Evaluation of an Intervention for Adolescent Girls with Trauma Related Disorders

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Evaluation of an Intervention for Adolescent Girls with Trauma Related Disorders

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Background of the intervention

- Trauma-Informed Treatment
- Triad of Issues
- Development of the Triad Girls’ Group
- Goals of Treatment

How do we conceptualize Developmental Trauma Disorder?

- Incidents of trauma that cross over multiple developmental domains
- Interpersonal nature (Including child abuse and neglect)
- Begins at an early age and is prolonged

TRIAD

- TRIAD of challenges
  - History of Trauma
  - History of Substance Abuse
  - History of Emotional Problems
- TRIAD = Intersection of these difficulties

TRAUMA ← Emotional Probs ← Substance abuse

Development of the Triad Girls Group

- Based on the Triad Women’s Group
  - SAMHSA funded project
- Modified to be appropriate for adolescents
- Target Population
  - Group appropriate for girls with at least two of the three Triad issues since they represent girls who are at risk for all three issues
  - Girls who have no histories of trauma or abuse may not be appropriate for this group
Treatment for high-risk adolescents will ideally:
- Address histories of trauma, substance use/abuse, and emotional problems
- Be gender-specific and gender-appropriate
- Be developmentally appropriate
- Be sensitive to diversity
- Will offer skills training and psychoeducation
- Will use both cognitive and behavioral approaches to facilitate change

Goals Accomplished By
- Building emotional regulation skills
- Building problem-solving skills
- Building social supports
- Building interpersonal effectiveness skills
- Fostering feelings of self-efficacy
- Enhancing capacities to cope with distress
- Addressing triggers for substance abuse
- Teaching drug refusal skills
- Increasing capacity for mindfulness
- Increasing awareness of abusive relationships
- Increasing awareness of risky behaviors

Evaluation of the Project
- Overview of Evaluation Project
- Research Questions / Hypotheses
- Methodology
  - Participants
  - Measures
  - Procedure
- Preliminary Data Presented
- Closing Remarks

Overview of Evaluation Project
- Larger Study: Evaluation of Medicaid-funded Out-of-Home Treatment Settings for FY 08-09
- This Study
  - AHCA Sub-Study: Trauma-Informed Treatment in Out-of-Home Settings

AHCA Sub-Study: Trauma-Informed Treatment in Out-of-Home Settings
- Implementation and evaluation project
  - Triad Girls’ Group Curriculum training for staff with emphasis on trauma-specific treatment
  - Technical assistance in conducting groups
  - Assessment of girls pre-, post-, with 2 follow-ups to investigate outcomes of intervention
  - Measurement of treatment fidelity to manualized Triad Girls’ Group intervention

Research Questions
- What are the effects of Triad Girls’ Group as a trauma intervention on emotional problems, coping strategies, and symptoms related to trauma?
- What is the impact of the Triad Girls’ Group on the participants’ progress through the system?
Hypotheses of Project

- Participants should show improvement in:
  - Self-concept / self-esteem
  - Coping strategies including temptation to use substances

- Participants should show decrease in symptoms related to:
  - Trauma related symptoms
  - Depression
  - Anger / Aggression

- Participants should show decrease in use of substances

Methodology: Participants

- N=28 (2 sites at Baseline)
- Age range 12 to 18 years-old (Mean = 14.4)
- Mean Age Site 1 = 13 Years
- Mean Age Site 2 = 15 Years
- 24% (N=6) of sample identifies as Hispanic

Living Situation Previous Year (6 M or more)

- Parent(s)
- Foster Parent(s)
- Foster Care
- Group home
- SIPP
- Boyfriend

Racial Identity at Baseline

- Black
- White
- Multiracial

Demographics (N=27)

Methodology: Measures

- Demographics
  - Trauma Symptoms - Trauma Symptom Report for Adolescents (TSRA; Briere, 2006)
  - Coping - Coping Responses Inventory – Youth Form (CRI-Y; Moos, 1993)
  - Problem Behaviors and Symptoms - Youth Self Report (YSR; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001)
  - Substance Use - Comprehensive Adolescent Severity Inventory (CASIS; Myers, 1996)
  - Coping with Temptation - Temptation Coping Questionnaire (Myers & Wagner, 1995)
  - Self-esteem - Self Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1979)

Methodology: Procedures

- Facilitator Training
- Identification of girls with Triad of issues
- Informed Consent / Assent
- Assessment of Girls
  - Pre- and Post- group participation
  - Follow-up assessments: 3 and 6 months
  - Participants are paid $25 per assessment session; each session takes ~ 1 - 1.5 hrs
Fidelity Information
- Evaluation and sign-in sheets to monitor attendance
- Facilitator interview
- Feedback from group members

Attendance and Evaluation - Site 1
- 17 Group Meetings
- Covered 1 manualized session
- Mean groups attended = 6.6
- 5 girls attended ≥ 50% of sessions
- Older group members had better attendance

Attendance and Evaluation - Site 2
- GROUP 1
  - 11 Group Meetings
  - Covered 11 manualized sessions
  - Mean groups attended = 3.8
  - 2 girls attended ≥ 50% of sessions
  - 13 girls in group 1 not enrolled in study
- GROUP 2
  - 12 Group Meetings
  - Covered 12 manualized sessions
  - Mean groups attended = 6.2
  - 7 girls attended ≥ 50% of sessions
  - 12 girls in group 2 not enrolled in study

Sample Facilitator Comments: Site 1
- Positive Comments by Facilitators:
  "Clients wanted to share their traumatic experience."
  "Girls' support and encouragement for each other has come a long way."
  "Girls shared that they feel safe and wanted to come back."
- Constructive Feedback of Sessions:
  "There's too much to cover in one session- we have to split it up."
  "Girls are struggling with respecting each other."
- Comments regarding Girl's Conduct in Group Sessions:
  "The girls were very distracted and required numerous redirections to remain on task, on topic and to remain positive when speaking with others."
  "Girls were extremely hyper- feeding off of each other, Difficult to complete."

Sample Facilitator Comments: Site 2
- Positive Comments by Facilitators:
  "Group members able to let conflict go quickly from outside group- ended on a positive note."
  "Everyone engaged in Mental Grounding exercise."
- Constructive Feedback of Sessions:
  "Empathy concept difficult for some."
  "Girls had difficulty totally understanding these worksheets."
- Comments regarding Girl's Conduct in Group Sessions:
  "Somewhat chaotic first session, although girls were engaged- This group has many conflicts coming in from outside- Being able to draw on folders helps them."
  "Engaged, curious, lots of disruption."
  "Very chaotic group due to one member in distress- hurt self in group, had to be escorted out."

Sample Feedback from Group Members
- "I can be just me."
- "I learned that nobody can make you do what you really don't want to do."
- "I liked telling my story."
- "I learned that I can trust some people."
- "I liked talking about empowerment & survivors."
- "It is easier to talk about it in group than in individual therapy where you just sit there."
- "It's fun...when are we going to start again."
- "The group leader is sweet and nice."
Trauma Symptom Report for Adolescents

- Trauma Exposure (13 items)
  - Measures child abuse & neglect, natural disasters, hospitalizations, and deaths
- Clinical Scales (97 items)
  - Anxiety, Depression, Anger/Aggression, Attachment Insecurity, Sexual Issues, Dissociation, Tension Reduction Behavior, Social Withdrawal/Isolation, Vulnerability to Victimization
- Posttraumatic Stress (17 items)
  - Reliving, Avoidance, Hyperarousal, Total

TSRA – Percent with at Least One Trauma Exposure

- Site 1 (n=9)
- Site 2 (n=18)

Life Time Trauma events at baseline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of events</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site 1 (N=9)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 2 (N=18)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coping Responses Inventory-Youth Form

- Part 1
  - Identify and describe recent problem or situation
  - 10 items about situation appraisal
- Part 2
  - 48 items
  - Evaluation of Coping Skill Usage

Coping Response Inventory-Youth Form Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach Responses</th>
<th>Site 1 (N = 9)</th>
<th>Site 2 (N = 18)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical Analysis</td>
<td>49.22</td>
<td>6.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Reappraisal</td>
<td>54.11</td>
<td>7.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking Guidance</td>
<td>52.77</td>
<td>7.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance Responses</td>
<td>57.33</td>
<td>8.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resignation</td>
<td>61.06</td>
<td>9.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional discharge</td>
<td>59.78</td>
<td>8.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Higher scores indicate higher use of that coping skill
Coping Responses Inventory—Youth Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach Responses</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Logical Analysis</td>
<td>-1.265</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Reappraisal</td>
<td>-1.913</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking Guidance</td>
<td>-2.404</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>-1.558</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.148</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Avoidance Responses

| Cognitive Avoidance | -0.242 | 11 | .861 |
| Acceptance or Resignation | -1.484 | 11 | .155 |
| Seeking Alt. Rewards | -1.139 | 11 | .279 |
| Emotional discharge  | -0.533 | 11 | .371 |

Youth Self-Report

- 112 items designed to measure general psychological functioning (emotional & behavioral)
- Psychometrically validated for use with youth ages 12-18
- Internalizing subscales:
  - Anxious/Depressed
  - Withdrew/Depressed
  - Somatic Complaints
- Externalizing subscales:
  - Rule-breaking
  - Aggressive Behaviors
- Total score also includes Social Problems, Thought Problems, & Attention Problems

Internalizing, Externalizing & Total T-scores at Baseline

![Bar chart showing t-scores for Internalizing, Externalizing, and Total]

* Higher scores indicate more problem behaviors and symptoms

CASI

- Using 3 Modules:
  - Drug & Alcohol Use
  - Leisure Activities
  - Peer Relationships
- Also using one item regarding gang involvement

CASI – Lifetime Drug and Alcohol Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ever Used Tobacco?</th>
<th>Site 1 (N = 5)</th>
<th>Site 2 (N = 17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ever Used Alcohol?</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever Used Cannabis?</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever Used Cocaine?</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Temptation Coping Questionnaire-1 (Ask participants to imagine a social situation with drugs/alcohol present)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site 1 (N = 5)</th>
<th>Site 2 (N = 17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How Likely to Not Use? (to Abstain from Use?)</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 = Not Likely to Abstain from Use; 10 = Definitely would Not Use</td>
<td>8.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Hard to Cope?</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 = Not at all Difficult to Cope; 10 = Very Difficult to Cope</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Important to Not Use?</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 = Not at all Important to Not Use; 10 = Very Important to Not Use</td>
<td>7.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Temptation Coping Questionnaire

Part 2
- Uses same social situation as Part 1
- 11 items measuring drug refusal coping responses to situation
- Items scored on a scale from 1 to 7 with higher scores indicating higher expectation to use coping skill
- Total scores range from 11 to 77

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site 1 (N=5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 2 (N=17)</td>
<td></td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Self-Esteem Scale

- 10 items aimed at measuring self-esteem
- *On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.*
- *At times, I think I am no good at all.* (Reverse-coded)
- 4-point Likert scale with responses ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree
- Scores range from 10 to 40; higher scores = higher self-esteem

Self-esteem at Baseline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SES</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site 1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34.11</td>
<td>5.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>28.44</td>
<td>4.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of Preliminary Results: Highlights of Baseline Group Data

- Trauma exposure
  - Site 1 (N=9) had a total of 29 traumatic exposures (M= 3.22 events each)
  - Site 2 (N = 18) had a total of 102 Traumatic Exposures (M= 5.66 events each)
- Coping skills
  - Use of Approach Coping Skills – Average
  - Use of Avoidance Coping Skills – Above Average
- Substance Use
  - Site 2 higher rates than Site 1
  - Self-esteem
    - Site 1 higher than Site 2

Summary of Preliminary Results: Highlights of Pre-post Trends

- Coping Skills
  - Overall, more improvement in approach coping skills
  - Significant improvement in “Seeking Guidance” subscale
  - No other improvement trends noted

Concluding Remarks

- Large differences between 2 sites
  - Demographics
  - Treatment Fidelity
  - Trauma exposure
  - High prevalence of trauma
  - Lack of support for hypotheses
  - “Real-life” research issues
  - This pilot data confirms the need to address these issues!!!
THANK YOU!!!!

For more information about:
Triad Girls' Group
A copy of the manual
The evaluation project

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