Can primary school interventions transform the lives of children?

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Transformation: a problematic concept

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0ucno0rUZw
Two more problematic concepts

Evidence

Interventions
From this -
To this - Evidence?

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JsDylEPNh0
Evidence

- Ongoing debate about what constitutes evidence
- NHS driven evidence-based practice
- Hierarchy of research with Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) as the ‘gold’ standard
Interventions

- Many different interventions
- Not all interventions have clearly defined parameters
- Interventions may include a variety of activities
- Practitioners often adopt different approaches to the same interventions
Interventions

- Play therapy
- Counselling
- SEAL - Circle Time etc

Emotional Well-being
National Institute for Clinical Excellence

Promoting children’s social and emotional well-being in primary education

• Based on research evidence – effective interventions:
  – Changes in school ethos, policies and environment
  – Teacher training in behaviour management
  – Classroom-based interventions
  – Parent work
NICE Recommendations for interventions

- Adopt a whole-school approach
- Should complement SEAL
- Embed social and emotional skills in the curriculum
- Help parents and carers to develop the skills of parenting
What are the interventions?

Interventions with parent components most successful:

• Changes in school ethos, policies or environment

• Teacher training in behaviour management

• Classroom-based interventions

• Parent components

• Wider community components
Targeted approaches for:

• Anxiety
• Emotional distress
• Behavioural problems
• Poor peer relationships
• Low self-esteem
• Withdrawal and marginalisation
Commissioned services:

• A range of interventions proven to be effective, and according to children’s needs

• Problem-focused group sessions

• In tandem with group parenting sessions
Under researched areas

- Measurement tools
- Vulnerable groups
- Involving parents and carers from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Most effective ways of involving children in the development, implementation and evaluation of interventions
Professor Liz Todd’s (Educational Psychology) work at Newcastle addresses issues such as:

- Parenting support
- Referral to specialist support services (including the stepped care approach)
Counselling research problematic:

• Studies cover wide age-groups e.g. 4-18 years
• E.G Robinson et al (1999) – meta-analysis- CBT has positive results

• School-based and clinic-based included in the same studies
  E.g Baer & Nietzel (2002) Review – CBT has positive results
Only 3 specifically identifiable primary school-based studies:


- Flitton & Buckroyd (2002) 4 children with LD, aged 6, 11, 12, 12 – pc counselling and pc art therapy – enhanced self-concept

- Sherr & Sterne (1999) 49 children (average age 9) play therapy- before and after study – improved self-esteem and academic achievement (number skills)
Place2Be Therapeutic Model: Effectiveness of intervention

• Lee et al (2009)

• Study of 1,864 children before and after intervention

• Improvements in social and emotional behaviour
Key messages

• Little published empirical research for primary school-based interventions in the UK in relation to specific interventions and children’s issues
  – Much unpublished research in the form of commissioned and service-based evaluations

Generally, interventions appear to be helpful
Transformation

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIcG5OXEKHY