

USMENA PRIOPĆENJA V.

Addressing individual psychological vulnerabilities in youth through supporting, preventing, empowering, linking: randomized control study

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The project „Addressing Individual Psychological Vulnerabilities through supporting, preventing, empowering, linking” was implemented by Prevent Association in Novi Sad over the period of 12 months, targeting early adolescents with psychological vulnerabilities. Project developed, implemented and tested context adjusted model of individual interventions for decreasing risk of substance abuse among adolescents. In this study the results of a randomized controlled trial of the effect of conducted prevention program were detailed. Participants were 370 adolescents (43.8% males), age ranged from 11 to 14 years ($M = 12.31$, $SD = 1.18$). Intervention group was created based on their scores on four dimensions of Substance Use Risk Profile Scale (SURPS). The most vulnerable participants for substance abuse for each dimension were selected – hopelessness, sensitivity to anxiety, impulsivity and sensation seeking. In total the intervention phase of the study involved 140 participants: 70 from the intervention group and 70 for control group, paired with demographic variables. Interventions included three main components: education on connection between situations and our emotional functioning, behavioural and cognitive coping skills. Used measures were: Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale, Positive and Negative Affect and Physiological Hyperarousal Scale, and Coping Scale for Children and Youth in pre-test and post-test measuring point. Data suggest that preventive interventions can have a positive effect on high-risk youth. Participants from intervention group improved with respect to Impulsivity ($t = 3.48$, $p < .05$), Sensation seeking ($t = 3.02$, $p < .05$), Negative affect ($t = 3.94$, $p < .001$), Physiological arousal ($t = 3.69$, $p < .001$), Depression ($t = 4.34$, $p < .001$), Anxiety ($t = 2.28$, $p < .05$) and Stress ($t = 2.60$, $p < .05$) due to intervention strategies. Lack of significant results on other examined constructs may be due to the high-risk nature of the subjects, who are likely in need of more intensive and long-term interventions.

Ključne riječi: adolescents, substance abuse, context adjusted model, prevention program