheless, been relatively understudied. This dissertation provides some insights into the lives of shy early adolescents, showing that both peers and parents may affect shyness in several negative ways. The shy adolescents were, however, also found to be active agents in their own lives, as their social fears were influential in their relationships with important people in their social worlds. On a more positive note, nonetheless, shyness was protective against involvement in problem behaviors. Hence, even though certain elements of adolescent shyness can make it unfavorable for the individual, there are also reasons to appreciate its distinctiveness. Perhaps it is our societal reactions towards socially fearful individuals and behaviors that create the core of the problem.