

Evaluation of a Psychoeducation Group for Children presenting with Functional Tics



NHS

Great Ormond Street
Hospital for Children
NHS Foundation Trust

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Background

- Rapid-onset functional tic-like behaviours (FTLBs) have increased in children and adolescents since COVID-19¹
- FTLBs appear to be related to underlying depression, stress, and/or anxiety²
- The evidence base for interventions to treat FTLBs is limited
- Clinical interventions are pragmatic with a focus on psychoeducation
- Goal-based outcomes (GBOs) allow children with functional movement disorder to set their own targets and measure change post-intervention³

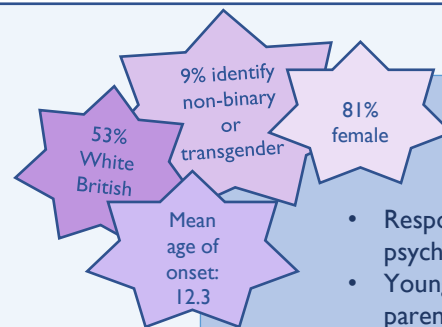
Objectives

To evaluate a one-off 2 ½ hour psychoeducational group intervention on functional tics, measuring change in patient centred goals.

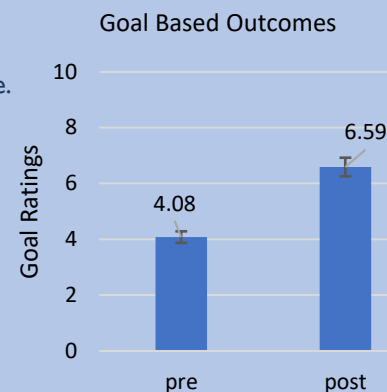
Methods

- A novel psychoeducational group intervention was developed for children, parents and professionals.
- GBOs collected before and after the group.
- Achievement of goals rated on a scale of 0 (not at all) to 10 (fully met).
- Additional feedback was gathered after the group.
- 51 families attended 5 groups from May 2021 to April 2022.
- 38 GBOs.
- 31 feedback responses were collected.

Results



- Responses to psychoeducation are positive.
- Young people and their parents reported significant improvement in their goals following the group.
- $t(26) = 6.88$, $p < 0.001$, Cohen's $d = 1.89$, a large effect size.



"Seeing more of the kids and less of parents, mainly parents talking"

"Seeing others in same situation was re-assuring as children with these difficulties are not seen that often, it was very encouraging"

"I liked meeting others... its nice to know that there are others (with functional tics) out there"

Discussion

- The Psychoeducation group for functional tics is accessible and feasible.
- Understanding the diagnosis is central to therapeutic intervention.
- Local professionals who attended had increased awareness of functional tics.
- Changes to the group have been made based on feedback.
- Future research to explore ethnic diversity within the population.