

Evidence for Early Intervention for Young Children with Conduct Problems

16 March 2009

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What are the goals of “Early Intervention”?

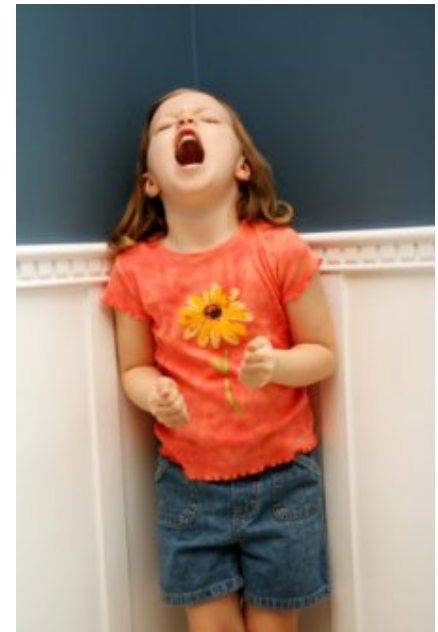
Intervention at a young age, leading to:

1. Change to “predicted” developmental pathway
2. Prevention of identified outcomes
3. Amelioration of identified outcomes
4. Individual variation / Individual differences



What are the predicted pathways and outcomes of early conduct problems?

1. Differentiating early conduct problems from normal developmental variation
2. Markers during the developmental period
3. Young adult outcomes of early severe conduct problems



What types of early intervention programmes have been trialled?

1. Programmes directed at changing the child
2. Programmes directed at changing parenting / foster parenting (parents then change child behaviour)
3. Programmes directed at changing the teaching / curriculum (teachers then change child behaviour)
4. Combined programmes



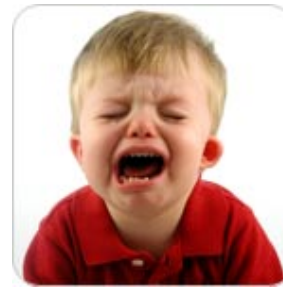
How have the outcomes of early intervention for conduct problems been researched?

- Controlled Research Studies
 - Case studies
 - Clinical trials
 - Focused Interviewing
- Controlled Evaluation Studies
 - Transplant
 - Roll out



What does the research show?

1. Immediate outcomes for children with conduct problems and their families
 1. ~70% children show reduction in conduct problems
 2. Reduction from “clinical levels” of severity to below clinical levels”
 3. ~30% do not show reduction at first programme
2. Long term outcomes for the ‘successful’ children during the schooling period to young adulthood
3. Outcomes for parents
4. Outcomes for teachers
5. Outcomes for schools and communities and tax payers



What are effective early intervention programmes for conduct problems?

1. Criteria for classification of 'effective'
2. Programmes meeting criteria of "effective":
3. New Zealand Programmes
4. Promising Programmes: adding to the basket of knowledge



Why have effective programmes not succeeded with all children?

1. Focused interviewing and follow-up
2. Characteristics of children:
 - Who did not show reduction in conduct problems
 - Whose initial reduction did not maintain
 - Whose reduction in one setting did not transfer to another setting
3. Addressing of 'cause' of conduct problems



What are the causes of conduct problems at a young age?

1. Why do some children need more “attention” at school than other children?
2. How are the mental health problems of children expressed in their behaviour?
3. Do children who have conduct problems at home also have them at school? *And vice versa.*
4. Why ‘behaviour management’ or ‘parent training’ may not be sufficient to reduce conduct problems for some children.
5. Conduct problems in New Zealand



What does the research evidence suggest for teachers of young children with conduct problems?

1. Professional development: preservice and inservice
2. Understanding cause
3. Understanding problems with punishment, reprimands, and other aversive controls

Why punishment makes behaviour problems worse

Why putting all the children with conduct problems together in one service won't work and will make behaviour worse in the long run.

4. Using research as a resource
5. Discipline as teaching



What does the research evidence indicate for the improvement of early intervention services for children with conduct problems in Aotearoa New Zealand?

1. Evidence-based services
2. B4 School Check
3. Service Availability
4. Access to services



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