A school consultation intervention for adolescents with ADHD: barriers and implementation strategies

Margaret H. Sibley, Sandra Olson, Candance Morley, Mileini Campez and William E. Pelham

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Background
Academic impairment is among the most troubling domains of impairment for adolescents with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Method
This investigation presents results of a yearlong academic intervention delivered to adolescents with ADHD (N = 218) by engaging school staff as interventionists through behavioral consultation with an outside mental health professional.

Results
The intervention was coordinated successfully in some cases, but not in others. The principal challenge to intervention coordination was sustaining monthly contact between consultants and interventionists (38.5% success rate) and scheduling in-person consultation meetings with interventionists (40.0% success rate). Implementation of the intervention was enhanced when the student (a) attended a public (vs. private) school, (b) had an IEP or Section 504 plan in place, (c) was in middle school (vs. high school), (d) had a parent who communicated regularly with the school, and (e) had a special education support staff member or counselor (vs. teacher or administrator) as a school interventionist.

Conclusions
Considering these data, recommendations are provided for effective coordination of academic interventions for adolescents with ADHD.