EFFECTIVENESS OF A TEACHER-BASED CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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Child sexual abuse prevention programs are designed to raise children’s knowledge and awareness regarding sexual abuse. Therefore, researchers in Turkey have developed a child sexual abuse prevention program called “I am learning to protect myself with Mika” for preschool children. The prevention program implemented by psychologists demonstrated that children gained more knowledge and skills to protect themselves. Because of teachers’ role on children’s development, it is important to implement a teacher-delivered child sexual abuse prevention program. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a teacher-delivered child sexual abuse prevention program.

The sample consisted of 290 children and their parents. The participants were randomly assigned to education (n=137) or comparison group (n=153). The age of children ranged from 46 to 71 months (M= 58.99, SD= 6.64). In three public preschools, ten preschool teachers were trained to deliver the program and eleven teachers were used as a control group who did not receive training. The prevention program is a 5-week program which consists of five modules such as emotional awareness, good touch-bad touch, and body safety rules.

To investigate the effectiveness of teacher-delivered child sexual abuse, Latent Markov Analysis was conducted. A three-class solution was found as the best model: Status-1 (self-protecting group: group who knows to be touched and to keeps it as a secret is wrong), Status-2 (group who knows to be touched is wrong but keeps it as a secret), and Status-3 (risk group who don’t know anything about touching and secrets). After the education members of Status-2 and Status-3 moved to Status-1 in the education group rather than in the comparison group. Skills were analyzed by using a 2 X 2 ANOVA with repeated measures. The interaction effects between group and time was significant. Follow-up analysis showed that gain on knowledge and skills of this program was maintained.

The results of this study were parallel to the previous literature. In sum, this program was also effective when delivered by teachers.