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Status: Approved by the Campbell Collaboration Steering Group in March 2008. Future changes to this paper will first be approved by the Campbell Collaboration Users Group and then submitted to the steering group for approval.

Policy guiding the production of Campbell Collaboration User Abstracts

This policy paper lists the formal requirements that a Campbell Collaboration User Abstract must fulfil in order to be recognized as such. It is the responsibility of C2UG to develop a more detailed guideline for writing a C2 User Abstract based on the frame set up in this paper.

There are two appendixes to this paper: Appendix 1 is an example of a non-contextualized Campbell User Abstract. Appendix 2 is an example of a contextualized Campbell User Abstract. Both abstracts have been written by Nordic Campbell Centre.

Introduction

A Campbell Collaboration User Abstract is an official Campbell product in itself. It is based on a Campbell Review, approved by the lead reviewer, and aimed at presenting the key findings of the review in a language adopted for non-researchers in order to facilitate evidence-based decisions in everyday judicial, social, welfare or educational practice.

Procedure

There are basically only two substantive and indispensable requirements when producing a Campbell Collaboration User Abstract:

- 1) All content in the User Abstract must have direct support in the review in question
- 2) The User Abstract must be approved by the lead reviewer

But embedding in local context is also essential for reaching users. Local context makes research results relevant for everyday use. However, local problems, circumstances and issues usually vary from country to country. Therefore, the first steps in the “from review to impact”-translation is divided into: 1) production of the Campbell Collaboration User Abstract in English, and 2) contextualisation and dissemination. Step 1) is a core Campbell activity performed only by members of the Campbell Collaboration Users Group. Step 2) is an optional (but strongly encouraged) reach-out activity employed by members and affiliates of the Campbell Collaboration Users Group or other interested entities

To ease this second step, these organisations are encouraged to translate the abstract into their own language, add comments from a local practitioner and add local facts on the problem and intervention in question. This local information can for instance be added in separate boxes as done by the Nordic Campbell Centre (see *appendix 2* pp. 3-4).

Acknowledgements and references

Non-contextualized abstracts

This is the standard Campbell Collaboration User Abstract. Consequently, this is strictly regulated.

Campbell Reviews are in essence standing on the shoulders of a long line of primary studies. These studies are acknowledged through standardized references. Similarly, Campbell Collaboration User Abstracts should have a clearly stated reference to the relevant review.

Furthermore, they should feature the Campbell Collaboration logo following the regular guidelines for other Campbell Collaboration products. Finally, the independent piece of dissemination work of the Campbell Collaboration Users Group member writing the abstract should be acknowledged. An example of how this is done can be seen in *appendix 1*.

For co-registered reviews reference should also be made to Cochrane. Throughout the User Abstract the review should be referred to as a “Campbell/Cochrane Review” and the line “The review is also published in Cochrane Library” should follow the C2-RIPE reference to the review.

The non-contextualized abstracts should be available for contextualization, translation and dissemination on the C2 website.

Contextualized abstracts

This is the next step in the knowledge translation chain. These types of abstracts (and other dissemination products) are of course completely under the control of the organisation that chooses to produce them.¹ Nevertheless, the Campbell Collaboration Users Group would very much like to support and encourage the production of these types of abstracts. For this reason the group offers guidance on how these abstracts could be done. An example can be seen in *appendix 2*.

¹ However, The Campbell Collaboration does expect the organisation to acknowledge the underlying review according to international standards on how to reference research.



This article is based on the Campbell Review:

Wilson SJ & Lipsey MW: *The Effects of School-based Social Information Processing Interventions on Aggressive Behaviour, Part I: Universal Programmes & Part II: Selected/Indicated Pull-out Programmes*. The Campbell Collaboration 2006

This article is written by the Nordic Campbell Centre. The article has been approved by the authors of the review.

Education programmes may reduce bullying and conflicts among children

School-based education programmes aimed at children's ability to interpret social situations may reduce aggressive and disruptive behaviour among children. These are the findings of a systematic Campbell review of the best international research findings in the field.

Trouble in the playground

Fighting, arguments and bullying among school children is a widespread problem. Attempts are often made to counter these social problems by introducing school-based education programmes, which, in one way or another, aim to remedy violent and disruptive behaviour.

This systematic review examines one such type of education programme: the type that seeks to strengthen cognitive skills and thought patterns among children to improve their ability to interpret and respond to cues from the world around them (so-called *Social Information Processing Interventions*). The researchers examine two groups of education programmes: those aimed at entire classes and those aimed at selected children who either have behavioural problems or are at risk of developing them.

Positive effect

The researchers' conclusion is clear: children who participate in this type of education programme exhibit less aggressive and disruptive behaviour than children who do not participate. The positive effect is achieved in both groups in the study, albeit with some variation in the findings:

As regards programmes for entire classes, the research indicates that short, intensive interventions – e.g. 8-16 weeks of 2-5 hours a week – are more effective than extended year-long programmes. Extended programmes may have a tendency to become routine and thus have less impact on the students.

Where the education programmes target children in special education classes, the effect is lesser than in ordinary classes. Pupils in special classes may be prone to many other problems which could reduce the impact of this type of education.

Conversely, the effect achieved appears to be especially large where the intervention is delivered outside of the regular classroom to children who are at risk for developing later behavioural problems. The researchers maintain that this may be due to the fact that children in the at-risk group have greater change potential.

Focus on thought patterns rather than on behaviour

The education programmes in the research review sort under the general concept of *Social Information Processing Interventions*. This concept embodies a number of different interventions, all of which seek to train children to encode and interpret information and cues in social interaction, and to identify an appropriate response.

Through structured exercises and activities, the education programmes are designed to build the children's capacity in respect of one or more of the following six stages:

1. Encoding of own and others' cues
2. Interpretation of cues
3. Clarifying a goal
4. Identifying possible responses for achieving the goal
5. Choosing a response
6. Behavioural response enactment

The idea is that negative social behaviour, aggression for instance, may be construed as symptomatic of cognitive deficits at one or more of the above stages. The education programmes are designed to remedy these cognitive deficits.

Thus, the education focuses on building the children's cognitive skills and thought patterns rather than on directly modifying their behaviour. In this way, these education programmes are distinct from the many different types of behaviour-focused interventions currently practised. By directing attention at thought patterns instead of at behaviour, the aim is to strengthen the children's general social skills.

Facts about the systematic review

All education programmes in the review were conducted during normal school hours. The research review falls into two parts. One part, which examines ordinary classes, is based on 73 individual studies, while the other part, which looks at selected children with behavioural problems or at risk of developing them, is based on 47 studies.

Programmes in the first part are delivered to essentially equal numbers of girls and boys aged 4-16. In the second part, the programme participants are primarily boys aged 6 to 16. This difference may be seen as an indication that boys generally make up the majority of pupils exhibiting at-risk or aggressive behaviour. The programmes in the second part also include more children from different ethnic backgrounds than the first part of the research review. Around half of the pupils are from lower socio-economic background families.

For both parts, the majority of the studies were conducted in the USA, while studies from Australia, Canada, Italy, Finland, Israel and India were also included.

Other research in the area

Internationally, a number of social skills studies already exist. However, the majority of these studies address social skills in a more general sense and do not have the specific focus on education programmes adopted by the present research review.

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See also www.nc2.net

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES MAY REDUCE BULLYING AND CONFLICTS AMONG CHILDREN

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TROUBLE IN THE PLAYGROUND

Fighting, arguments and bullying among school children is a widespread problem. Attempts are often made to counter these social problems by introducing school-based education programmes, which, in one way or another, aim to remedy violent and disruptive behaviour.

This systematic review examines one such type of education programme: the type that seeks to strengthen cognitive skills and thought patterns among children to improve their ability to interpret and respond to cues from the world around them (so-called *Social Information Processing Interventions*). The researchers examine two groups of education programmes: those aimed at entire classes and those aimed at selected children who either have behavioural problems or are at risk of developing them.

POSITIVE EFFECT

The researchers' conclusion is clear: children who participate in this type of education programme exhibit less aggressive and disruptive behaviour than children who do not participate. The positive effect is achieved in both groups in the study, albeit with some variation in the findings:

As regards programmes for entire classes, the research indicates that short, intensive interventions – e.g. 8-16 weeks of 2-5 hours a week – are more effective than extended year-long programmes. Extended programmes may have a tendency to become routine and thus have less impact on the students.

Where the education programmes target children in special education classes, the effect is lesser than in ordinary classes. Pupils in special classes may be prone to many other problems which could reduce the impact of this type of education.

Conversely, the effect achieved appears to be especially large where the intervention is delivered outside of the regular classroom to children who are at risk for developing later behavioural

problems. The researchers maintain that this may be due to the fact that children in the at-risk group have greater change potential.

FOCUS ON THOUGHT PATTERNS RATHER THAN ON BEHAVIOUR

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OTHER RESEARCH IN THE AREA

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THE REVIEW RESULTS AND DANISH PRACTICE

By Sidsel Stenbak, anti-bullying-consultant

The majority of Danish schools have experience with programmes and interventions against bullying. The described education programmes can contribute to this effort in relation to the general work with the social dynamic in classes – but only in part.

In my opinion the results of the review are not surprising because the children have been with adults who are fundamentally interested in children's lives and their social life. It is my experience that there is an observable effect when students experience that adults are interested in and take their thoughts, feelings, opinions and experiences seriously. When the children experience that they are seen and acknowledged.

It is likely that this challenge is even larger in special education classes where the children are already stigmatized and may have massive negative self-image issues. This may be the reason why the effect of the interventions is smaller in special education classes. It is my experience that adults have to pave the way to bring excluded children back into the group. The excluded child does not have possibility to do this alone due to its position of being excluded in the first place.

It is vital for a child to feel that they are "one of the group", that they belong to a community of children. In this respect the class environment is a crucial social arena in the cultural community the child is growing up in. The group represents necessary developmental potentials and, in contrast, exclusion from the group is associated with deep existential fears.

If aggression and exclusion are the norm and reflected in language use, it will become a natural part of the children's mindset and behaviour. Children decode their surroundings based on their experiences and on the community of interpretation they are placed in by the adult world.

Therefore it is necessary when working with bullying to relate to the specific teaching environment: How are teacher/student-relations; how are student/student-relations? Who has the right to define the "right way" to behave in a specific situation? If the bully says: "But, it was just a joke. You need to be able to take a joke!" then who is being belittled and considered to be wrong?

All efforts reducing bullying are welcomed in the educational world. The complexity of bullying still needs to be unravelled and this area is in many ways characterized by sporadic efforts. We are on the verge of transition in this area as evaluations and effect studies are becoming common knowledge. We – and the children – are still waiting for that day.

The content of this box is solely the opinion of Sidsel Stenbak.

BULLYING AND CONFLICTS IN DENMARK

In Denmark when it comes to social problems between children, bullying is the top issue on the agenda.

According to a survey by The Danish Children's Council and The National Danish Centre for Educational Environment (DCUM) on bullying and conflicts among 9th grade students (aged 13-14) 87 % of the students are involved in conflicts at least once a month. App. 20 % are involved in conflicts at least twice a week.

The majority of conflicts are solved in a peaceful manner, but app. 14 % involve violence and app. 12 % use threats to solve conflicts.

Conflicts arise for many reasons; however the students find that misunderstandings are the primary cause.

Source: The Danish Children's Council & DCUM: "Mobning og konflikt 2006"

DCUM has collected data based on electronic questionnaires answered by more than 38.000 students from 4th to 10th grade (aged 8-15) in 428 Danish schools:

- 23 % reply that in their opinion foul language is always or often used in the classroom.
- 18 % state that they have been bullied by one or more of their classmates within the last two months
- 17 % state that they during the last two months have participated in bullying other students

Source: DCUM

Read more

www.amoktrix.dk Anti-bullying-consultants

www.brd.dk The Danish Children's Council

www.dcum.dk – DCUM

www.brugkonflikten.dk – DCUM campaign on conflicts in school

www.dkr.dk – National Crime Prevention Council