



Child and Adolescent Anxiety and Mood Program (ChAAMP)

A primary care research-practice partnership

THE PROBLEM

On any given day, 1 in 5 children and adolescents suffer from disabling levels of anxiety and worry. Nearly 1 in 10 youths are clinically depressed. These two serious emotional problems cause significant impairment in school achievement, family life, and social relationships.

WHY PRIMARY CARE?

Primary care is playing an ever larger role in youth mental health care. Most prescriptions for psychiatric medications are written by pediatricians, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is routinely managed in primary care. Treating anxiety and depression is less common, but there are many reasons to think primary care may be a good care setting for “internalizing” youth. Internalizing youth visit pediatric offices more frequently with aches and pains, have poor compliance with physical health treatment recommendations, and have poorer health outcomes across the lifespan. In addition, several projects have successfully treated adult depression and anxiety in primary care. ***Our own pilot work has suggested that 70% of youths with anxiety or depression show substantial improvement, when treated with a brief, behavioral intervention in primary care.***

HOW CAN YOUR PRACTICE PARTICIPATE?

We are interested in extending this pilot research, and we are searching for primary care practice partners in the San Diego County area. We are looking for practices to participate in two studies – an initial screening study, followed by a treatment study.

Study 1: Screening for anxiety and depression (Summer 2007)

In our first study, we plan to screen families in interested practices to see:

- Are youths experiencing significant anxiety and/or depression?
- Are families interested in a future treatment study?

To participate in this study, your practice would:

- Identify youths age 8-17 when they come in to the practice for routine appointments
- Have the receptionist hand out a 1-page (front and back) anonymous questionnaire
- Collect the questionnaires to be picked up by ChAAMP staff

Study 2: Testing Brief Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (BCBT) for youth (Fall 2007)

In our second study, we plan to test our brief cognitive behavioral therapy (BCBT) program in practices.

This BCBT treatment program involves:

- FREE treatment for 8 visits of 45 minutes each (per child) by an expert BCBT therapist
- Teaching youths how to relax, solve problems, and use positive activities to raise mood
- NO medication given as part of the program
- Treatment provided in your practice setting
- Direct communication with you about each child's mood and response to treatment

To participate in this study, your practice would:

- Help us identify 5-10 youths with anxiety or depression, by referral or screening
- Provide access to a room where we can interview families, seek consent for participation, and see families for BCBT treatment (can be evenings or weekends)

Following these two studies, we plan to submit a grant to the National Institute of Mental Health to support a large randomized clinical trial of this program. For more information, please contact Robin Weersing, Ph.D., (Principal Investigator) at 619-594-8892 or at chaamp.sdsu@gmail.com. You also can learn more about our work at www.sci.sdsu.edu/chaamp. ***We hope you will consider working with us on this project!***