Healthy Moms Healthy Kids: Reducing Maternal Depression for Better Outcomes in Head Start Children

Child Care and Early Education Policy Research Consortium
Washington, D. C. April 17, 2019
The HMHK Program: Preliminary Results

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- **Intervention group**
  - IPT Group (n=49)
  - Mothers with depression and their children

- **Control group**
  - TAU (n=70)
  - Mothers with depression and their children

- **Comparison group**
  - Mothers with no depression and their children (n=89)
Study Demographics

- 208 Head Start children and their mothers
- Mothers: Mean age was 32.5 (SD=6.8)
- Children:
  - Mean age was 4.2 (SD=0.6)
  - 52.7% were male
Maternal Outcome Variables

- Depression
- Parenting Stress
- Social Support
- Executive Functioning
- Parenting Attitudes and Behaviors
- Employment
- Income
- Healthy Relationships
- Physical Health
Parent-Child Relationship Outcome Variables

- Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale (KIPS)
Child Outcome Variables

- School Readiness Skills
- Executive Functioning
- Behavior Problems:
  - Parent report
  - Teacher report
Baseline Results: Mothers

Maternal Depression

- Parental Stress
- Social Support
- Applied Cognition and Impulsivity
- Trauma
- Parenting Hostility
Baseline Results: Children

Maternal Depression

- YES
  - Child Behavior

- NO
  - Child Executive Functioning

- NO
  - School Functioning
## Group Differences at Baseline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maternal depression</td>
<td>20.3 (11.6)</td>
<td>19.2 (11.4)</td>
<td>6.2 (7.3)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting Stress</td>
<td>84.7 (18.3)</td>
<td>80 (21.6)</td>
<td>64.4 (19)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Support</td>
<td>32.6 (9)</td>
<td>32.5 (10.2)</td>
<td>41.1 (7.8)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applied Cognition</td>
<td>25.6 (5.3)</td>
<td>24.3 (4.8)</td>
<td>28.3 (3.9)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impulsivity</td>
<td>2.4 (0.3)</td>
<td>2.4 (0.3)</td>
<td>2.2 (0.3)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parental Control</td>
<td>35 (8.5)</td>
<td>35.3 (9.7)</td>
<td>38.8 (7.9)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parental Hostility</td>
<td>8.7 (5.4)</td>
<td>9.7 (7)</td>
<td>6.4 (5.1)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verbal IPV</td>
<td>7.8 (7.6)</td>
<td>7.5 (7.2)</td>
<td>3 (4)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic Pressure</td>
<td>22 (45.83)</td>
<td>29 (41.43)</td>
<td>21 (23.86)*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Treatment Effects: Maternal Depression (CES-D)
Treatment Effects:
Maternal Parenting Stress (PSI)
Treatment Results: Children

Maternal Depression

YES

Child Behavior

NO

Child Executive Functioning

NO

School Functioning
Treatment Effects:
Child Behavior Problems

[Graph showing trends over time for Treatment, Control, and Comparison groups]
Null effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maternal Social Support</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parenting Attitudes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maternal Executive Functioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Impulsivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment (Total Hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic Strain</td>
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</table>
Overview of Findings

• Group IPT significantly reduced *maternal depression* compared to the control group

• Group IPT reduced overall *parenting stress*, including the difficult child subscale, but it’s unclear whether this led to changes in parenting

• **Next steps:**
  • Parenting behaviors (KIPS)
  • Examine lagged effects
Preliminary Qualitative Results
Qualitative Data Collection

**Implementation Study**
Gathering qualitative data from:
- IPT-G participants
- Mothers who declined IPT-G
- Agency staff

**IPT Group Participants**
13 semi-structured individual interviews have been conducted with IPT group participants
"[The group] helped me a great deal...For instance, I wanted to attend school and wanted to study, and I was studying ESL but I had two children, very close together. I had to stop but I've gone back to school and I'm very close to go into the field that I want to study. The [group] has helped me a lot...it was because of that that I made the decision go back to school."
“In group therapy, you listen to others’ problems and they’ve probably overcome something which you may be currently going through. I believe this helps you more than attending one-on-one therapy...If someone has gone through an experience which you may be going through, and they’re doing fine, even if they have another problem...you hang on to their experience.”
“I started having more patience with my kids...I just was so depressed I wanted to forget about everything and everyone...[The group] helped me learn and to see that they're going through things too and it's hard for them too... So it helped me with the relationship with them. I got therapy not just for myself but also for them.”

Theme: Improving the Parent-Child Relationship
Where We Go From Here

IPT-G seems effective but barriers to entry exist

Not as effective in making change for children

Need to adapt model

Structural changes to enhance appeal

Add components to address parenting

Allow rolling admission to group

Consider moving to Early Head Start as well