

New CBT resource shows promise in reducing children's dental anxiety

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The International and American Associations for Dental Research (IADR/AADR) have published an article titled "Development and Testing of a Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Resource for Children's Dental Anxiety" in the OnlineFirst portion of *JDR Clinical & Translational Research*. In this study, Jenny Porritt, Department of Psychology, Sociology, and Politics, Sheffield Hallam University, UK, et al describe the development of a guided self-help cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) resource for the management of children's dental anxiety and provide preliminary evidence for the feasibility and acceptability of this approach with children aged between nine and 16 years.

CBT is an evidence-based treatment for dental anxiety; however, access to therapy is limited. This study employed a mixed methods design where within phase one, a qualitative "person-based" approach informed the [development](#) of the self-help CBT resource. Guidelines for the development and evaluation of complex interventions were also used. Within phase two, children aged between nine and 16 years who had elevated self-reported dental anxiety and were attending a community dental service or dental hospital were invited to use the CBT resource. Children completed questionnaires, which assessed their dental anxiety and health-related quality of life prior to and following their use of the resource. Recruitment and completion rates were also recorded.

Acceptability of the CBT resource was explored using interviews and focus groups with children, parents/caregivers and dental professionals. A total of 85 children were invited to participate in the feasibility study

and trial the CBT resource. The recruitment rate (proportion of children invited to take part in the study who agreed to participate) and completion rate (proportion of children who agreed to participate who completed the study) was 66 percent and 86 percent, respectively. A total of 48 patients completed the study.

At the conclusion of the study, the authors ascertained that there was a significant reduction in dental anxiety and an increase in health-related quality of life following the use of the guided self-help [cognitive behavioral therapy](#) resource. The results of this study will inform the design of a definitive trial to examine the treatment and cost-effectiveness of the resource for the reduction of children's [dental anxiety](#).

"Having launched this year, JDR Clinical & Translational Research provides a unique opportunity for oral health research leaders to publish their research and effectively translate their findings to those who need the information to deliver evidence-based prevention and care. On behalf of the International Association for Dental Research, I am pleased that the authors of this study contributed their research to this publication," said IADR President Jukka Meurman.

Provided by International & American Associations for Dental Research

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