Tell Me A Story as a Bibliotherapy Intervention to Promote Resiliency in Military Children

KatherineMarie Conover, PhD RN
Curry College School of Nursing

Children of Military Members
- A third of a million children aged 6 to 11 of active duty military members (DoD, 2016)
- Increased stress from risk factors (Lemmon & Stafford, 2014)
  - Frequent moves
  - Parental deployment
  - Parent Divorce
  - Mental Health
- Effects of parental deployment (Hooper, Moore, & Smith, 2014; Larson et al., 2012; Ryan-Wenger, 2001)
  - Parentification
  - Increased fear of war
  - Increased specialty office visits (anxiety, depression)

Resiliency
- Interrelated bio-psycho-social ecology (Ungar, 2012)
- Positive growth
- Depends on social and physical environment
- Positive development process changes
  - Traits
  - Behaviors
  - Cognitions

Tell Me A Story™
- TMAS was created in 2005 by Military Child Education Coalition
- Using positive psychology as a basis, a curriculum of 16 books were selected, all focusing on the military child’s needs (Clime & Mastoras, 2015; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Scaglioni & Rizzo, 2010)
  - Optimism
  - Emotions, thoughts, and motivational factors
  - Life Satisfaction
  - Predicts good self-esteem, optimism, self efficacy, and reduction of problems
  - Strengths based approach
- A TMAS event is composed of three parts:
  - Group reading with VIP reader
  - Discussion session
  - Activity session

Design & Methods
- Community based quasi-experimental pre-post design with waitlist controls
- Participants: Active duty military members and their spouses
  - Living on or near seven military installations in continental U.S.
  - Reporting on their perceptions of their children aged 6-10 years old
  - Intervention Group n = 23
  - Control Group n = 4
- Measures
  - Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM; Ungar & Liebenberg, 2011)
  - Ego-Resiliency Q-Sort (ER11; Taylor et al., 2014)
  - Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001)

Results
- Improvement in resiliency (CYRM, F = 4.8, p = .039, η² = 0.19) and ego-resiliency (ER11, F = 8.7, p = .008, η² = 0.30) after attending intervention
- Boys benefited in reduction of internalizing problem behaviors more than girls (F = 5.6, p = .028, η² = 0.22)

Practice Implications
- TMAS helps to increase resiliency
- Protective effect for boy’s resiliency
- Use of TMAS as programming for military families

Bibliotherapy
- Reading of stories which are used to help gain insight (Allen Heath, Sheen, Leavy, Young, & Money, 2005; Iaquinta & Hipsky, 2006; Olsen, 1975)
- Characters and stories used therapeutically
- Children deal with strong emotions safely
- Four stages:
  - Pre reading (selecting appropriate stories)
  - Guided reading (reading with someone)
  - Post-reading discussion (talking about the events and characters)
  - Activity (integration of story into life)

Acknowledgements
Thanks to University of Massachusetts Amherst IRB, Dr. Genevieve Chandler, Dr. Lisa Chiolo, and Dr. Claire Hamilton, for their support for my dissertation research.

Contact Information
KatherineMarie Conover PhD RN
Assistant Professor
617-333-2336
Katherinemarie.Conover@curry.edu

Tell Me A Story™ was created in 2005 by Military Child Education Coalition.

Tell Me A Story as a Bibliotherapy Intervention to Promote Resiliency in Military Children

Resiliency
- Interrelated bio-psycho-social ecology (Ungar, 2012)
- Positive growth
- Depends on social and physical environment
- Positive development process changes
  - Traits
  - Behaviors
  - Cognitions

Design & Methods
- Community based quasi-experimental pre-post design with waitlist controls
- Participants: Active duty military members and their spouses
  - Living on or near seven military installations in continental U.S.
  - Reporting on their perceptions of their children aged 6-10 years old
  - Intervention Group n = 23
  - Control Group n = 4
- Measures
  - Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM; Ungar & Liebenberg, 2011)
  - Ego-Resiliency Q-Sort (ER11; Taylor et al., 2014)
  - Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001)

Results
- Improvement in resiliency (CYRM, F = 4.8, p = .039, η² = 0.19) and ego-resiliency (ER11, F = 8.7, p = .008, η² = 0.30) after attending intervention
- Boys benefited in reduction of internalizing problem behaviors more than girls (F = 5.6, p = .028, η² = 0.22)

Practice Implications
- TMAS helps to increase resiliency
- Protective effect for boy’s resiliency
- Use of TMAS as programming for military families

Bibliotherapy
- Reading of stories which are used to help gain insight (Allen Heath, Sheen, Leavy, Young, & Money, 2005; Iaquinta & Hipsky, 2006; Olsen, 1975)
- Characters and stories used therapeutically
- Children deal with strong emotions safely
- Four stages:
  - Pre reading (selecting appropriate stories)
  - Guided reading (reading with someone)
  - Post-reading discussion (talking about the events and characters)
  - Activity (integration of story into life)