



Treatment Program Abstract

Summary

THE COPING COURSE utilizes cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) to treat incarcerated youth in closed-custody juvenile facilities. The aims of this intervention are: improving behavior within the facility; reducing negative emotions, including depression, anger, frustration, boredom, sadness, and fear; and enhancing general coping and problem solving skills.

THE COPING COURSE consists of 16 group treatment sessions occurring twice a week over 8 weeks. The program uses handouts, structured learning tasks, short quizzes, and homework assignments to teach the following skills in a group treatment setting: social skills, relaxation techniques, identifying and increasing fun activities, changing negative thinking, communication and problem-solving skills, and developing a Life Plan and long-term goals.

The therapeutic efficacy of *THE COPING COURSE* was evaluated in a randomized control trial in 2004 in a state youth correctional facility. Participants were randomly assigned to either: 1) *THE COPING COURSE* treatment condition; or 2) usual care. An additional site served as a second control group receiving usual care. All 76 participants (mean age 16 years) at the intervention facility were male; the majority (64.2%) were white non-Latino race/ethnicity.

Study results indicated that externalizing problems and suicide proneness decreased for the treatment group. In addition, self esteem, sharing feelings with staff, and CBT knowledge all increased after treatment. No differences were found from pre- to post-assessments for both control groups. The study authors concluded that incarcerated male adolescents benefit from group interventions aimed at enhancing general coping skills. They assert that future research should examine the impact of cognitive-behavioral group treatments with incarcerated youth, including more extensive assessments of psychopathology, psychosocial functioning, and criminal recidivism over a longer follow-up period.

Treatment Program Abstract (continued)

- Other: Negative emotions, general coping and problem solving skills

Original Intervention Sample

Age = 12-22 years
Gender = Male = 100%
Race/
Ethnicity African American 6.7%; Asian 2.2%; Latino 14.2%;
Native American 10.4%; Pacific Islander 0.7%; White
non-Latino 64.2%; and Other 1.5%

Staffing Requirements/ Training

It is intended that this program be implemented by mental health professionals with appropriate education, training, credentialing, and experience treating the target population.

Group sessions of 6 to 10 participants per group may be led by co-facilitators: a PhD-level therapist paired with a Master's-level therapist. The program developers recommend one male and one female therapist as co-leaders of both single- and mixed-gender groups.

Treatment Program Materials

THE COPING COURSE includes the full CEDETA replication kit: hard copies of all materials including the Leader Manual (194 pages, 3-ring binder) and the participant Workbook (83 pages), comb-bound Leader reference copy of the Workbook, and Workbook photocopy master, as well as the User's Guide, evaluation materials and Biodots used in two of the program sessions (see below).

Two sessions of the program use "Biodots" as a tool for measuring levels of physical tension. The replication kit includes a packet of 100 Biodots and a color code card for use during these two sessions. Additional Biodots can be purchased online at: www.biodots.net. A note about the Biodots: initially it may appear that they do not work, and remain black. However, if the user concentrates on bringing warmth to the hand, as per the instructions, the Biodots will change color within a few minutes. (Verified by CEDETA staff when, at first, they appeared not to work.)

In addition, the replication kit includes:

- ◆ reference copies of the available evaluation instruments used during the original study of *THE COPING COURSE* (see blue poly-string envelope);
- ◆ and a reference copy of the age-appropriate *PedsQL*TM instruments (see blue paper envelope).

Treatment Program Abstract (continued)

Notes about Evaluation

The replication kit includes reference copies of the available evaluation instruments used in the original evaluation of the treatment program. Please refer to the "Instrument Packet" in the blue poly-string envelope. (Note that these instruments cannot be photocopied, and are not intended for use in individual or group assessments.) In addition, two versions of the *PedsQL*TM have been included in the blue paper envelope: child (ages 8-12) and teen (13-18).

These evaluation materials are included as a starting point for evaluating your program, should you choose to do so. Most program evaluations can benefit from expert help in designing and carrying out such an evaluation. Sociometrics can offer help in evaluating your implementation of this program for a fee. For further information, call Sociometrics staff at 1-800-846-3475.

Treatment Program Acquisition & Implementation Cost

The cost of the full CEDETA program package includes one complete set of materials needed to implement this program and the resources for evaluation, all described above (call CEDETA staff; see below for contact information). Implementation costs depend on the number of clients, staff, and the nature and extent of the services you offer.

Contact Information

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Bibliography

Rodhe, P., Jorgensen, J. S., Seeley, J. R., & Mace, D. E. (2004). Pilot evaluation of the Coping Course: A cognitive-behavioral intervention to enhance coping skills in incarcerated youth. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 43(6), 669-676.

Rohde, P., & Jorgensen, J. (2002). *The Coping Course for Juvenile Corrections: Leader Manual*. Eugene: Oregon Research Institute.