Can a Behavioral Program Help Children with Emotional Behavior Disorders?

Ge’Keira Ashford, OTS; Dr. Brooks Wingo, PhD and Dr. Sarah Tucker, PhD OTR/L
Department of Occupational Therapy | University of Alabama at Birmingham
Dena Dickerson | Offender Alumni Association

Introduction

Literature Review:

• Emotional Behavior Disorder
  According to the Georgia Department of Education, an emotional behavior disorder is characterized by an individual who consistently expresses inappropriate behaviors and feelings, displays need of unrelated or unreasonable fears associated with personal or school problems, and inability to build and maintain interpersonal relationships with peers, teachers, and other caregivers. (Bridgett Still, Georgia Department of Education, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders 2023)
  • Behavioral Program:
    Research on two behavioral interventions—parent management training (PMT) and cognitive-behavioral training—was done by Sukhodolsky et al. in 2016. (EBT) The study only served to highlight the need for additional intervention to help boys with severe and persistent behaviors.
    • Research Question:
      Over the course of 8 weeks, the program’s effectiveness in helping children with emotional behavior disorders, such as anger, irritability, and aggression, was measured by evaluating the children’s behavior and interpersonal relationships before and after the program.

Overview of the Program:

• Purpose:
  Implement an 8-week behavioral program with a focus on creating interventions catering to emotional regulation and coping skills for children with emotional behavior disorders. The program aims to improve the children’s emotional well-being and facilitate better interpersonal relationships.

Methods

Steps
1. Meet and Build Rapport with the participants for a week
   • Complete Pre-Test Survey
   • Based off survey, communicate with participants what they would like to improve and/or talk about when discussing emotions/behaviors
2. Create 8-Week Emotional Behavioral Program
   • 5 Weeks of Gary Chapman’s “Five Love Languages”
   • 3 Weeks of Proper/Redirected Behavior Techniques
3. Implement 8-Week Program

Discussion

Results

Pre-Test Survey Results

Post-Test Survey Results

Discussion

Limited

• Effectiveness of participation with adolescents: each group intervention
• Limited amount of time program not fully implemented due to school holiday breaks

Implications

• Mental health: Awareness of mental health issues and impact on their education
• Academic and social: Stress from social dynamics, parental academic expectations, and their own personal goals
• Family and peer dynamics: The support of peers and community resources to address underlying stresses through interventions implemented in the program

Survey Questions

Acknowledgement & Contact Information

I would like to thank my faculty and site mentors Dr. Brooks Wingo, Dr. Sarah Tucker, and Ms. Dena Dickerson for giving me assistance and guidance throughout completing this project. I would also like to thank the coaches and players of the Fairfield Preparatory High School football team for participating in my emotional behavioral program.

For any additional questions, Contact Ge’Keira Ashford at keira.ashford@yahoo.com or (205) 960-7630

References