Cognitive Relaxation Coping Skills

TARGET AUDIENCE

This program is for adolescents and young adults with acute anger issues and behavior problems.

SUMMARY

Cognitive Relaxation Coping Skills, a school-based program, is designed to encourage participants to learn how to manage and restrain their anger and resulting emotions.

EVIDENCE

Adolescents and young adults who participated in the Cognitive Relaxation Coping Skills intervention were more likely than members of a comparison group to experience a reduction in anger expression. Results of several studies indicated improvements in general anger, anger expression, anger suppression, and anger specific to multiple situations. Each of these effects persisted for at least 15 months after completing the program. One study also indicated positive effects on mental health and deviant behavior among young adolescents; although, such outcomes were not evident among older program participants.

COMPONENTS

Youth are taught to recognize their anger triggers and use relaxation techniques and cognitive awareness processes to alleviate aggravating situations. Small group sessions of 9 to 14 participants cover the following:

- In the early sessions, participants create a list of situations they have encountered that have incited or increased their anger.
- In the next few sessions, participants focus on changing the way they think about these situations and their subsequent reactions.
- The final sessions discuss situations considered in the first sessions and introduce skills that may help participants view these situations from different perspectives. Relaxation techniques, such as breathing cued relaxation and relaxation without tension, are used in this process.

Participants are also given homework to encourage self monitoring and to apply the skills learned to particular situations.

PREVIOUS USE

This program was implemented during the 1990s with groups of adolescents and young adults in Colorado. The extent to which this program has been otherwise implemented is unknown.

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TRAINING

Program facilitators should possess a master’s or a bachelor’s degree and have 10 years of experience as a school psychologist. Specific training information was not located.

CONSIDERATIONS

Considerations for implementing this program include ensuring buy-in of participants and possibly participants’ parents/guardians as participants may need to relive or discuss difficult situations, locating qualified facilitators, and finding time within the school day to implement the sessions.

The Clearinghouse can help address these considerations. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

IMPLEMENTATION

If you are interested in implementing Cognitive Relaxation Coping Skills, the Clearinghouse is interested in helping you! Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

TIME

This program consists of eight or nine sessions that last 45 minutes to 1 hour each.

COST

Information on implementation costs was not located.

EVALUATION PLAN

To move the Cognitive Relaxation Coping Skills program to the Effective category on the Clearinghouse Continuum of Evidence, at least one external evaluation must be conducted that demonstrates sustained, positive outcomes. This study must be conducted independently of the program developer.

The Clearinghouse can help you develop an evaluation plan to ensure the program components are meeting your goals. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

CONTACT

Contact the Clearinghouse with any questions regarding this program.
Phone: 1-877-382-9185 Email: Clearinghouse@psu.edu

You may also contact Jerry Deffenbacher by phone 1-970-491-6871, email Jerry.Deffenbacher@colostate.edu, or visit http://psy.psych.colostate.edu/psylist/detail.asp?Num=18

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