

Data Analysis Summary of Minding Your Mind Speaker Program: Stigma Reduction

Introduction

The Minding Your Mind Speaker Program is conducted at middle schools and high schools throughout the greater Philadelphia region and beyond. Minding Your Mind’s Speaker Program features young adults who have mental health conditions talking to students about their experiences with mental illness in a way that challenges negative stereotypes about people with mental health conditions. The Speaker Program is an evidence-based **contact** strategy to reduce stigmatized attitudes about people living with mental illness. Many research studies show that contact strategies are the most effective way to improve attitudes about those with mental health conditions. Statistical analysis of the Speaker Program shows that the program is improving students’ attitudes about people with mental illness. These improvements demonstrate that Minding Your Mind’s Speaker Program is an effective stigma-reduction program, and one of the few in the country that has the data to prove it.

Evaluation Design

To measure the effect of the Speaker Program on stigma, students who participate in the Speaker Program are given the Attribution Questionnaire-8-C (AQ-8-C) one week before the intervention and immediately after the intervention. The AQ-8-C is an eight-item survey that poses statements and questions that require a respondent to rate her level of agreement with a statement on a scale of one to nine, or to answer a question on a scale of one to nine. The statements and questions relate to a brief story about Charlie, a hypothetical boy with mental illness who has transferred to the respondent’s school. Higher scores on each item reflect higher levels of prejudice. Therefore, lower scores at posttest compared to pretest are desired. The eight items on the AQ-8-C correspond to the following attitudinal categories:

- | | |
|-----------|----------------|
| 1. Pity | 5. Segregation |
| 2. Danger | 6. Anger |
| 3. Fear | 7. Help |
| 4. Blame | 8. Avoidance |

Results

When measuring statistical significance, something called a p-value shows whether or not the result is statistically significant. The threshold for statistically significant P-values can be set at different levels, but usually .05 is selected. When this is the threshold, any p-value below .05 is considered statistically significant. In this case, the p-value is measuring whether the differences between the students’ pretest and posttest scores are statistically significant. As the table below shows, the p-values for five of the categories were below the threshold of .05. **In plain language**, this suggests that the Speaker Program is indeed improving students’ attitudes about people with mental illness. Specifically, they are less likely to think students with mental illness are dangerous, less likely to be afraid, less likely to think students with mental health issues should be in different classes, less likely to be angry with students with mental illness, and less likely to avoid them socially.

In the table below, the first column lists the attitude category, the second column lists the students’ average scores one week before the Speaker Program, the third column lists their average scores afterwards, and the fourth column indicates if there is a statistically significant difference between before and after. Remember, the specific numbers in the fourth column are not that important, just that they are below .05. For a more detailed explanation of this section, p-values, and the statistical test used to obtain these results, contact the Scattergood Fellow on Stigma Reduction, Timothy Clement at tclement@scattergoodfoundation.org

N= 207 Students

Table of Mean Averages and P-Values

Attitude Category	Average Score Pretest	Average Score Posttest	Significance (p-value)
Pity	6.21	5.96	.179 (not significant)
Dangerousness	3.26	2.11	.000
Fear	2.46	1.68	.000
Blame	1.41	1.26	.051 (not significant)
Segregation	4.02	2.64	.000
Anger	1.41	1.20	.001
Help	3.63	3.88	.362 (not significant)
Avoidance	2.83	1.88	.000

The AQ-8-C (The AQ-8-C is a valid and reliable instrument)

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT ABOUT CHARLIE.

Charlie is a new student in your class. Before Charlie's first day, your teacher explained that Charlie is mentally ill and is transferring from a special school.

NOW CIRCLE THE NUMBER OF THE BEST ANSWER TO EACH QUESTION.

1. I would feel pity for Charlie.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
none at all								very much

2. How dangerous would you feel Charlie is?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
none at all								very much

3. How scared of Charlie would you feel?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
none at all								very much

4. I think Charlie is to blame for the mental illness.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
no, none at all								yes, absolutely so

5. I think Charlie should be in a special class for kids with problems, not a normal class like mine.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
none at all								very much

6. How angry would you feel at Charlie?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
none at all								very much

7. How likely is it that you would help Charlie with school work?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
definitely would help								definitely would not help

8. I would try to stay away from Charlie after school.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
none at all								very much