Project Title: Integrating Wellness into Trauma Treatment: A Holistic Interdisciplinary Approach for Foster Children
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This report summarizes the key grant activities and progress that occurred between May and September of 2014 as part of the initial report. Of note is that an updated summation covering between October 2014 and May 2015 has been added to this report for the project. The research team has entitled the project TRYAD (Trauma, Recovery, Youth Assessment & Development).

Summary of Activities:

- Consulted with professionals from the School of Nursing as well as the Educational, School and Counseling Psychology and Clinical Psychology department regarding the creation of an interdisciplinary team to carry out the objectives of the grant and implement services.
- Orientation provided to potential TRYAD team members prior to summer meetings to encourage participation and explain expectations of team members.
- Student members were recruited and the TRYAD team was created. The team is comprised of 19 individuals which includes: 1 Licensed Psychologist, 2 student supervisors pursuing doctoral degrees in counseling psychology, 1 office manager, 14 graduate students from interdisciplinary professions, and 1 undergraduate student.
- Project supervisor and coordinator met weekly (approximately 1 hour per week) to develop and design a summer field placement for members of the team, including design of a syllabus to guide full TRYAD team meetings. Expectations for team members and summer goals were created.
- Conducted summer weekly meetings (approximately 2 hours per week) with the TRYAD Team to delegate and follow-up on tasks related to research design and organization of the various project phases. Specifically, students led the decision-making process regarding: participant criteria, operationalized constructs, measure selection, recruitment activities, design of forms (e.g., consent, HIPAA, others), data collection methods, and overall project design modifications (i.e., minor adjustments to the design based other decisions made; see below).
- Project supervisor and coordinator ensured that each member of the TRYAD Team completed required trainings. Trainings included: Mandated Reporter Training; IRB Training; Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Children training; and various readings related to health, wellness and trauma with foster children;
- The IRB application submitted to campus IRB board and is pending approval so that data collection may begin. Feedback has been received (9/8/2014) and responses are being compiled for submission. The IRB Full Board will review the application on 9/24/14.
- Initial materials for the project have been purchased and disseminated as needed; including the installation of video recording software and research materials.
- Consultations and partnerships with local community agencies have been established; potential research participants and families have been identified via these sites (e.g., Great Circle, Children’s Division, and the Family Impact Center).
- Weekly check-ins with TRYAD Team members will resume for Fall 2014 semester
- Weekly supervision discussions involving Dr. Brooks and student supervisors began the Fall 2014 semester. These weekly meetings are formatted as an Independent Study course (Studies in Supervision) and provide an overview of supervision practices, particularly with children in the foster care system, as well as oversight of the supervision of the TRYAD clients once IRB approval is received. This format ensures high quality and fidelity with supervision of TRYAD clinicians throughout the project.
Consultation with experts in statistical analyses occurred to ensure quality results in project analysis are obtained. Plans are in place for ongoing discussions after IRB approval is received.

Summary of Activities (October 2014 – May 2015):

- Once IRB approval was received, project supervisor and coordinator initiated the recruitment phase of the study, which entailed contacting various community agencies (e.g., Great Circle, Children’s Division, Burrell Behavioral Health, MU Thompson Center) for potential child participants.
- Ongoing recruitment has since occurred as our project is expected to serve 20 child participants. We currently have recruited and are working with 8 child participants to date. 11 child participants were initially screened for our study; however, 3 did not meet criteria. Demographics of the child participants who met criteria include: 4 males, 3 females, & 1 pending participant (male) for a total of 8 participants.
- Four of our TRYAD team members will be continuing with the project through Fall 2015 to ensure all participants complete the study as well as ensure that our project continues to recruit and provide services for up to 20 participants.
- All 8 of our child participants are in various stages of the project and our first participant will complete the project in approximately two weeks. A thorough detailed account of each project phase is listed below under the section entitled Summary of Project Phases.
- Each participant has been given a $5 gift card at the end each session for maintaining the FitBit device. Along with compensation, each participant was given a FitBit Flex to track health variables as indicated in our study. They have been asked to not lose or break the devices. Each session has been recorded and reviewed (either live or at a later time) through the confidential recording system.
- Selected video sessions were reviewed by student supervisors and Dr. Brooks to ensure fidelity of the study. Written and verbal feedback was also provided to TRYAD clinicians to improve skill development when implementing specific therapeutic techniques. Video clips were also discussed during group supervision meetings to provide skill review for all TRYAD clinicians.
- A progress note was written after each session to document the activities that occurred between TRYAD clinician and child participant. Progress notes were then reviewed and signed by clinician, student supervisor, and Dr. Brooks. All notes are stored in each client’s confidential file.
- Weekly supervision has been provided to members of the TRYAD team who are providing direct services to child participants to ensure fidelity of the study as well as ensure client welfare. Weekly supervision consists of 1 hour didactic meetings with one or two student supervisors. Additionally, the student supervisors have participated in weekly “Supervision of Supervision” with the project supervisor and licensed psychologist (Dr. Connie Brooks) for 1.5 hours to process client issues and work through details of the study. All members are required to participate in group supervision held at the end of each week for 1.5 hours.
- Throughout group supervision, students have discussed client issues as well as participated in training and skill development as it relates to Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TFCBT) with children. Other relevant issues have been discussed that include children in foster care, parent/family systems, legal issues, and child abuse.
- Ongoing data collection is occurring as planned.
- Research proposals have been submitted to the 2015 American Psychological Association Convention, which have since been accepted for a poster presentation. The convention will take place August 6-9, 2015 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Preliminary results will be presented during this poster session.

Project Objectives:

Objectives for this project are the following:

- Creation and examination of a holistic treatment approach (wellness plus TFCBT) for traumatized children to increase positive client outcomes.
- Utilization of easily accessible technology devices (Fitbit™ software/devices, tablet/iPads, recording system for service oversight) to track data related to the study and for outcome analysis as well as fidelity purposes.
- Creation of a long-term partnership between ACC and the School of Nursing to bridge a training gap for both sets of students.
Summary of Project Phases:

Project Background:

This project team, referred to as TRYAD (Trauma Recovery for Youth through Assessment and Development), will begin with recruitment of foster children in the Missouri state foster care system considered in "alternative care". This indicates that the child's case is overseen by the state of Missouri and is assigned to a Children's Division (CD) case manager. Children in alternative care for this project can be in a variety of placements including guardianship with a family member, kinship care with a familiar adult, or foster care with a licensed foster parent; these adults will be referred to as "caregivers" throughout the project. Children appropriate for this project range from age 7 through 12 and exhibit symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Procedures for recruitment and inclusionary/exclusionary participant criteria are described below. It should be noted that TRYAD clinicians will meet on a weekly basis throughout the entirety of the project to receive training in the various project components and group supervision. Additionally, they will participate in weekly individual/dyad supervision with qualified graduate students overseen by Dr. Brooks, a licensed psychologist. Supervising clinicians receive weekly feedback on their supervision practices and oversight for review of service recordings. All clinicians are fully trained in all components of the project.

In addition to the project phases below, a pre-post survey is being finalized which gathers qualitative data on perceived treatment effectiveness (anticipated/achieved), critical feedback on the project components/implementation, and the value of the role of technology within the project. The survey will be administered via the Surface Pro 2 devices to stakeholders (e.g., TRYAD team members, referral sources, and caregivers). This information is intended to inform future related project.

*Project Phases have been underway as of October 2014.*

Phone Screen:

Once a child is referred for participation, a screening process begins. First, a brief phone screen occurs which helps the caregivers understand the project expectations and to ensure that the child meets criteria for inclusion in the project. Once a child is deemed appropriate for the project, and the caregiver wishes to participate, an appointment is scheduled for the initial evaluation.

Evaluation #1:

Throughout the project, child participants are evaluated at three data points (pre-mid-post project). At the initial evaluation, the clinician reviews the project expectations and obtains consent and assent for participation, including permission to record services for supervision purposes. Additionally at this time a release of information form is obtained so that TRYAD may obtain a Teacher Report Form on the participant at the three data points as well. A battery of assessments is administered to assess the participant’s cognitive abilities; behavioral, social, and emotional functioning in home and school settings; posttraumatic stress symptoms; and general background information. Following this appointment, the participant's data is reviewed to ensure that he/she does not meet exclusionary criteria. If the participant continues to meet project criteria, he/she is assigned a TRYAD project identification number and randomly assigned to either the control group or treatment group. For this project, the control group will receive wellness check-ins and trauma-focused cognitive-behavioral therapy (TF-CBT) while the treatment group will receive wellness intervention and TF-CBT.

Wellness Component (Fall 2014):

As indicated, participants are randomly assigned to either a wellness check-in group (WCI; control) or wellness intervention group (WI; treatment). All participants receive a FitBit device and are scheduled for weekly appointments for six weeks. At initial appointments, they are provided with instructions on how to use the FitBit and expectations for their specific group (WCI or WI) are discussed. Each week, participants in both groups
download data from their FitBit devices and complete the UCLA PTSD Index for Children via Qualtrics, to track posttraumatic stress symptoms. Additionally, participants receive a small gift card incentive for not losing their FitBit and for using it appropriately. On a weekly basis, participants in the wellness check-in group (WCI) simply track the aforementioned data; no other intervention is provided to participants in the WCI group. On a weekly basis, participants in the wellness intervention group (WI) meet for 30-50 minutes with a TRYAD clinician and receive psychoeducation on the wellness components (i.e., nutrition, sleep, exercise).

This is done via the following model:

- Week 1: discussion of current practices related to nutrition, sleep, and exercise
- Weeks 2, 3, 4: specific psychoeducation on nutrition, sleep, and exercise including strategies for improving wellness in these areas
- Weeks 5 & 6: review of strategies and focus on problematic, targeted areas

Evaluation #2:

Following completion of the wellness component, all participants will be given a second evaluation which includes the same components as Evaluation #1, with the exception of a repeated cognitive measure (as doing so would be invalid).

**Trauma-Focused Cognitive-Behavior Therapy (TF-CBT):**

Participants in both groups will receive the same intervention, TF-CBT, which is an evidence-based intervention for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and has been proven effective with children. TF-CBT is a 12-14 week intervention formatted as a conjoint child and parent psychotherapy approach for youth who are experiencing significant emotional and behavioral difficulties related to traumatic life events (National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN, 2013). TRYAD clinicians providing TF-CBT will receive weekly group and individual/dyad supervision, all overseen by a licensed psychologist. Each week participants will continue to download data from their FitBit devices and will complete the UCLA PTSD Index.

Evaluation #3:

Following completion of the TF-CBT components, all participants will be given their final evaluation which includes the same components as Evaluation #2.

**Analysis:**

Statistical analysis will be conducted with consultation from the Social Sciences Statistics Lab. We plan to utilize a repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) within-subject design in addition to exploratory factor analysis.

**Dissemination of Results:**

TRYAD clinicians will be presenting a research poster at the 2015 American Psychological Association Convention with preliminary results. The convention will take place August 6-9, 2015 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. No identifying information of any participants will be used in any dissemination products or future grant submissions. Additionally, the social service agency, Great Circle, is submitting a proposal for the Boone County Mental Health funds in May of 2015, which will include provision for this project as an ongoing service to children in foster care.