Do parental ADHD symptoms reduce the efficacy of parent training for preschool ADHD? A secondary analysis of a randomized controlled trial

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Abstract

Previous studies have suggested that children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) may benefit less from behavioral parent training (BPT) if their parents have high levels of ADHD symptoms. We conducted a secondary analysis of data from a randomized controlled trial to test the hypothesis that parental ADHD symptoms reduce the efficacy of two BPT programs in a sample of preschoolers with ADHD. One intervention was specifically designed for children with ADHD (NFPP: New Forest Parenting Programme) and one was designed for children with Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) (HNC: Helping the Noncompliant Child). Neither intervention was adapted to address parental ADHD symptoms. This secondary analysis included data from 164 parents and their 3-4 year-old children who were randomly assigned to one of the two programs or a waitlist group. Children were compared on ADHD and ODD outcomes at post-intervention and a 6-month follow-up. The presence of parent ADHD symptoms reduced the efficacy of BPT in only one of 16 analyses. Implications and limitations (e.g., low baseline rate of parental ADHD symptoms) of the findings are provided.