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## Improving mental health among children in low income families

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Children in low income families may show higher rates of psychological problems such as depression and anxiety because of their multiple adverse environmental conditions. They need to receive specific intervention to reduce their emotional problems. This study aimed at investigating effects of Mind Management Program (MMP) on depression, anxiety and self-concept among low-income children. Participants were 67 low income children. Intervention group (n=39) received eight weekly MMP sessions weekly, taking one and half hours per session. They were provided with a child-centered activities including recognizing stress, knowing emotion-though-need, changing thought, managing negative emotion and finding their strengths. Control group (n=28) received the routine case management services in community child health and welfare centers. Enrolled children were assessed on depression, anxiety and self-concept at pre- and post-intervention. Demographic data were summarized by descriptive analysis. Independent t-test was conducted to identify group-differences for pretest scores of main variables. The group-differences of changes in depression and self-concept after the intervention were analyzed by Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) because we should consider the interaction of subscales to affect the significance in group-difference. The group-differences of changes in anxiety after the intervention were tested using Univariate Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). Covariance were grade, school record and pretest scores in social, physical and intellectual dimension of self-concept because significant group differences were found in those variables. Significant decreases in depression and anxiety were found in MMP group after the intervention. However, there was no significant change in self-concept. MMP is helpful to reduce negative emotions in low-income children. Given that children in poverty more frequently exposure to stressful life events, it is significant that the program break the increasing tendency of psychosocial symptoms and prevent children from experiencing more serious emotional problems. Further research with larger population is needed.

### Biography

Lee Gyungjoo has her expertise in teaching, research and counseling for improving the mental health of clients and their families. She is a passionate Professor who teaches nursing students about psychiatric mental health nursing at the Catholic University of Korea. She is also interested in the development of a training program for enhancing the quality of psychiatric-mental health nurse professionals in South Korea. Her research field is family counseling for improving children's mental health. She has been contributing to the community as an educator, researcher and child and family counselor.

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