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The development of a tool for parents for the stimulation of communication skills in infants (0 – 12 months)

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Abstract

The development of a tool for parents for the stimulation of communication skills in infants (0 – 12 months)

South Africa is a developing country and children in South Africa are at a high risk for developing communication disorders with more than 10% of children under three likely to have communication disorders. The ideal is to prevent as many of these communication disorders as possible. This requires the identification of factors within specific communities which may increase the risk for or resilience against developing communication disorders. Providing information on communication development is a form of primary prevention which has proven to be highly successful.

There is a continuum of communities in the South African context that range from the developing to the developed and at each level parents have specific requirements regarding the need for information on communication development. Considering the large number of South African infants who are at risk for developing communication disorders and in recognition of the many different communities in the South African context, the need for prevention tools which are developed to meet the needs of specific communities, becomes apparent.

This study aimed to develop a tool for parents of a specific South African community, identified as Pretoria East, for the stimulation of communication skills in infants that is valid in terms of content and is judged by parents to be practical and empowering. In order to achieve this aim three phases of research were planned. Phase one aimed to identify the needs of parents and professionals in terms of the informational content and format of a tool for the stimulation of communication in infants. Phase two aimed to develop a tool for the stimulation of communication in infants based on the needs and preferences expressed by parents and professionals, the active involvement of parents from the community in focus group discussions as well as on sound theoretical underpinnings of infant development. Phase three aimed to validate the tool by determining whether the tool fulfilled the needs of parents in terms of informational content and format.

The results of this research indicated that a need was identified in parents and professionals alike for a tool for parents on the stimulation of communication skills in infants. A video was indicated as the most popular choice of format. The content of the stimulation tool which was developed in phase two reflected the needs and preferences of the community and included the following topics, namely: discussions and demonstrations on the normal development of communication skills in infants, techniques that would facilitate normal development, risk factors and resilience factors which may influence communication development as well as information on locating a professional. In phase three parents from the community evaluated the video tool as practical and empowering, therefore achieving the main objective of the research.

This research highlighted the need within a specific community for information on the facilitation of communication development in young children, implying the need for further research in order to determine the needs of other South African communities. Recommendations were also made regarding the need for speech-language therapists to increase their involvement in prevention initiatives and community work.

Key Terms

Infants (0-12 months); parents; communication development; resilience; primary prevention; community needs; video; stimulation.

Opsomming

Die ontwikkeling van ‘n hulpmiddel vir ouers vir die stimulering van kommunikasievermoëns van babas (0 – 12 maande)

Suid Afrika is ‘n ontwikkelende land en kinders in Suid Afrika vertoon ‘n hoë risiko om kommunikasieafwykings te ontwikkel met die waarskynlikheid dat meer as 10% van kinders onder die ouderdom van drie kommunikasieafwykings mag hê. Die ideaal is om so veel van hierdie afwykings as moontlik te voorkom. Dit vereis egter dat risiko faktore en weerstandsfaktore wat kommunikasie ontwikkeling mag beïnvloed binne bepaalde gemeenskappe geidentifiseer moet word. Die verskaffing van inligting is ‘n vorm van primêre voorkoming wat blyk om hoogs suksesvol te wees.

Daar is ‘n kontinuum gemeenskappe in die Suid Afrikaanse konteks wat wissel vanaf ontwikkelend tot ontwikkeld en op elke vlak het ouers besondere behoeftes met betrekking tot informasie oor kommunikasie intwikkeling. In ag genome die groot aantal Suid Afrikaanse babas wat die risiko loop om kommunikasieafwykings te ontwikkel en gegewe die verskeidenheid gemeenskappe in die Suid Afrikaanse konteks word die behoefte vir hulpmiddels vir voorkoming, spesiaal ontwikkel om die behoeftes van spesifieke gemeenskappe aan te spreek, duidelik.

Hierdie studie se doel was die ontwikkeling van ‘n hulpmiddel vir ‘n spesifieke gemeenskap wat as Pretoria Oos bekend staan, vir die stimulering van kommunikasievaardighede by babas wat toepaslik is in terme van inhoud en wat as prakties en bemagtigend beoordeel word deur ouers. Ten einde die doel te bereik was drie fases van navorsing beplan. Fase een het be-oog om die behoeftes van ouers en beroepslui te identifiseer in terme van die inligtingsinhoud en formaat van ‘n hulpmiddel vir die stimulasie van kommunikasievaardighede by babas. Fase twee was gemik op die daarstelling van ‘n hulpmiddel vir die stimulering van kommunikasie by babas gegrond op die behoeftes en voorkeure wat uitgedruk is deur ouers en beroepslui, die aktiewe betrokkenheid van ouers vanuit die gemeenskap in fokusgroepbesprekings sowel as op ‘n grondige teoretiese onderbou van

ontwikkeling. Fase drie het beoog om die hulpmiddel te valideer deur vas te stel of dit die behoeftes van ouers vervul in terme van die inligtingsinhoud en formaat.

Die resultate van hierdie navorsing het aangedui dat ‘n behoefte ewe-eens by ouers sowel as beroepslui geidentifiseer is vir ‘n hulpmiddel vir ouers ten einde die kommunikasievermoens by babas te kan stimuleer. ‘n Video-opname is uitgelig as die formaat van keuse. Die inhoud van die hulpmiddel wat ontwikkel is in fase drie het die behoeftes en voorkeure van die gemeenskap weerspieel en het die volgende onderwerpe ingesluit, naamlik: besprekings en demonstrasies oor die normale ontwikkeling van kommunikasievaardighede by babas, tegnieke wat normale ontwikkeling sou fasiliteer, risiko faktore en weerstandsfaktore wat kommunikasie ontwikkeling mag beïnvloed sowel as waar om ‘n beroepspraktisyn te vind. In fase drie het ouers vanuit die gemeenskap die video as prakties en bemagtigend bevind en so is die hoofdoel van die navorsing bereik.

Hierdie navorsing het die behoefte van ‘n bepaalde gemeenskap vir informasie oor die fasilitering van kommunikasie ontwikkeling by jong kinders geidentifiseer. Dit impliseer die noodsaaklikheidheid vir verdere navorsing om die behoeftes van ander Suid Afrikaanse gemeenskappe te identifiseer. Daar is ook aanbeveel dat spraak-taalterapeute toenemend betrokke raak in gemeenskapswerk en die voorkoming van kommunikasie afwykings.

Sleutelterme

Babas (0-12 maande); ouers; kommunikasie ontwikkeling; weerstandbiedenheid; primêre voorkoming; gemeenskapsbehoeftes; video; stimulasie.

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