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A Review of Developmentally Appropriate Evidence-Based Effective Parenting and Resources for Parents

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Purpose

Krisma Counseling, a counseling center located in rural southern Minnesota, offers high quality and affordable consumer-centered mental health services to individuals, families, couples, including in-home therapy. In order to provide adequate services and care that abides by the Nation Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, there needs to be standard ethical practice rooted in evidence based literature. The purpose of this project was to research developmentally appropriate evidence-based effective parenting and create a resource guide for clinicians to use in their work with parents of children ages two to 17.

Methodology

- ❖ Researched the three developmental stages of children/ adolescents: Early childhood (2-6 years), middle childhood (6-11 years) and adolescence (12-17 years).
- ❖ Researched the physical, cognitive, social and emotional developmental, grounded in developmental theory, for the 3 developmental stages.
- ❖ Researched effective parenting skills for the three developmental stages.
- ❖ Created a manual entitled *A Clinicians Guide to Understanding Human Development and Effective Parenting of Children Ages 2-17*.

Literature Review

- ❖ Identifies the importance of parent child relationships and interactions.
 - “Either a child’s predisposition and/or the parents lack of effective parenting skills may initiate a pattern of aggressive behavior within the family that ultimately leads to delinquency in children” (Sandy & Boardman, 2000).
- ❖ Highlights the difficulty of parenting.
 - “Parenting is almost the toughest job human beings have. Parenting is a 24-hour-a-day, no pay, no thanks, no promotion job” (Smith, 2010).
- ❖ Identifies the importance of warm and nurturing parenting styles.
 - “Research has documented positive associations between warm, responsive caregiving and indicators of emotional and behavioral regulation in infancy and early childhood” (Colman, Hardy, Albert, Raffaelli, & Crockett, 2006).
 - “Punishment, both verbal reprimands and corporal punishment, are considered the least effective strategies to eliminate undesirable behaviors” (Flaskerud, 2011).
- ❖ Shares the importance of development in effective parenting.
 - “Emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between these behaviors, while taking in to account the interrelated nature of their development” (Haan, Prinzie & Dekovic, 2010).

Early Childhood (Ages 2 – 5)



PHYSICAL

- Improved physical coordination
- Loses baby fat and baby teeth
- Significant increase in language skills
- Scribbles will become pictures when drawing
- Appetite declines and picky eating increases



COGNITIVE

- Begin make believe play
- Play becomes less self-centered
- Will demonstrate private speech
- Begin solving simple arithmetic
- Begin face to face conversations using gestures



EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL

- Sensitive to praise and blame
- Will begin to show physical aggressiveness instead of verbal
- Increased emotional competence and able to cope with intense feelings
- Improved emotional regulation
- Begin to develop a self concept

Effective Parenting

- ❖ Anticipate many changes at a rapid pace. Parents also need to be proactive and mindful of changes still to come. Parents should anticipate separation anxiety in children as this peaks around the age of 2 (Robb, 2010, p.16). Parents should begin looking at schools for their children and focusing on reading and writing. Safety in social activities, such as biking, playing and peer associations, is important.

Middle Childhood (Ages 7 – 11)



PHYSICAL

- Body size grows at a slow pace
- Girls will pass boys in size
- Drawings include details
- Increased rough and tumble play
- Improved flexibility, balance, agility and force



COGNITIVE

- More aware of hierarchy's
- Begin forming complex sentences
- Increased information processing speed and capacity
- Begin to appreciate multiple word meanings.
- Gains inhibition, the ability to control internal and external stimuli



EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL

- Sensitive to praise and blame
- Self-concept includes personality traits and social comparisons
- Friendships become based on mutual trust
- Self-esteem become more realistic
- Sibling rivalry will emerge and peer groups emerge

Effective Parenting

- ❖ This stage can be a challenging time making the use of effective skills is critical. Re “Parents who engage in high rates of physically punitive and power assertive parenting practices have less well regulated children” (Colman, Hardy, Albert, Raffaelli & Crockett, 2006 p.423). Parents should be sure to include their children in rule making.

Developmental Theories

- ❖ Early Childhood (2-5 years)
 - Piagets’s Preoperational Stages of Development
 - Vygotsky’s Theory of Development
- ❖ Middle Childhood (6-11 years)
 - Piagets’s Stages of Development/Principals and Education
 - Kohlbergs Theory of Moral Development
- ❖ Adolescence (12-17 years)
 - Piagets’s Stages of Development/Deductive Reasoning
 - Adolescent Egocentrism (Sanrock, MacKenzie-Rivers, Leung & Malcomson, 2003)

Adolescence (Ages 12 – 17)



PHYSICAL

- Hormonal changes begin and puberty begins
- Body enlarges, girls hips and boys shoulders broaden
- Likely to be aware of sexual orientation
- Increased nutritional needs due to rapid body growth
- Skin become oilier and acne ay appear



COGNITIVE

- Become more self-conscious and self focused
- Speed of thinking increases drastically
- Are sensitive to public criticism
- Believe they are the focus of everyone attention
- Increase in risk taking behaviors and believing they are invincible



EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL

- Conformity to peer pressure is evident
- Acceptance into cliques is important
- Seek romantic intimacy
- Likely to take on societal views as their own
- Friendships decline in quantity and are based on loyalty

Effective Parenting

- ❖ Parents over this period of time need to be willing to talk openly about sex, sexual identity, peer pressure, relationships, contraceptives and other societal pressures. Parent must take an active role in parenting instead of just being a parent. “Merely to be a parent is nothing, to parent everything. Children must no longer think of themselves as having parents, rather they are parented” (Smith, 2010, p.360).

Examination of Pertinent Issues

Ethics

- According to the National Association of Social Worker’s Code of Ethics, social workers have an ethical responsibility to “ work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice” as well as “ keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work and fully use evaluation and research evidence in their professional practice” (NASW, 2008).

At-Risk Populations

- Through the Krisma in-home program there will be diverse groups of people being served all of which are at high risk explaining their involvement with the in-home program.

Rural Implications

- Transportation, conflicts of interest, dual roles and limited referral sources.