Reviewer’s report

Title: The effectiveness of the Inspiring Futures parenting programme in improving behavioural and emotional outcomes in primary school children with behavioural or emotional difficulties: study protocol for a randomised controlled trial

Version: 1 Date: 14 Sep 2017

Reviewer: Oana Alexandra David

Reviewer’s report:

This topic is of importance and there is a high value in researching the efficacy of parenting programs. The strength of the study is the statistical power offered by the sample size. However, the enthusiasm is limited by the following shortcomings in the methodology proposed:

- The program needs to be described in details for each session.
- While authors present in the intro data regarding the efficacy of cognitive-behavioral group based parent programs, then they choose to build a new one based on „A combination of child development education and psychodynamic, transactional and solution-focused therapy is used to improve parenting skills.”. The rationale for doing so is not provided.
- Authors mention research on the strategies found to be more effective in such programs but they do not seem to be part of this program.
- It is not clear why CWQ is used since it is a general measure and other measures are available for parent specific emotion-regulation.
- Follow-up is used incorrectly here and this is misleading since it suggests that long term reasuts are registered for the program. Follow-up is actually post-test since some of the sample will receive intervention in the meantime. Week count should be made from post-test not from the beginning of the intervention. It would be useful to follow participants at least 3 months after the termination of the intervention.
- Clarification needs to be made in terms of intent to treat analyses and definition of drop-outs.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.
Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

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I am able to assess the statistics

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