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Robert R. Selles, Laura Belschner, Juliana
Negreiros, Sarah Lin, David Schuberth, Katherine
McKenney, Noel Gregorowski, Annie Simpson,
Andrea Bliss, S. Evelyn Stewart



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Group Family-Based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Pediatric Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: Global Outcomes and Predictors of Improvement

Robert R. Selles, PhD^{1,2}, Laura Belschner, MS^{1,2}, Juliana Negreiros, PhD^{1,2}, Sarah Lin, MS^{1,2}, David Schuberth, MA^{1,3}, Katherine McKenney, PhD^{1,2}, Noel Gregorowski, MSW^{1,2}, Annie Simpson, PhD^{1,2}, Andrea Bliss, PhD⁴, and S. Evelyn Stewart, MD^{1,2}

¹ BC Children's Hospital, Vancouver, BC

² University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC

³ Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC

⁴ Alberta Children's Hospital, Calgary, AB

Corresponding Author: Robert R. Selles, Ph.D.

BC Children's Hospital Research Institute

A3 – 938 West 28th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4H4

Telephone: 604-875-4027

E-mail: rselles@cfri.edu

ORCID: 0000-0002-4061-6147

Abstract

This open, uncontrolled study examined the efficacy of a group family-based cognitive behavioral therapy (GF-CBT) protocol in treating pediatric obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and explored predictors of symptom improvement. Eighty-five OCD-affected youth aged 8-18 years ($M = 13.9$ years, $SD = 2.49$; 46% male) and their parent(s) participated in a weekly, 12-session GF-CBT program. Data from multiple perspectives were gathered at the beginning and end of treatment, as well as at one-month follow-up. A broad range of assessment measures were utilized to capture clinically-relevant domains and a number of potential predictor variables were explored. Paired t -tests indicated that treatment was associated with significant reductions in clinician- and parent-rated OCD severity ($d = 1.47, 1.32$), youth and parent-rated functional impairment ($d = 0.87, 0.67$), coercive/disruptive behaviors ($d = 0.75$), and family accommodation ($d = 1.02$), as well as improvements in youth-, mother-, and father-rated family functioning ($d = 1.05, 0.50, 0.88$). Paired t -tests also indicated that youth remained improved at one-month follow-up. Step-wise regression identified greater homework success as a significant predictor of symptom improvement. This study provides evidence that GF-CBT significantly improves a wide range of domains for youth/families that extends beyond OCD symptom severity and supports homework as a core treatment component.

Keywords: Treatment; Open Trial; Parent Involvement; Homework; Coercive/Disruptive Behaviors; Family Accommodation; Family Functioning

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