
CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Guided meditations in the treatment of trauma-related sleep disorders in adjudicated adolescents in New Mexico

19th International Conference on Integrated Care, San Sebastian, 01-03 April 2019

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The purpose of this study is to determine the efficacy of providing guided meditations to reduce insomnia and other sleep disorders in a juvenile justice-involved population. Studies have shown that early childhood trauma, identified as Adverse Childhood Experiences, has a detrimental effect on the overall emotional and physical well-being of the trauma sufferer, often resulting in sleep disruption. Consequently, adolescents develop ineffective behaviors such as aggression, violence, social functioning deficits, and self-harm, often requiring directed means of moderating and resolving those behaviors. Research supports the use of evidence-based mindfulness modalities in the treatment of adolescent sleep disorders). The use of guided meditations was implemented at a New Mexico juvenile justice facility, with a population of incarcerated youth ranging in age from 15 to 20 years old. Guided meditations were broadcast over an FM frequency during sleeping hours over a four-week period, with pre- and post-intervention assessments using the Insomnia Severity Index and Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index. Data analysis of the pre-and post-assessment scores of the study population (n=27) showed a strong relationship to the use of guided meditations in the decrease of insomnia symptoms and an increase in the quality of sleep. Paired sample t-tests for both the ISI and PSQI showed statistical significance within this study. Of the starting population (n=42), approximately 69% of the study group meet the criteria for inclusion in the final data analysis.

Keywords: insomnia; sleep; adolescent; youth; juvenile justice; incarcerated; trauma
