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Address of Editorial Board:

EFSHAR Association
P.O. Box 53296, Jerusalem 91531, Israel
Tel: +972-2-6728905; Fax: +972-2-6728904
E-mail: mgilat@efshar.org.il
www.efshar.org.il

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ABSTRACTS

Perceptions about empowerment techniques: A comparative study among social workers

Khawla Zoabi, Ph.D., Sakhnin Academic College for Teacher Education

Iddo Gal, Ph.D., Department of Human Services, Faculty of Welfare and Health Sciences, University of Haifa

Empowerment is an intervention approach which has received much attention in social work literature. However, to date social workers' attitudes about the nature of intervention techniques used to empower individuals, have not been examined. The present study, which was designed as a pilot study, was aimed to validate a tool for investigating perceptions of social workers in relation to the potential empowerment of different intervention techniques, and to collect preliminary data that will provide a basis for future studies regarding empowerment techniques in different cultures. The data collection was based on a convenience sample of social workers in two different countries, Israel and the U.S., in order to contribute to the understanding of the stability of patterns revealed from the use of the tools in the different cultural contexts. The findings indicate that social workers agree on the techniques that have potential for empowerment. They also agree on the techniques that do not have the potential to empower the applicant. Furthermore, the study findings showed differences between the two nationality groups with reference to the perception of the potential of empowerment of the different techniques. Questions concerning the relationship between the perception of the potential for empowerment and the cultural context of the social worker emerged from the findings, indicating the need to conduct further research on this issue.

Keywords: empowerment, self-determination, practice methods, intervention outcomes, professional development

The meaning of music therapy in residential care settings for children at risk: An ecological perspective

Maya Yair, Ph.D., Department of Music, Bar-Ilan University; David Yellin Academic College of Education

Dorit Amir, D.A., Professor, Head of Music Therapy Program, Department of Music, Bar-Ilan University

This article is based on a qualitative study which researched the meaning of music therapy in residential care settings for children at risk from the music therapists' perspectives. Interviews were conducted with nine music therapists who work in residential care settings in Israel. During the interviews the therapists presented examples of music they use in their therapy, and songs they chose to summarize their experiences after reviewing the interview summary. Analysis of the material yielded four major categories: 1. The clients – weaknesses and difficulties versus abilities and strengths; 2. Music therapy – “home for the soul”; 3. The therapeutic work in the residential care setting – what exists and what is lacking; 4. The music therapist's world – a bridge between professional and personal. The findings show the potential for music therapy to highlight and expand the clients' strengths and to turn the residential environment into a better place for both clients and staff. The discussion, based on the principles of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model, concludes that music can play an important role in promoting reciprocal relations between the various systems in the clients' environment.

Keywords: children at risk, residential care setting, music therapy, music therapists, ecological model

Photographing places in school as a window to the students' school experience

Ayala Zur, Ph.D., Oranim Academic College of Education

This article presents a study that focused on two aims: to examine the meaning that students attribute to places and to characterize components of their school experience. The study participants were 35 high school students. The students were asked to photograph one place that they liked and one place that they disliked, while taking the college students on a tour

of their schools and explaining the reasons for their choices. The study findings show that the student's school experience is unbalanced, and traverses between two poles: learning for many hours in classrooms, which were places they disliked, and short periods of rest in the yard, which was a place they liked. The article includes a focused analysis of four high school students' photography tasks. A youth participatory action research implementing a photo elicitation method is proposed.

Keywords: school experience, photo elicitation interviews, learning environment, youth participatory action research

Perceptions of the equality of health services among Negev Arabs (Bedouins)

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Adi Mana, Ph.D., Peres Academic Center

The purpose of this study was to offer a new perspective of the study from the standpoint of members of minority groups, in regards to health care services, while examining the relations between satisfaction with health care services, perception of the level of its equality and the inter-group relations between minority and majority. We questioned a large sample of 600 (372 women), Negev Bedouins who live in recognized villages and towns and 200 (118 women) Negev Bedouins who live in unrecognized villages, all of whom were over the age of 18. Ten Bedouin settlements were sampled (4 unrecognized villages). No significant differences in socioeconomic status and education were found between the participants living in recognized and unrecognized settlements. We used questionnaires measuring the level of satisfaction with health services, the perception of equality in the health care service and the feeling of general inequality. In addition, socio-demographic variables were measured. The results reveal, as expected, lower satisfaction from health services among Bedouins who live in unrecognized villages. Both groups perceived high levels of inequality and they assessed that the health care system is less responsive to the Bedouin population, compared to the Jewish population. Among the Bedouins living in unrecognized villages, the quality of the health care services, mastering Hebrew, perception of relative deprivation and perception of inequality of health care services predicted satisfaction with health care services, while among Bedouins living in recognized settlements only the quality of the health care services predicted satisfaction with health care services. It appears that

a more profound understanding of the Bedouins' perception of their own social status and their relations with the majority group, as a whole, by both health care providers and policy makers, may assist to better adapt the health services to their needs.

Keywords: equality, health care, inter-group relations, Bedouins, minority, Israel

On two different routes: The mourning and communication processes of bereaved parents and siblings following the loss of an adult child

Dana Cohen, Ph.D., Ashkelon Academic College; Academic College of Israel

This article is based on research conducted on families who experienced the unexpected loss of an adult child. It examined the meanings these families reconstruct to the loss and the processes that assist them in reconstructing these meanings. For this purpose a qualitative method was chosen to collect and analyze the relevant data. Fourteen Israeli families including parents and their surviving children participated in the study. Findings indicate a significant difference between the form grief takes among parents in comparison to siblings and at the same time little engagement in verbal discourse among family members concerning the loss. While parental grief is profound and intensive that fills their lives and becomes deeper as time goes by, the grief of the siblings is experienced as relatively milder and gradually less intense over time. In parallel with the gap in the way grief is experienced, families were found to engage in relatively little discussion about the loss. Parents and siblings avoid sharing their feelings of pain and grief with each other, and thus they cope with the loss by themselves. They answer the need to express their feelings by talking with members of their peer-group. In the discussion we provide explanations for the findings in light of two theoretical approaches: The family life cycle theory and the theory of managing disclosure of private information. Therapeutic implications for families coping with loss are suggested.

Keywords: loss, bereavement, child loss, loss in the family, parental grief, sibling grief, family communication