

Jennifer Fisher

Psychologist, with General Registration

The impact of a parent psychoeducation group on treatment outcomes of suicidal
young people

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School of Psychology, University of Newcastle

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Supervisors: Dr. Sean Halpin and Dr. Alex Hains

Statement of Originality

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to the final version of my thesis being made available worldwide when deposited in the University's Digital Repository, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

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Jennifer Fisher

Declarations

The authors declare that they have no competing interests. Jennifer Fisher and Alex Hains previously worked in the Suicide Prevention Program conducting both individual therapy with young people, and the psychoeducation group with parents. Neither author is currently involved in the service and have no competing interests in the current research.

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Abstract

Background: Suicide continues to be the lead cause of death for Australian young people aged 15-24 years. This is alarming given adolescence is often seen as the time which reflects the most productive, social, and positive years of life. Research on effective interventions for adolescent suicide has recommended a focus on improving protective factors against suicide, including education to parents about effective parental support and monitoring.

Aim: To assess the relationship between a single session parent psychoeducation session on specific clinical outcomes of psychological distress, hopelessness, non-suicidal self-injury, thwarted belongingness, perceived burdensomeness, and suicidal ideation and planning in young people accessing short term psychological support for suicide risk. *Method:* Baseline and final session data of clinical outcome measures of 182 young people aged 12 to 25 years ($M = 16$) who were participating in an individual intervention for suicide risk. Data from 34 young people (27 females; 7 males) who had one or more parent attend a single-session psychoeducation group was compared with 148 young people (107 females; 41 males) whose parent did not attend the group. *Results:* Findings indicated a decrease in youth-reported frequency of non-suicidal self-injury across the intervention was associated with parent attendance in the group. *Limitations:* Significant limitations of the current study were due to the data being collected from a clinical setting. Group allocation was not randomised, rather was based on whether parents accepted an invitation to attend the group. Due to this no conclusions of causation could be made. *Conclusions:* Findings provide preliminary support for the importance of including parental psychoeducation in the individual treatment of young people accessing support for suicide risk.

Keywords: suicide, young people, non-suicidal self-injury, parents

Table of Contents

Title Page	1
Statement of Originality	2
Declaration	3
Acknowledgements	4
Abstract	5
Table of Contents	6
List of Tables	8
List of Figures	9
Introduction	10
Suicide risk factors and interventions	11
Interpersonal aspects of suicide risk	14
Support for parents	15
Aims and hypothesis	16
Method	17
Participants	17
Measures	20
Procedure	22
Data analysis	24
Results	26
Correlations	26
Effects of parent attendance on suicide risk factors	27
Discussion	29
Main findings	29
Strengths and limitations of the study	33

EFFECTS OF PARENT PSYCHOEDUCATION ON SUICIDE RISK	7
Conclusion	35
References	36
Appendix A - Ethics Approval	45
Appendix B - Journal Instructions to Authors	48

List of Tables

Table 1	Examples of risk factors and warning signs for suicide	12
Table 2	Demographic and baseline clinical data for both Intervention and Control groups.....	19
Table 3	Bivariate correlations of covariates, parent attendance, and change in outcome variables across treatment	27

List of Figures

Figure 1	Participant selection flowchart.....	24
Figure 2	Changes in mean weekly ratings of NSSI across time in therapy for young people who did (Intervention) and did not (Control) have a parent attend a group psychoeducation group.....	29