A Comparison of Two Models of School-based Mental Health Services for Children With Severe Emotional Disturbances

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The Center is jointly funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, U.S. Department of Education and the Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration under grant number H133B040024

Purpose

Very little is known about kids with SED and placed in special education settings.

Purpose: Purpose of this study was to examine the outcomes from two distinct school-based models of mental health delivery for this population of children.

The Day Treatment Model

One model included the following services during the school day:
• Social Skills Group
• Problem Solving Group
• Behavior Management Group
• Individual/Group Counseling

The Therapist Model

The second model included these services during the school day:
• Individual Counseling
• Group Counseling

Outcomes for the two models were examined in the areas of:

• Emotional and Behavioral Functioning of the child (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire – both parents and teachers ratings)
• Level of impairment (Columbia Impairment Scale – parent rating)
• Academic Performance (Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement – Reading and Math subscales)

These measures were administered twice over a 9-month period – or one school year.

Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Day Tx (N=22)</th>
<th>Therapist (N=21)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (average)</td>
<td>9.0 (1.4)</td>
<td>8.9 (1.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ (average)</td>
<td>83.8 (15.0)</td>
<td>80.6 (11.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in Sp Ed (average)</td>
<td>2.2 years (1.3)</td>
<td>2.4 years (1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of School Career in Special Ed (average)</td>
<td>75.7 (26.6)</td>
<td>71.1 (32.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Service Average hours over school year (per student)**

- Behavior Management Group 68.0 (33.5)
- Social Skills Group 32.9 (17.5)
- Problem Solving Group 3.0 (2.9)
- Other Group Counseling 12.6 (12.1)
- Individual Counseling 1.2 (0.5)

**Average Total 123.1 Hours**

(about 45 minutes per day)

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**Service Average hours over school year (per student)**

- Individual Counseling 3.2 (2.5)
- Group Counseling 15.2 (7.1)

**Average Total 17.8 Hours**

(about 50 minutes every two weeks)

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**% of Parents Satisfied or Very Satisfied with:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Day Tx</th>
<th>Therapist</th>
<th>SEELS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>77.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>81.8*</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>85.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational svs</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>83.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Ed svs</td>
<td>86.4*</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>90.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Lower than SEELS

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**% of Parents Answering “Yes” to attending a:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Day Tx</th>
<th>Therapist</th>
<th>SEELS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School mtg</td>
<td>68.2</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/Class event</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEP Meeting</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>92.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**% of parents perceiving that the education and services child receives are highly individualized to child’s needs:**

- 52.4
- 27.3
- 38.3

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**Emotional and Behavioral Functioning**

**Parent Scores on the SDQ (>16 “abnormal”)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time 1</th>
<th>Time 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lower scores indicate better functioning

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**Emotional and Behavioral Functioning**

**Teacher Scores on the SDQ (>16 “abnormal”)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time 1</th>
<th>Time 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lower scores indicate better functioning
Changes over time

Level of Impairment

Parent Scores on the CIS (≥16 “clinical”)

Lower scores indicate less impairment

Achievement – Math

Standardized Student scores on the K-TEA Math Test

Achievement – Reading

Standardized Student scores on the K-TEA Reading Test

Reliable Change Index

Day Treatment (n=22) Therapist Only (n=21)
 Math - No Change 21 (95.4%) 17 (81.0%)
 Reading - No Change 18 (81.3%) 16 (76.2%)
 SDQ Parent - No Change 21 (95.4%) 17 (81.0%)
 SDQ Teacher - No Change 12 (54.5%) 9 (42.8%)
 CIS - No Change 11 (50.0%) 16 (76.2%)

Columbia Impairment Scale (CIS)

Model = Day Tx - Therapist

SDQ – Parent and Teacher

Model = Day Tx - Therapist
(Note: Sig. differences in Teacher baseline scores)
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K-TEA – Math and Reading

Model = Day Tx - Therapist

MST

MST Therapists in the community
(d=.26, CI = 0.06)

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Implications

• Must start to document the effect sizes from various models of services
• For children with SED in sp ed – maintaining them in school may be successful
• Because of the cost of multi-faceted program – results warrant further investigation.

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