



Enhancing sensitivity in adolescent mothers of children 0-1 years: A family approach



An applied program for mothers in Siaya District – Kenya.

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Introduction

- Maternal sensitivity is defined as being aware of the infant's signals and responding to them promptly and appropriately (Ainsworth et al., 1978). It is most predictive of attachment security.
- A good range of literature suggests that adolescent mothers are less knowledgeable about child development and depict less desirable parenting style. This can lessen their ability to respond to their children contingently (Sommer et al., 1993; Tarabulsky et al., 2005).
- In Kenya, about 19% of girls between 15-19 years are mothers who are faced by many problems, among them lack of knowledge on parenting skills (KDHS, 2014).
- A teenage mother in Kenya is still under the care of her family who are responsible for providing her needs.
- Social support by the family of the teen mother may act as a buffer with respect to inappropriate maternal parenting practices (Emery et al., 2008).

Rationale

- To enhance sensitivity among adolescent mothers by teaching and modeling specific parenting skills. It will also capacity build the family members on their supportive role.

Participants

- 30 adolescent mothers ages 13-19 with their family member representatives.



Procedure

- Manual development. A short manual of training will be written to include contents of the sessions and teaching methods. It will be a guide to the intervention.
- Approval from hospital in-charge
- Staff training & budget presentation.
- Pilot testing tools.
- Recruitment of participants.
- Pre-Assessment.
- Post-assessment.
- Feedback of intervention will be disseminated to nurses and other relevant staff.

Intervention protocol and Measures

- Enhancing sensitivity in adolescent mothers (ESAM; Dali, 2016).
- Maternal Infant Responsive Instrument (MIRI; Amankwaa & Pickler 2007). A self-report that measures maternal responsiveness to infant cues. Mother's recognition of her own responses & mother's recognition of child's responses to her.
- If resource is available, pre and post assessment will be done by observing mother and child using Maternal Behavior Q-sort (Pederson & Moran, 1995).
- Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ; Sarason et al 1987). Measures the quality of social support network an individual perceives as accessible in different circumstances and her degree of satisfaction with the support.

Intervention protocol

KEY FEATURES

Multi-faceted
Group based
Short – term
Theory based

Maternal sensitivity

- Maternal sensitivity and attachment.
- Role of family

Parent-child interaction

- Physical & emotional interaction, Child's lead
- Pace & space

Sensitive response.

- Video watching: Sensitive and non-sensitive mother.
- Observation skills on cues.

Emotional attunement

- Reflection on dyadic interaction
- Challenges of interaction

Social support

- Teen mother's dreams & goals.
- Family's point of entry in support

Self-sufficiency

- Enhancing self esteem
- Mother's role as secure figure to the child

Implications for practice

- Health professionals should not only target interventions to physical health risks of the adolescent mother but also seek to foster quality mother-child interactions.

Conclusion

- Improving teen mother's **knowledge on physical and emotional needs** that underlie the child's behavior, will enhance **more responsive care giving** behavior that will enable the child's use of the mother as a **secure base**.



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