

## ABSTRACT

Title of the Research: **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AGGRESSION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM TO CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW**

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Guided by the Social Learning Theory (Bandura,1973) and Social Information-Processing Model (Crick & Dodge,1994), this qualitative study on aggression was conducted to determine the effectiveness of an Aggression Management Program (AMP), wherein combined approaches of CBT-EFT were utilized in reducing the aggression level of the children in conflict with the law (CICL). Eight CICL housed in Bahay Kalinga, an institution under the supervision of the DSWD of the City of Dasmariñas, were the primary source of data.

Different means of gathering data namely administration and interpretation of tests, in-depth interview, group interview, observation, notetaking, and homework assignments were employed. Information from participants and their peers and houseparents, combined with post test scores in AQ were analyzed and utilized as basis for determining the reduced level of aggression of the CICL.

The findings revealed that physical and verbal abuses, family condition, and too much involvement with peers influenced the children's behavior towards offending. Their offenses provided evidence of the

presence of high level of aggression, which was confirmed by their high AQ total scores and observations of peers and houseparents. Findings likewise indicated that aggression levels of the children were reduced after their participation in the AMP. Their physically aggressive responses when angry such as fighting, hitting, and getting even when hurt during teasing incidents diminished. Their verbally aggressive reactions such as arguing, contradicting, cursing, and saying bad words were also eliminated. The absence of physical and verbal aggressive behavior responses when angry contributed to the children's lack of involvement in any form of trouble in Bahay Kalinga. The peers and the houseparents confirmed that children developed positive traits like being friendly and cooperative. They learned to share and lend their things and displayed sensitivity to the feelings and thoughts of others. The latter was evident as they became obedient, respectful, and helpful to other residents and to the houseparents.

Based on the findings, the study concludes that the CBT-EFT approaches, which were utilized in the AMP, were effective in teaching the CICL adaptive behavior in dealing with problematic and conflicting situations like in handling teasing and/or bullying. The counseling sessions which utilized EFT were effective in processing the CICL's unpleasant feelings that triggered aggressive behavior and in helping the children to achieve emotional awareness, regulation, and transformation, leading to greater self-control.

This study recommends that the staff for shelters of CICL should involve the parents in the rehabilitation of their children while they are still inside the institution, so that once they are integrated with their family, the parents would know how to guide them. The staff of shelters for the CICL should learn activities that would promote better adjustment as loneliness, boredom, anger, and worry are common feelings that are experienced by the children who are in confinement. Experts in the fields of psychology and counseling should collaborate their efforts in developing and implementing programs to address the specific needs of the CICL. Other people in the community, especially the government policy makers of the City of Dasmariñas, should take part in responding to the needs of the CICL, not only by giving financial assistance to the shelter for the CICL, but also by providing a venue where the CICL who are already integrated with their families could spend their time, and learn skills that could help them become productive. Follow-up counseling and evaluation of the children must be conducted to assess the long term effect of AMP.