Attachment Intervention with Parents and Infants in Early Substance Abuse Recovery

Rosana M. Aguilar
University of San Francisco

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

• Child abuse and neglect is major social problem
• Improving the relationship between infant(s) and their parent(s) is of great importance and can reduce child maltreatment
• Infants of parents with substance use/abuse problems have a higher rate of entry to the foster care system compare to infants of non-abusing parents
• Substance dependent parents have trouble forming healthy attachment with their infants
• Infant massage interventions have been shown to improve bonds between parent(s) and their infant(s), increase parenting skills, and decrease parental stress and depressive moods
• The current study evaluates the impact of a 10-week infant massage intervention program with substance dependent parent(s) and their infant(s)

METHOD

Parent Participants (N = 17)
• 88.2% female
• 64.7% single
• Mean age = 33.7 years; SD = 5.865
• 41.2% completed high school
• 100% were unemployed

Infant Participants (N = 17)
• 64.7% female
• Mean age = 3.45 months; SD = 2.735
• 59.9% born with positive toxicology screen

Procedure
• Staff of the treatment facility identified the residents who registered for the intervention
• Parents who agreed to participate in the study read and signed Informed Consent Forms
• Interviews were conducted before and after the infant massage intervention at a residential substance abuse treatment facility

Measures
• Semi-structured demographic and program evaluation survey
• The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI)
• The Parenting Stress Index (PSI)
• The Knowledge of Infant Development Questionnaire (KIDI)

RESULTS

Standardized Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-test Scores</th>
<th>Post-test Scores</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BDI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PSI Parent-Child Emotional Moran</td>
<td>21.82</td>
<td>16.05</td>
<td>5.662</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSI Parental Stress</td>
<td>21.29</td>
<td>17.29</td>
<td>4.650</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSI Depression</td>
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<td>17.15</td>
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<td>PSI Total</td>
<td>64.72</td>
<td>50.72</td>
<td>27.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>KIDI-Total</td>
<td>118.00</td>
<td>88.00</td>
<td>21.8</td>
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<td>KIDI-Emotional</td>
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<td>KIDI-Anger</td>
<td>40.20</td>
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<td>KIDI-Psych</td>
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<td>10.40</td>
<td>5.662</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSI Mean Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phrasing of questions

Parent-Child Emotional Moran
• How many times in the past month have you felt sad?
• How many times in the past month have you felt angry?
• How many times in the past month have you felt confused and frustrated?

Parental Stress
• How many times in the past month have you felt eminently
too many too count
• How many times in the past month have you felt too much
• How many times in the past month have you felt too hard

Depression
• How many times in the past month have you felt too sad
• How many times in the past month have you felt too hard

Total Score
• How many times in the past month have you felt too sad

KIDI Mean Score

88.2% (n = 15)
53.0% (n = 9)
23.5% (n = 4)
0
0
0

What is interesting about infant massage?

• How often did you enjoy the smell?
• How often did you enjoy the feel?
• How often did you enjoy the touch?
• How often did you enjoy the total?

How does it make you feel you are your child’s best?

• How often did you enjoy the smile?
• How often did you enjoy the touch?
• How often did you enjoy the total?
• How often did you enjoy the total?

What Parents Learned From the Group

• Professional understood that any baby is communicating
• Remember that there are steps to helping them to help us calming them
• Learned that the importance of taking care in not to try communicating
• Viewed our baby and who to interact with my baby without
• Needed to understand the baby, read cues, and increase communication
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• Helped in working in a new baby by accepting back
• Helped to mange and be patient
• Help to know more about baby
• Help to know more about baby
• Help to know more about baby

DISCUSSION

• Though not statistically significant, results demonstrate decreased parent depression and increased knowledge of child development following participation in an infant massage program
• Results suggest lower parental stress following the intervention, in particular in the dysfunctional interactions between parent and child
• After completing the intervention, parents reported having more “happy,” less “frustrating/confused,” and less “sad” moments with their infant each day
• Parents indicated that they learned about infant development and how to understand and soothe their infants during the intervention
• Participants indicated that the intervention was very helpful in creating a stronger bond with their infants
• The current study is limited by small sample size, lack of comparison group, and pre-test post-test sensitization
• Future research should include more participants, a comparison group, and measures to directly assess infant participants

CONTACT

Foster Care Research Group
Department of Psychology
(415) 422-5321
fcerg@usfca.edu