



Using Storyboarding to Train School Staff to Deliver Mental Health Interventions

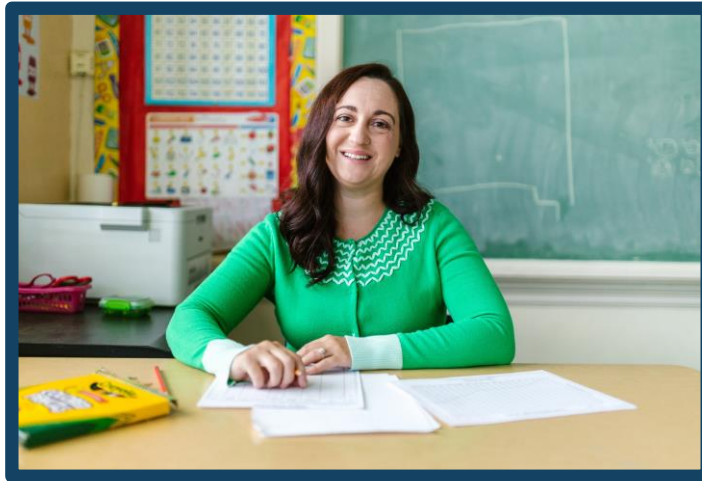
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Because schools are often a convenient and trusted space for families, delivering mental health interventions on school

grounds might make receiving mental health services more accessible to families who need mental healthcare.

However, delivering family-focused mental health interventions

requires specialized training.



*Figure 1 Photograph by RODNAE Productions:
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-in-green-long-sleeve-shirt-writing-on-paper-8363787/>Public Domain CCO*

“Mental health professionals in schools and the community are often overburdened and underfunded in high-need areas, limiting their capacity to deliver needed family-based mental health interventions. To train professional and paraprofessional school personnel in maternal depression and interventions, we used storyboarding, a narrative storytelling method traditionally used to create films.”

To train mental health providers in delivering these interventions, we used storyboarding, a narrative storytelling technique usually used to create films. By using storyboarding, we illustrated the multi-step process of engaging and videotaping families as they described their experiences of living with mental health issues.

Highlights

Storyboarding can creatively engage families to share their experiences with mental health problems.

Community-engaged tools such as storyboarding can be used to increase awareness and reduce stigma of maternal depression among staff training to deliver family-focused mental health programs in schools.

Methods

We invited Latinx families with maternal depression who had previously completed a family-focused mental health intervention to participate in this project. With their permission, we videotaped them talking about their experiences of living with mental health issues. The videos captured the complex emotions and experiences of the families. The video clips were organized into themes (e.g., the impact of maternal depression on children) and were then used to create training materials for school staff to deliver a family-focused mental health intervention in schools.

Results

- Storyboarding can capture the lived experiences of people with mental health problems and can be used to create training materials for school staff.
- This training material might be useful in increasing empathy among school staff about mental health issues in families.

HOW DID A COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY PERSPECTIVE INFORM YOUR WORK?

Our work goes beyond focusing on the individual. We focus on how other factors affect one's mental health, such as the limited access to mental health services, and a lack of providers who are trained in delivering family-focused mental health interventions. Our work is action-oriented because it provides a step-by-step approach to create videos and training materials, which can later be used to train professionals to deliver family-focused mental health interventions.

What Does This Mean For?

Research: Our work describes the use of storyboarding as an engaging data collection strategy, which future community-based studies could replicate.

Practice: Our work was specific to a family-focused mental health intervention for maternal depression. However, our approach of using storyboards could be adapted to create training materials for other mental health concerns, such as anxiety or grief.

Social Action: School staff in areas where mental health needs are high are often underfunded or overworked. Our work provides an option to reduce this workload by suggesting training other school personnel, such as paraprofessionals (e.g., engagement specialists and bilingual coordinators).

Similar Settings: Our work suggests that storyboarding is one creative approach to learn more about the mental health needs of families and train staff to learn about delivering family-focused mental health interventions.

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