

Psychological Assistance for Children in the New Era in China after Major Emergencies

Yonglu Wang^{1, a} and Kai Zhang^{2, b, *}

¹School of Nanjing Medical University, Nanjing, 210009, China

²School of Southwest Medical University, Luzhou, 646000, China

^a3462903628@qq.com, ^b58082144@qq.com,

Abstract

Children are vulnerable to psychological crises after major emergencies, and if the psychological shadows or traumas that occur in childhood are not relieved in time, the development of physical and mental health of children will be seriously affected. In recent years, psychological assistance for children after major emergencies has attracted wide attention from the society in the field of research and practice. Therefore, in order to provide some reference for the future development of psychological assistance for children after major emergencies, we intend to explore the problems in the field of emergency psychological assistance for children in China in the new era, and explore the direction and ideas to solve them, based on elaborating on the current situation of psychological assistance for children after major emergencies in China.

Keywords

Post major emergency; Psychological crisis of children; Psychological assistance for children.

1. Introduction

A major emergency is a sudden occurrence that may cause significant casualties, property damage, ecological and environmental damage and serious social hazards, endangering public safety. It includes natural disasters, accidents, public health events and social security events. [1]. As a social stressor, major emergencies are characterized by high stress intensity, suddenness, threat, unpredictability, and uncertainty of consequences. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a delayed, persistent abnormal psychiatric reaction with a prevalence of 1.0% to 2.6% in the general population and a lifetime prevalence of 59.4% in individuals.

After a major emergency, people in distress may experience acute stress disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and other psychological crises. Because of the high prevalence of PTSD, persistent symptoms, and poor prognosis, it is generally accepted in academic circles that it will bring a heavy burden to individuals and society for the lack of effective external intervention [2, 3]. Child psychology studies children and adolescents between the ages of 0-18 when they are in immature stage of psychological development, more prone to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and are vulnerable to psychological crisis after major emergencies.

2. Current Research on Psychological Assistance Strategies for Children After Major Emergencies in China

Psychological assistance is mainly divided into three categories for children affected by major emergencies: First, the main psychological disorders are from a reduced sense of security for ordinary children affected by major emergencies. Second, the main psychological disorders are

from the lack of belonging and love for children who have had a loved one injured or died. Third, the main difficulty is how to deal with their imperfect selves for children with physical injuries or even disabilities. Research has shown that the most effective individual interventions for children are mainly sand tray therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy. The main group intervention methods are psychodrama. There is no significant difference between individual and group interventions on children's psychological disorders after major emergencies [4].

The trinity of society, school and family is usually reinforced in three stages to help children of different ages (infant, toddler, preschool, school age, adolescence):

Phase I: the main task is to maintain life safety within 1 month after a major emergency;

Phase II: the main task is to deal with placement services, emotional reassurance, relief measures, resource coordination, etc. within 1-6 months;

Phase III: between 6 months-3 years, the main work is life reconstruction and psychological reconstruction [5].

Common interventions include emotion dredging based on Belkin's Balanced Model Theory, play therapy recommended by Bratton and Ray [6], physical rehabilitation [7], reading therapy [8, 9], psychological projection tests for drawing [10], death education, and art therapy covering drawing, music, dance and drama [11]. In addition, Chinese medicine and acupuncture have been effective in treating trauma in children after major emergencies. [12, 13]

3. Construction of Psychological Assistance System for Children After Major Emergencies in China's New Era

The rise of psychological assistance in China has gone through three important stages, and the overall level has been greatly improved: the SARS epidemic period was at the budding stage, the Wenchuan earthquake period belongs to the development stage, and the period of the new coronavirus pneumonia epidemic belongs to the large-scale psychological assistance. After the outbreak of the new coronavirus pneumonia, based on the urgent mental health needs of the majority of children, emergency psychological assistance for children in China was quickly launched. During this period, the psychological assistance force was strong and professionalized, and the relevant state ministries and commissions provided strong guidance. The new form of the Internet Plus model psychological assistance was created, and a combination of online and offline psychological assistance was carried out. China's large-scale psychological assistance for children after major emergencies has taken shape. However, there are still some shortcomings in China's psychological assistance for children:

Firstly, there is a lack of a unified system, and psychological assistance is coordinated by multiple departments, which easily leads to confusion and inefficiency in psychological assistance work;

Secondly, psychological assistance techniques are basically adopted from abroad, which obviously ignores the Chinese cultural background of psychological assistance and the social and psychological characteristics of children in the new era in China;

Third, psychological assistance resources are seriously wasted, and there are problems such as duplication of construction;

Fourth, the advanced experience of emergency psychological assistance for children with Chinese characteristics has not yet been showcased in the international arena, nor has it been fully shared with the World Health [14].

As of 2020, China's emergency psychological assistance for children still lacks legal protection, a clear authority, and special government funding support, and has not yet been combined with a regular professional team of social psychological services [15].

4. Thinking

4.1. Pre-disaster Education

In the popular anti-epidemic movie "Chinese Doctor" in 2021, Zhang Zifeng plays a role as a child with no support who asks the question "What should a person do if he doesn't have a mother and a father?" At present, there is a serious lack of life and death education for children in China, children do not understand the meaning of life? What are their personal values? As a result, after a major emergency, children suffering the loss of a loved one or their own disability, will have a momentary or even long-term psychological difficulty in accepting it, and thus develop a series of psychological disorders. Ultimately, psychological support for children is about helping them to find their personal values. External motivation is only a drop in the bucket. The endogenous motivation is the only way to keep it flowing.

First of all, It is indispensable for parents and teachers to learn about pre-disaster education through intermediary agent such as books, training courses, lectures by experts and online platforms [16]. After the construction of the pre-disaster education camp, the pre-disaster life and death education should be implemented in children's family education and schools. Parents and elders can build up psychological infrastructure of children by telling stories, role playing, etc. Schools can guiding school-age children to explore the meaning of life by offering life education courses and death education cultural activities. The education that focuses on the cultivation of subjective personality and the stimulation of endogenous motivation can guide the self-knowledge, self-reliance and self-control of adolescents, and stimulate the endogenous motivation of adolescents to develop and resist stress independently [17, 18]and enhance children's psychological resilience [19].

Due to the characteristics of the era of "the Internet Plus model", it is an inevitable trend for children and adolescents to develop their mental health online. Big data can be used to establish and improve the mental health records of adolescents in universities. We will actively create an online platform for learning and exchanging psychological knowledge for children and youth groups, teachers and parents to help children and adolescents understand themselves correctly, cultivate positive, optimistic and healthy psychological qualities, and cultivate the awareness of seeking help when they encounter problems. [20, 21, 22]

4.2. Incorporating Cultural Contextual Considerations Into Psychological Assistance

Culture is the externalization of psychology, and psychology is the accumulation of culture. The development of psychology in China started late, the foundation is weak, and so far there is no indigenous theory in the full sense of the word [23]. Western-style psychology is based on Western utilitarian, maritime and resistance culture, which is incompatible with China's ethical, inland and harmonious cultural traditions [24].

In fact, the "invasion" of Western-style psychology is also a kind of cultural colonization. As a result, we should remove the dross and take the essence, and critically accept the Western psychological theories. We should insist on our independence, integrate elements of traditional Chinese culture, without neglecting our own system; it insists on science rather than scientism, breaking through the division between science and humanities in existing research; it insists on local application, taking the initiative to connect with new knowledge and striving to serve children in the new era [25]. For example, the post-disaster psychological intervention method proposed by the American Red Cross: sharing report, used at the disaster site, takes discussion as the main form to help disaster victims to raise their disaster experience from feeling to understanding [26]. This would be tantamount to destroying what is valuable in life live to the sufferers. On the contrary, traditional Chinese culture tends to care for the hearts of the

sufferers with well-intentioned lies, such as "Mom and Dad have become stars to watch over us in the sky".

As an ancient civilization with a splendid culture of 5,000 years, China is in the process of realizing the goal of "two hundred years" and the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. It is necessary to continuously enhance the cultural confidence in psychological assistance.

4.3. Adapt to the Changes of the Times

The level of children's mental health has not improved with economic development, and the destructive power of behaviors caused by psychological problems is increasing under the historical changes. Internet addiction, game addiction and the phenomenon of "hollow disease" have become the children's mental health killers in the new era of [27]. Therefore, the important initiative to promote children's mental health after major emergencies is no longer to solve a single problem, but to build up a good child mental health ecosystem, and to actively promote children's mental health.

In today's era of the Internet Plus model, children's psychology is characterized by the following features: carrying a heavy emotional burden, having a high demand for the right to speak, having a broad knowledge, kind, having a very weak sense of reality, having a high demand for personalized life, and having contradictory and tangled knotted [28, 29]. Therefore, whether it is the family, school, community or society, when it comes to providing sudden and significant psychological assistance to children after a sudden major event, it is important to put these psychological characteristics and values of children in the new era into consideration to reduce ineffective intervention and excessive intervention.

As the world is undergoing the greatest change in the century, nurturing a new generation of socialist successors who are idealistic, responsible, ambitious and physically and mentally healthy is a top priority for China's future progress and development. The active and effective psychological assistance for children in response to sudden and critical events is a new perspective of education. The psychological assistance for children is a new perspective of education, which can help them establish a correct outlook on life, values and worldview, and grow into a healthy and upward new generation of youth, which is an inevitable need for national development in the new era.

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Talent Introduction Foundation.

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