

Title: Implementation of Telemental Health Services in Early Childhood Populations During COVID-19: Perspectives from the Field

Abstract:

Telemental health research for early childhood population is less developed than that for school-age children and adolescents. This study surveyed 98 therapists who began providing mental health services via telemental health to infants, young children, and their families due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The sample's ethnic composition was as follows: 50% Latinx/Hispanic, 26% White/Caucasian non-Hispanic, 17% Asian or Pacific Islander, 3% Black, 3% Native American/Mestizo, and 7% Other. The survey collected information regarding their agency's methods in adapting to telemental health for young children, barriers experienced, and clinicians' views about the effectiveness of telemental health with this age group. The perspectives gathered from the sample were organized by using the Exploration, Preparation, Implementation, and Sustainment framework (Moullin et al., 2019). This implementation science framework, applied to the implementation of early childhood telemental health, leads to recommendations to ensure that therapists have proper, working devices to provide sessions, and that they have support in addressing the biggest technical barrier, which are clients' internet access.

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