

Symposium Pernebo: Child-Parent Psychotherapy – Implementation, research, and clinical practice in the Nordic countries

Abstract 1

Child-Parent Psychotherapy, a dyadic intervention for young traumatized children and their caregivers – overview of the treatment model and the dissemination process in Sweden and Norway.

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Introduction

This presentation will provide an overview of Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP), followed by a summary of the process of dissemination from the US to Sweden and Norway.

CPP is an evidence-based treatment for children under age 6 who experience mental health problems or whose relationship with their caregiver(s) is negatively affected by exposure to trauma. An underlying principle in CPP is that the attachment relationship is the main organizer of a young child's response to experiences, and treatment with young children is done in the context of attachment relationships. CPP integrates perspectives from theories such as attachment, developmental, psychoanalytic, family systems, cognitive behavioral, and trauma theory.

Methods

Child-Parent Psychotherapy was initiated in Sweden in 2013 by professor Kjerstin Almqvist as part of a program initially funded by the Swedish National Board for Health and Welfare. A training program was developed in collaboration with the originators at UCSF (Alicia Lieberman & Chandra Ghosh Ippen). In the second cohort, two Swedish trainers were trained and five Norwegian colleagues joined, three of whom are now trainers in Norway. A Nordic network for CPP was initiated to scaffold training, research and clinical practice.

Simultaneously research has been realized: a feasibility study, an interview-study with caregivers, a study on implementation, and an effectiveness study. A follow-up study and a feasibility study of CPP for children in foster care are running.

Results

CPP is spreading in Sweden and Norway, in child psychiatry, social services, and non-profit organizations. Currently the sixth Swedish training, held by Ericastiftelsen, and the third Norwegian training, organized by RBUP (Regional Children's Mental Health Center), are ongoing.

Conclusions

The dissemination of CPP in Sweden and Norway has been successfully supported by 1) training national trainers and continuous training of therapists, 2) Nordic research studies, and 3) the formation of national and Nordic networks.