

NeuroRehab Evidence Database

Target Area: Challenging Behaviour

Neurological Group: Traumatic Brain Injury

Wade et al. (2006). Putting the pieces together: Preliminary efficacy of a family problem-solving intervention for children with traumatic brain injury. *J Head Trauma Rehabil*, 21(1): 57-67.

PEDro score - 5/10

Method / Results

Rehabilitation Program

Design

• Study Design: RCT.

 Population: n=32 children, with moderate to severe TBI (65.6% male, mean age = 10.83 years).

• Groups:

- 1. Intervention group: Family-centred problem-solving intervention (FPS).
- 2. Control group: Usual care (UC).
- Setting: Either at the clinic or at the family's home

Primary outcome measure/s:

- Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL).
- Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI).
- Conflict Behaviour Questionnaire (CBQ).

Secondary outcome measure/s:

Satisfaction survey.

Results: No significant group differences on CBQ or BSI. Parents reported a decline in anxiety and depression in the FPS group but a slight increase in the UC group. Reported increase in knowledge of TBI and behaviour strategies in FPS group (not measured in US group).

Aim: To give families strategies for problem-solving and behaviour management.

Materials: None specified.

Treatment Plan:

- **Duration:** 6 months.
- **Procedure:** 7 biweekly core sessions for 75-100 minutes. Total of 9-12 contact hours.
- **Content:** FPS involved:
 - Each session had two parts didactic (30-40 mins) and problem-solving (45-60 mins).
 - Families were taught a problem-solving framework based on D'Zurilla & Nezu (1999). There are five steps – AIM, BRAINSTORM, CHOOSE, DO IT and EVALUATE (ABCDE).
 - Families started using these strategies in session 2 and continued throughout the program with progressively more severe problems.
 - Families were also taught behaviour management strategies (positive everyday routines). These were aimed at modifying and structuring the family environment to help with goal implementation.
 - Sessions also covered communication skills, coping abilities and future planning.
 - During session 6 families were assessed to see whether they needed additional individual sessions; with the focus of these sessions being specific areas of burden identified. This occurred in 50% of families.