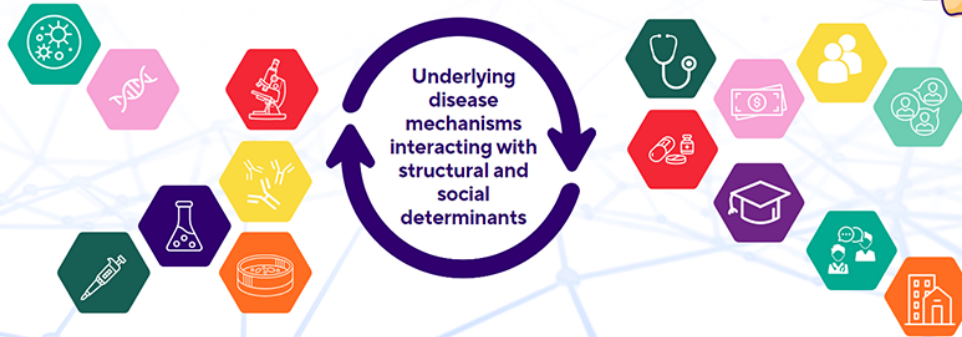




19TH ANNUAL CHILD HEALTH RESEARCH DAYS
Outcomes in Child Health



October 25 + 26, 2023 | RBC Convention Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Abstract Submission Form

CHRD 2023: Abstract Submission Form

Submitter Name

Cynthia Côté

Presenter Name

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Presenter Status

Undergraduate Students

Research Category

Clinical

Role in the project

Analyze Data
Write Abstract

Title

Treatment for Maternal Depression and the Use of Child-Directed Speech

Background

Approximately 19.1% of children under the age of 5 have a mother who has been diagnosed with depression. Symptoms of depression have been found to influence numerous parenting practices, notably a reduction in the use of child-directed speech (CDS).

Objective

Here, we tested whether a program designed to reduce depressive symptomology would increase mothers use of CDS.

Methods

Mothers with a 2–5-year-old who met the criteria for a Major Depressive Episode (MDE) were recruited for a 20-week treatment program which emphasized dialectical behavior therapy skills (N = 31). The mother-child dyads participated in a Zoom assessment pre- and post-treatment where a playtime period was recorded and coded with a speech analysis software (ELAN 5.9) for characteristics of CDS, including maternal responsivity and expressiveness. Additionally, maternal depression severity was assessed before and after treatment.

Results

Descriptive statistics are reported in Table 1. The results indicated that symptoms of depression ($t = 4.709$, $p < .001$), use of disconnected or controlled speech ($t = 2.899$, $p = .004$), and neutral expressiveness ($t = 1.813$, $p = .041$) all decreased posttreatment. Furthermore, depression severity was inversely related to elaborative or collaborative speech [$F(3, 53) = 3.44$, $p = .023$], where those with minimal or no depression

symptoms utilized more elaborative or collaborative speech than those with mild to moderate ($p = .036$), moderate to severe ($p = .043$), or severe depression ($p = .030$). Finally, level of expressiveness did not significantly differ post-treatment, nor was it related to level of depression.

Conclusion

Overall, the findings suggested that treatment for depression does support the use of CDS, and that its use is influenced by symptom severity. Future replication studies are necessary to strengthen the findings, explore other characteristics of CDS, and further examine ways to best support both mother-child interactions and child language development.

Table/Figure File

CHRD_Abstract Table_Cynthia Côté.pdf

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Treatment for Maternal Depression and the Use of Child-Directed Speech

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Background: Approximately 19.1% of children under the age of 5 have a mother who has been diagnosed with depression. Symptoms of depression have been found to influence numerous parenting practices, notably a reduction in the use of child-directed speech (CDS). Here, we tested whether a program designed to reduce depressive symptomology would increase mothers use of CDS.

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Conclusion: Overall, the findings suggested that treatment for depression does support the use of CDS, and that its use is influenced by symptom severity. Future replication studies are necessary to strengthen the findings, explore other characteristics of CDS, and further examine ways to best support both mother-child interactions and child language development.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Demographic Data		
Child Age	4.37	0.93

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Maternal Depression		
Pre-treatment	33.92	11.08
Post-treatment	20.05	14.96
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Responsivity Pre-Treatment (%)		
Repetition	5.60	4.72
Elaborative or Collaborative Speech	64.78	15.47
Praise or Reassurance	4.10	3.86
Discussing or Communicating Emotion	5.84	6.78
Disconnected or Controlled Response	13.19	11.63
Neutral Short Response	6.32	6.24
<hr/>		
Expressiveness Pre-Treatment (%)		
Neutral	15.19	17.45
Mostly Neutral	26.13	15.87
Somewhat Expressive	29.17	11.49
Expressive	24.04	18.04
Very Expressive	5.47	6.84
<hr/>		
Responsivity Post-Treatment (%)		
Repetition	5.84	5.34
Elaborative or Collaborative Speech	68.34	11.47
Praise or Reassurance	4.41	4.29
Discussing or Communicating Emotion	6.69	5.71
Disconnected or Controlled Response	7.21	7.42
Neutral Short Response	7.4	6.01
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Expressiveness Post-Treatment (%)

Neutral	13.95	15.40
Mostly Neutral	21.36	11.34
Somewhat Expressive	33.34	10.18
Expressive	25.86	15.89
Very Expressive	5.48	8.50

Note. Maternal Age was not collected due to a survey error.