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Integrating positive behavior support and emotional learning programs in children with special educational needs at risk for externalizing and internalizing problems: evaluating TIME-IN

Submission date
17/03/2017

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
28/03/2017

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
17/05/2021

Condition category
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[ ] Prospectively registered
[X] Protocol
[ ] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[ ] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
Special education students with learning disabilities are known to be at risk for developing emotional and behavioural problems. This can threaten students' school readiness and complicate teaching, requiring punishment which may lead to dropping out of school. In contrast, emotional problems are often underestimated and are likely to remain unaddressed. Unfortunately, solely using punishment strategies to deal with problem behaviour seems to be ineffective and only makes the problems worse. Previous research shows that programmes such as the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) can be effective at preventing and addressing external problems (i.e. behavioural issues). However, SWPBS lacks clear evidence-based interventions for dealing with negative emotions and internalizing problems (i.e. emotional problems). Therefore, the TIME-IN programme was developed as a school-wide healthcare policy, which extends SWPBS by also adding emotional support systems such as Emotion Regulation Training (ERT). TIME-IN aims to improve the inclusion of special education students with learning disabilities in the classroom by teaching adaptive emotion regulation strategies and by reducing externalised and internalised problems, which is also a key priority for Flemish government as part of recent educational reformation. The aim of this study is to test the effectiveness of the TIME-IN programme on children’s emotion regulation, behaviour and emotional well-being in special education children.

Who can participate?
Children aged 8-12 with learning disabilities, their parents and their special education teachers.

What does the study involve?
Participating schools are allocated to either receiving the TIME-IN programme or to continue as normal. Schools receive the programme if they display that they are willing and ready to implement it. TIME-IN is supervised by a school psychologist and follows a three level approach

using proactive (creating or controlling a situation), preventive (preventing a situation) and curative (curing a situation) programmes. TIME-IN works to create a school wide plan to create a safe school environment and to determine student's special educational needs. The programme also includes training on classroom management, promoting emotional awareness, coaching emotional regulating strategies (i.e. problem-solving) and repairing conflicts between teachers and children. Schools who do not receive the TIME-IN programme continue with their normal care. Emotional regulation strategies and school readiness of students are measured before and after the programme using questionnaires for teachers, students and their parents.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
A possible benefit with participating is that the programme may improve children's school readiness and prevent school drop-out. There are no notable risks with participating.

Where is the study run from?
MPI 't Craeneveld Oudenaarde (Belgium)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
September 2015 to June 2015

Who is funding the study?
1. Educational Government (Belgium)
2. Special Research Fund Ghent University (BOF) University of Ghent (Belgium)

Who is the main contact?
Mr Henk Weymeis
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Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

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Protocol serial number

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Study information

Scientific Title
Extending School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) with emotional support systems: a non-randomized study testing the effectiveness of a school-wide health care policy TIME-IN in Flemish special education

Acronym
TIME-IN

Study objectives
1. TIME-IN improves special education children's adaptive emotion regulation strategies compared to a control group with no intervention
2. TIME-IN reduces both children's externalizing and internalizing problems compared to a control group with no intervention
3. TIME-IN reduces both children's externalizing and internalizing problems through adaptive emotion regulation

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
Ethical Commission of Ghent University Faculty of Psychology and Pedagogical Sciences, 22/9 /2014, ref: 2014/45

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Prospective controlled two armed non randomised study

Study type(s)
Prevention

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Children with learning disabilities, at risk for developing behavioural, emotional and academic problems (clinical sample).

Interventions
Participating schools are allocated to either receiving the intervention or to the control group. Schools are allocated based on their readiness to implement the intervention programme and based on the implementation criteria such as sufficient awareness of need and motivation to get started with the implementation of a demanding school-wide programme. This is done through discussions with school boards. Control schools are chosen randomly selected from an ongoing study on school readiness in 18 nearby schools.

Intervention group (TIME-IN):
Participating schools implement the TIME-IN programme over nine months. This consists of 48

meetings, lasting a total of 122 hours. Five workshops of three hours and one two-hour plenary information sessions is devoted to the development and presentation of a school-wide charter and additionally three three-hour discussion sessions are held over the year to evaluate the schools action plan. Next, one plenary information session (three hours) is organised to discussion children's screening results and six workshops of three hours on the implementation of a school-wide quality assurance system is implemented: Action-Oriented Working in the Classroom (AOW). 30 teachers are trained about the programme through five three-hour workshops. The school clinical psychologist staff receive four workshops (three hours) to training outside classroom interventions. Finally two school-parent contacts (three hours) are organised to involve parents in the learning process.

Teachers are expected to enhance a safe classroom climate by formulating and visualizing positive behavioural expectations, practicing relational skills and providing clear instructions regarding the course content. Teachers promote emotional competencies using classroom emotional thermometers tools which enhance emotion identification by visualising different emotions and fostering emotional understanding. Students' special needs and adaptive emotion regulation strategies are improved by using a student reminder card. When aggressive behaviour or an emotional crisis arise, staff use the Life Space Crisis Intervention procedure in order to repair the conflictual relationship between teachers and child. Teachers support the children to cool down and receive assistance from the school psychologist.

Control group (Care as usual):
The control group does not receive any interventions and continue with their normal care.

School readiness is measured at baseline and at month nine (after the intervention) using questionnaires for teachers, students and their parents in a multi-informant assessment procedure.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
Current primary outcome measures as of 16/10/2020:
1. Adaptive emotion regulation strategies are measured using the FEEL-KJ at baseline and 9 months
2. Maladaptive emotion regulation strategies are measured using the FEEL-KJ at baseline and 9 months
3. Depressive symptoms are measured using the Child Depression Inventory (CDI) at baseline and 9 months

Previous primary outcome measures:
1. Externalizing problems are measured using the Teacher Report Form (TRF) at baseline and 9 months
2. Internalizing problems are measured using the Teacher Report Form (TRF) at baseline and 9 months
3. Depressive symptoms are measured using the Child Depression Inventory (CDI) at baseline and 9 months

Key secondary outcome(s)
Current secondary outcome measures as of 16/10/2020:
1. Externalising problems are measured using the Teacher Report Form (TRF; intervention

group) and Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL; control group) at baseline and 9 months
2. Internalising problems are measured using the Teacher Report Form (TRF; intervention group) and Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL; control group) at baseline and 9 months

Previous secondary outcome measures:
Emotional regulation strategies are measured using FEEL-KJ is measured using at baseline and 9 months

Completion date
30/06/2015

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Special Education Children with learning disabilities between 8 - 12 years old

Updated 20/03/2018:
1. Children between 8-12 years old with special educational needs (SEN; i.e. children with a learning and/or a mild intellectual disability)

2. Their biological parents (father and/or mother)
3. Their Special Education Teacher

Participant type(s)
Other

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Child

Lower age limit
8 Years

Upper age limit
12 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
162

Key exclusion criteria
1. Children, parents or teachers who do not consent to participate in the study
2. Children younger than 8 and older than 12 years
3. Children who are not primarily diagnosed with a learning disability (in Flemish education this is categorised as 'Type BA - special education')

Date of first enrolment
01/09/2014

Date of final enrolment
15/09/2014

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Belgium

Study participating centre
MPI 't Craeneveld
Serpentsstraat 63
Oudenaarde
Belgium
9700

Sponsor information

Organisation
Flemish Government Education

ROR
https://ror.org/04qxsrb28

Funder(s)

Funder type
University/education

Funder Name
Ghent University

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are/will be available upon request from Henk Weymeis (henk.weymeis@ugent.be).

IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article		27/04/2021	28/04/2021	Yes	No
Protocol article	protocol	01/07/2019	16/10/2020	Yes	No
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes