The Face of Diabetes: the Child's Perspective

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Conflict of Interest Disclosure

• NONE

Objectives

• Explore the role of art in pediatric health care
• Discuss the results of review of art collected in routine follow up diabetes visits
• Explore future research
Review of Literature

Art has been used:
• to make meaning
• facilitate comprehension
• manage stress
• to enhance self-esteem and life satisfaction.
• integrate creativity (non-verbal/verbal)
• shape persons through self-exploration & expression.

Literature review, cont.

• Art enables a sense of accomplishment.
• Drawing aids in sorting through feelings & experiences
• It promotes expression of what might be suppressed (words cannot describe).

Art in the literature, cont.

• By reducing stress, coping is facilitated (in general) & when dealing with chronic illness.
• Art allows enhanced communication
• Art allows distancing between “artist” and their “condition”.
Lit review, cont.

- Detail and expression within facial drawings develop in tandem with child development.
- Art is developmentally supportive & can impact neuronal development.
- The process of visualizing & working to achieve the outcome imagined impacts focus-ability.
- Diabetes care & outcomes are influenced by stress

Limited studies using art in diabetes

Nuvoli et. al, 1989
- Youth age 10 to 15 years
- Used “draw a sick person”.
- Compared to control of well youth “draw a person” test.
- The “diabetic” youth
  - drew an image of “sick person” having projective elements, depressive signs & retreating into themselves
  - seemed less prone to the cultural stereotype requiring a smiling, happy image of a “healthy person”
  - had symbolic defense which allowed them to adapt & move from anxiousness to psychological recovery.

Nuvoli, Maioli, Ferrari, Pala & Chiaretti, 1989

Limited studies, cont.

Basso and Pelech 2008
- Studied creative arts intervention in Diabetes camp
  - Used acting and role playing
- Youth had opportunity to decipher the emotional part of diabetes through symbolic play in a secure environment

Limited studies, cont.
Harel et al in 2013
• Used art therapy for youth with poorly controlled type 1 diabetes
  • Observed improved glucose control in 56% of the case group
  • (compared to 23% of the control group)
Nansell, Iannotti, and Liu, in 2012
• 12 to 14 year old age group studied for clinic intervention
  • Clinic-integrated behavioral interventions for family of youth with diabetes had a significant overall effect

Our “event” @ Children’s of WI - Fox Valley
• Duration: August to December 2014
• Students given paper, crayons
• While clinic data entered into system, students were asked to draw:
  • “If diabetes had a face, what would it look like?”
• As art was collected
  • Similarities were noted
• Literature review done:
  • limited data on art/diabetes
• Pictures divided into age groups:
  • 4-8, 9-12, 13-15, 16-20
• Nurse researchers evaluated art for complexity, expression, appliances, etc

Results of preliminary study
• Evaluated 212 pictures
• Most common expression: neutral (consistent with mandatory "smile not required in youth with diabetes) Nuvoli et al 1989
• Other “looks”:
  • smile
  • open mouth
  • frown, unhappy
  • tears
  • corner of mouth tipped
  • half smile/frown
• All age groups contained expressions from each emotion: neutral, happy, frown, sad, tears, tools
• Art: simple to complex
  • Detailed or not
• Common themes:
  • Eyes off center/unseen
  • Exaggerated features
  • Lows
  • “Devil” features
  • Non human
  • Body fluids: vomit, sweat, blood, "snot"
• Tools used for diabetes self-care: syringe, meter, pump, jockey, blood
Key discovered during art review?

4-6 year olds
- Was sick that am, drew self vomiting
- Syringe and meter

6 yr. Teeth, angry and smile
8 years-one color design

Sad, body fluids

Teammates in care
Many had straight mouths

10 Yr. tools & tears

10-11 yr. Non human
11-12 year old: the neutral look, uneven eyes

Frown, uneven pupils, tools

Devil, tears, open mouth
Simple drawings; intense expressions

Tools", that "smile" & words

The Face of Diabetes

Complex to simple
Non human: lots of pokes

More non-Human

13 year olds
13 & 14 yr. Even lips, down cast eyes

14 yr male: “tools”, blood, tear & ears

14 yr. Mixed facial features
PENS second half

Attends special needs school; parents do much of cares. "Diabetes is evil. I hate it."

14 years neutral look

Never ending.....
Eye placement

Visit 1 of the day:
Went from non participation to laughing.

Visit 2 of the same day: same off-centered eyes, more detail.

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Complex to simple in every age group.

19 yo male.

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Diabetes can be both good and bad. It depends how you view it. And how you handle it.
The number “rules” her feelings & life is mad.

Both smiled on the outside.

Falling “dying” from diabetes

Age 15 years: whatever
Non human, Red/black

17 year male

17 Yr. female: "It's a big thing you need to take care of. It's always there, similar to an unwanted pet. When it is happy, nothing bad happens. It is helpless."

13 Yr. A1c 2% better: Is it a smile?
Outgoing, joyous on the surface

Pancreas Antibodies killing islet cells
Color or not

Carrying on

Or not…

Diabetes is my blood sucking Monster.

Ca
Our next step

- Exploratory study
- Does art in clinic visit change over time
- Does knowing they would draw at clinic visits impact home discussions about diabetes/feelings
- Does personality type impact pediatric QOL, diabetes, or willingness to attend clinic

Most important
- An interview/evaluation of what their art means to them

Thank You

- To fellow nurse researchers:
  - Sharron Close PhD, MS, CPNP-PC
  - Dr. Elizabeth Babler, PhD, APNP, CDE, UW
  - Dr. Kathy Elertson, DNP, UW
- All the artists, who deal with diabetes every minute of every day

Thank You
References


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