

PILOT RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL OF A NOVEL WEB-BASED INTERVENTION TO PREVENT POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS IN CHILDREN FOLLOWING MEDICAL EVENTS

Authors:

Kassam-Adams N, Marsac ML, Kohser KL, Kenardy J, March S, Winston FK.

Publisher:

(2015) Journal of Paediatric Psychology



What was the study about?

This study sought to determine whether it would be feasible to deliver a novel web-based intervention to prevent or reduce Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms (PTSS) in school-age children in hospital following a traumatic medical event.

What did the study find?

The study showed that Copping Coach, the self-directed web-based intervention, which looks much like a computer game, was able to be implemented within the hospital setting and showed a positive effect on persistent PTSS after acute trauma.

Why is this interesting or important?

Up to 2/3rds of children are exposed to acute, potentially traumatic events before age 16. Interventions such as Copping Coach can help prevent children from developing persistent PTSS following a traumatic event. This is important because psychological impacts associated with traumatic events can affect future health outcomes, even after taking into account the severity of the injury. Web-based or mobile interventions such as this are cost-effective way of addressing these issues.

How was the study done?

This randomized controlled trial included children who were in hospital due to an acute medical event plus one of their parents. These children and parents were randomly assigned to receive the Copping Coach intervention. Both the intervention and control groups were assessed using validated surveys relating to PTSS, quality of life and coping at baseline and followed up after 6, 12 and 18 weeks.

What does this mean for practice?

Online web-based interventions show potential for use within hospital setting to reduce PTSS in children who have experienced a traumatic medical event. Online, self-directed interventions like Copping Coach provide a cost-effective means for reducing the future health and economic impacts arising from PTSS.

Link: <http://jpepsy.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2015/06/18/jpepsy.jsv057.abstract>