

Exploring the Suitability, Feasibility, and Benefits of an Arts-Based Mindfulness Intervention for Adolescent Mothers

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Abstract

Adolescent mothers are more vulnerable to parenting stress due to their age and life circumstances. Mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) are increasingly being used to help improve parenting and prevent stress. This poster reflects the experiences of 9 adolescent mothers (18-22 years) who attended an 11-week arts-based mindfulness group program called HAP.



Arts-based mindfulness group methods are a suitable, feasible, and beneficial way to engage adolescent mothers & help them develop supportive relationships, positive coping strategies, and improved awareness of themselves and their children.



Introduction

Adolescent mothers experience higher levels of psychological distress and are vulnerable to isolation & decreased social support, which affect a mother's parenting. Given both their proven effectiveness with other vulnerable youth and parenting populations, MBIs have the potential to be helpful in improving the psychological well-being and parenting behaviors of adolescent mothers.

Methods

Qualitative data collection methods included group discussions, semi-structured private interviews, arts-based methods, and field notes.

Results

Inductive thematic analysis led to the development of themes relating to (a) connections with others, (b) new ways of coping, and (c) improved awareness

- HAP has the potential for improving the internal maternal capacities of adolescent mothers to cope with parenting stress.
- Mindfulness skills of acceptance, emotion regulation, self-awareness, and non-judgment can encourage the development of responsive parenting.
- HAP is a suitable way to engage adolescent mothers in programming, especially if it is offered in a way that addresses social inequalities & barriers to service.
- HAP is an enjoyable and effective way for adolescent mothers to express themselves and share experiences.

Me As a Tree Activity

Participants are asked to construct or draw themselves as trees. This activity encouraged self-awareness and provided an opportunity for the mothers to make connections with one another.



Bad Day Better Activity

Participants are asked to paint a bad day and then change it into a good day. This activity supported the identification of positive coping strategies & was helpful in facilitating difficult but meaningful conversations about their lives.

References

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