

Building an Inclusive and Caring Society :

Effectiveness of Play Therapy for Children with Special Educational Needs

建構關愛共融社會：遊戲治療對特殊教育需要兒童的成效研究

背景

近年特殊教育需要學生人數持續增加，為提供精神支援並建構一個關愛共融的社會，yNOTplay 遊戲治療社企與聖方濟各大學羅耀增博士攜手合作進行遊戲治療對特殊教育需要兒童的成效研究。遊戲治療計劃（下稱計劃）獲得家庭薈慈善基金及樂信兒童醫療及教育基金會的贊助。此計劃採用了兒童為本遊戲治療（Child-Centered Play Therapy）為基礎，由註冊遊戲治療師督導余寶貞女士帶領 yNOTplay 團隊治療師進行遊戲治療介入。治療師在個別治療課內運用 EMOPlay[®] Therapy 工具，協助兒童改善情緒及行為問題。在完成個別遊戲治療後，兒童參與針對特殊教育需要的 AutPlay[®] Therapy 社交小組或 LEGO[®] Brick Based Therapy 砌磚社交小組，以促進正面的社交溝通能力。

研究項目詳情

此研究項目的第一階段，共有 36 位 3 至 12 歲面對情緒、社交及/或行為問題的基層兒童，由註冊社工轉介參與計劃。首先，計劃安排 20 節遊戲治療師與兒童的個別遊戲治療（每節 60 分鐘）；及 5 節親子遊戲教育課（每節 60 分鐘），由遊戲治療師與家長面談。在進行個別遊戲治療及親子遊戲教育時，治療師亦會加入 EMOPlay[®] Therapy 工具協助兒童認識、辨識及表達情緒。隨後，兒童參與 32 節社交小組（每節長達 90 分鐘），內容包括 AutPlay[®] Therapy 及 LEGO[®] Brick Based Therapy，在治療師輔助下提升與同輩的社交技巧，建立良好關係並學習與人相處。研究結果顯示，完成個別治療後兒童的行為問題由 24.59（5.03）至治療後的 21.41（5.17）及小組治療由 21.64（7.33）至治療後 19.21（7.50），達到統計學上的顯著性差異。在社交能力、情緒及行為上，在完成治療之後都有改善，在數字上達到統計學上的顯著性差異。

建議

是次研究展示了遊戲治療對特殊教育需要兒童的情緒、行為及社交能力都有顯著成效，證明此計劃所採用的個別及小組治療方案對於改善特殊教育需要兒童的狀況具有積極的影響力。學校、社區和教育機構可以考慮引進遊戲治療為一種有效的輔助治療方法，提供予需要情緒支援和提升社交能力的學生。同時，家長的參與度在治療過程中極為重要，既給予兒童支持和關愛，又能夠促進家庭和諧。此外，社交小組活動能夠幫助兒童建立積極的社交互動技巧和關係。計劃中提及的註冊遊戲治療師及當中引入的情緒治療工具，於實施遊戲治療方面，發揮重要作用。為推廣遊戲治療的應用，鼓勵業界培訓更多相關的專業人員，確保治療的質量和效果。

媒體查詢

有關此項研究的查詢，可與聖方濟各大學副教授暨研究事務處總監羅耀增博士聯絡（電郵：alow@sfu.edu.hk 電話：3653 6695）。有關遊戲治療計劃的查詢，可與 yNOTplay 遊戲治療社企註冊遊戲治療師督導余寶貞女士聯絡（電郵：ynotplayhk@gmail.com 電話：9790 2370）。

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Background

In recent years, the number of students with special educational needs has been continuously rising. To provide emotional support and build a caring and inclusive society, yNOTplay Play Therapy Social Enterprise has collaborated with Dr. LOW Yiu Tsang at Saint Francis University to conduct research on the effectiveness of play therapy for children with special educational needs. The play therapy program ("the program"), sponsored by the Family Compass Charitable Foundation and Advance Children Medical And Education Foundation Limited, is underpinned by Child-Centered Play Therapy. Ms. Canace Yee Po Ching, Registered Play Therapist Supervisor supervised a team of professional play therapists to conduct the program. The play therapists utilize the EMOplay[®] Therapy tools during individual play therapy sessions to specifically target and improve emotional and behavioral issues among children. Following individual play therapy, children participate in AutPlay[®] Therapy and LEGO[®] Brick Based Therapy social groups tailored for special educational needs to enhance positive social communication skills.

Research Project Details

In the first phase of this research project, 36 children aged between 3 and 12 with emotional, social, and/or behavioral issues from low-income families were referred by registered social workers. At the first stage, children participated in 20 sessions of individual play therapy (60 minutes per session); and 5 sessions of child-parent play education (60 minutes per session) were specially arranged between parents and the play therapists. The play therapists also incorporated the EMOplay[®] Therapy tools in these sessions to assist children in understanding, identifying, and expressing emotions. Then, the children progressed to the next stage and participated in 32 sessions of social group (up to 90 minutes per session), which included AutPlay[®] Therapy and LEGO[®] Brick Based Therapy. The play therapists facilitated the children in improving their social skills with peers, building good relationships, and interacting with others. The research results showed that the total difficulties of children in behavioral improved statistically significantly from a score of 24.59 (5.03) to 21.41 (5.17) after individual play therapy and from 21.64 (7.33) to 19.21 (7.50) after group play therapy. Social skills, emotions and behavior improvements were also observed after completing therapy with statistically significant differences.

Recommendations

This research demonstrates that play therapy has significant effects in improving emotional, behavioral, and social abilities of children with special educational needs, proving that the individual and group play therapy programs adopted by this project have a positive impact on these children. Schools, communities, and educational institutions may consider introducing play therapy as an effective complementary treatment method for students who need emotional and enhanced social skills support. Parental involvement is essential during therapy, providing support and care for the children and promoting family harmony. Also, social group activities can help children develop positive social interaction skills and relationships. The registered play therapists mentioned in the program and the emotional therapy tools introduced play an important role in implementing play therapy. To promote the application of play therapy, it is encouraged to train more professionals in this field to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the therapy.

Media Inquiries

For inquiries about this research, please contact Dr. LOW Yiu Tsang Andrew, Associate Professor cum Director of Research Office at Saint Francis University (email: alow@sfu.edu.hk, phone no. : 3653 6695). For inquiries about the play therapy program, please contact Ms. Canace Yee Po Ching, Registered Play Therapist Supervisor at yNOTplay Play Therapy Social Enterprise (email: ynotplayhk@gmail.com, phone no. : 9790 2370).