Open-access CBT group interventions in secondary schools: Do they work?

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Outline of Presentation

• Why develop the DISCOVER Workshop Programme?
• What is DISCOVER?
• Does DISCOVER Work? The Evidence Base
• Reflections from student, school staff and clinicians
• Next steps
The DISCOVER Team
Why develop the DISCOVER Workshop Programme?
Prevalence of anxiety and depression in 16-18’s

• 1 in 10 young people experience a mental health disorder (Green et al., 2005)

• Increase in prevalence of mental health problems at 16-19 (Singleton et al., 2001)

• Over half of all mental ill health starts by age 14 and 75% develops by age 18 (Murphy and Fonagy, 2012)

• Most common mental health difficulties are anxiety and depression and these have high comorbidity (Green et al., 2005)

• Affects learning, problem solving, social relationships, future choices (Layard, 2008)

• Can have a significant impact on employment, income and relationship stability in adult life (Goodman, Joyce & Smith, 2011; Green et al. 2005)
Barriers to 16-18’s help seeking

• Only 10% of teenagers in need access CAMHS (Pugh et al., 2006)
• CAMHS are:
  • Clinic-based
  • Formal referral system (via GP)
  • Waiting-times
  • Prioritise high risk cases
• Emotional problems are often ‘hidden’ from adults
• Stigma and confidentiality concerns
• Unaware of support and nature of problems
• Anxiety at attending services
• Real life - school timetable and social pressures
Mental Health in school as a priority

• Future in mind (DoH, 2015)

• Teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing in PSHE lessons (PSHE Association, 2015)

• ‘Better inspection for all’ / Common Inspection Framework (Ofsted, 2015)

• Need for school-based mental health interventions to be evidence-based (Fazel et al, 2014)
What is the DISCOVER Workshop Programme?
Setting up DISCOVER in Schools

- CBT principles
- Familiar setting
- Easy ‘sign up’
- Designed with young people
- Adapted from evidence based community adult workshop model (Brown et al., 2000)
- Not NHS ‘patients’
- Focused on real life problems
- Open access
- Don’t have to tell parents
- Face to face and telephone support
- Confidential
The DISCOVER Programme Overview (4 Month Programme)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>School planning meeting(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sixth Form assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Information meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Individual assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>The DISCOVER Workshop</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Goal reviews by phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3 month follow-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Feedback and review session with teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The DISCOVER Workshop

**Topics:**
- Stress Psycho-education
- CBT cycle
- Thinking styles
- How to change:
  - Your thoughts
  - Your behaviour
  - Your body sensations

**Techniques:**
- Thought challenging
- Mindfulness
- Problem solving
- Time management
- Relaxation
- Sleep tips

**Methods:**
- Interactive
- Group activities
- Individual tasks
- Film vignettes
- Discussion
+ **Workbook** to take home

**Goal setting:**
- Tips for goal setting
- Setting own goal

Goal review by phone the following week
The DISCOVER Workbook

Stress: The basics

Mindfulness

Accepting your thoughts

Focus on the road ahead.

Learning to root out those annoying, thought and like unwanted passengers on your route through life.

Thinking styles

Do you have the time?

Discoveries

Meet the characters

ASHLEY

JO

LAURA

ISH

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Young people’s views......

DISCOVER Film
Does DISCOVER work?
The Evidence Base
Evidence - Pilot Study 2011 - 2012
(Sclare et al., 2015)

• Community / School based workshops
• N=31 (over 3 workshops)
• Reduction in anxiety & depression
• Improvements in self-esteem
• High levels of satisfaction
• Feedback - school-based workshops more acceptable

Next Step: RCT
RCT Team 2014-15

South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust

[Image of RCT Team members]

[Logos of King's College London, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience, and National Institute for Health Research]
Research Design

- 10 schools in Southwark and Lambeth
  - 5 randomised to experimental group
  - 5 randomised to delayed treatment control group
- Follow-up at 3 months
- Research assessors blind to experimental condition
Feasibility RCT Measures

- Mood and Feelings Questionnaire (MFQ) 
  *(Costello & Angold, 1988)*

- Revised Child Anxiety and Depression Scale (RCADS) 
  *(Chorpita et al., 2000)*

- Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well Being Scale (WEMWBS) 
  *(Tennant et al., 2007)*

- Client Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ8) 
  *(Larsen et al., 1979)*

- Additional measures piloted to consider quality of life, service usage and health economics based on adult model

- Qualitative study interviewing attendees (n=15), school staff (n=10), non-attenders (n=9)
Who attended DISCOVER?

N = 155

- Experimental = 72
- Control = 83

- Means on outcome measures were below clinical threshold

- Subgroup of higher need young people encouraged to attend by teachers (29%)
Importance of Goal Based Approach

- 75% has a goal review
- 91% were already working their on goal
- 43% opted for a second review, (with 9% opting for a third review)
Results showed:

• Significant reduction in anxiety
• Significant reduction in low mood
• Significant improvement in well-being

In the experimental group compared to the delayed treatment control group
Waitlist Control vs. Experimental

Figure 1: RCADS Results

Figure 2: MFQ Results

Figure 3: WEMWBS Results
Satisfaction with DISCOVER

- 96% of students were happy with DISCOVER and would recommend it

- "It was good, informative. Allowed you to look at the same things with a different point of view. Helped to tackle big problems by breaking it down into smaller goals."

- "The most helpful thing about this workshop was I learned different ways to keep organised. Also I believe I may be able to start doing my work and not having a fear about it."

- "I learned new and helpful ways on how to manage my stress. I found making goals for myself was helpful also because I can work effectively on things that are important to me."

- "I've learned that not having a plan can make things very hard for me and stress me out. I've also learned how to calm my mind and release my stress."

- "Really great workshop! Honestly I really got the help I needed!"

- "I loved this workshop and if I could come again I wouldn't miss the chance!"
School staff perspectives

“It’s quite nice to have people come in and take some of those students who are really stressed and kind of give them that support that they don’t, they can’t always get 24/7 with us.”

“We want them to be educated and to go on to great things but we also want to help them to, to develop as young adults and to be able to deal with things.”

“I think that the students know that it’s confidential is really important, so that they can really open up about things.”

“It is easy to set up and very well supported [...] it will not require that much time and effort but will give great opportunity to students.”

“It would be beneficial for us to be able to have some acknowledgment of what, what particular strategies work well, so that we can reinforce that with students.”
Reflections from our work so far....
Reflections: Students

• Overwhelmingly positive about the programme

• Felt more empowered to manage stress:
  
  ➢ “I think it’s made me think more about where the stress came from and that there are ways to deal with it rather than just freaking out.”

• Value of both individual and group based approach

• Importance of practical techniques

• Pressure of taking time off school lessons
Reflections: School Staff

• Something students really need:
  ➢ “We want them to be educated and to go on to great things but we also want to help them to develop as young adults and to be able to deal with things”

• Easy to facilitate (although some found the research commitments an additional pressure)

• Staff wanted to be more involved in the programme
Reflections: Clinicians Perspectives

- Pros and cons of a Manualised approach
- Research vs. Clinical priorities
- Measuring academic improvements
- Pros and cons of school based delivery….
Challenges of working in schools……
Next steps?

• Dissemination to other schools
• Developing marketing strategy
• Assessing capacity and costings
• Training others
• Piloting delivery with CAMHS services
Any Questions?
References

Contact us……

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