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Early intervention programs for anxiety in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Community Support Project (CAMcom)

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Introduction

Early intervention programs for anxiety in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Community Support Project (CAMcom) Wong SY, Tang CP, Chan WS

Objectives

This study evaluated the effectiveness of early intervention programs for anxiety using cognitive-behavioral therapy approach.

Methodology

For indicated preventive approach, a total of 8058 Hong Kong Chinese students aged 6 to 15 were screened for anxiety symptoms using parental report or children's self-report. After individual screening, 188 students were identified with mild to moderate anxiety symptoms and were assigned to 6-session school-based group interventions. For universal preventive approach, a total of 177 Hong Kong Chinese students and parents were recruited to join one-day anxiety management programs on a voluntary basis.

Result

Result of group interventions suggested that all groups showed significant reduction in anxiety symptoms at post intervention, with moderate to large effect size. Significant reduction in associated emotional and behavioral problems was also recorded respectively. Meanwhile, result of one-day anxiety management programs showed that both parents and students reported significant reduction in students' anxiety symptoms at post intervention with small effect size. All in all, the preliminary results supported the effectiveness of early intervention programs for anxiety in local community context.