Pilot study of TF-CBT approach with sexually abused preschoolers at the Centre d’expertise Marie-Vincent

This fact-sheet describes the results of a pilot study evaluating the TF-CBT treatment (Trauma-Focused Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, from 8 to 16 sessions) conducted among a group of 25 children attending the Centre d’expertise Marie-Vincent.

Effects of the TF-CBT treatment in children

The effects of the TF-CBT treatment offered at CEMV were evaluated among 25 children victims of sexual abuse, 15 girls and 10 boys aged 3 to 6 years. To benefit from the center's services, children had to be accompanied by a non-offending caregiver, who was the mother in 80% of cases and the father in 12% of cases. One child was accompanied by an aunt and another one by his foster mother.

The results show significant changes in children following the therapy. Thus, the results show a decrease in externalizing and internalizing behaviour problems, symptoms of dissociation and symptoms of posttraumatic stress following the therapy.
The results indicate that the TF-CBT treatment is effective with preschoolers and their parents. A follow-up assessment was conducted among 16 families. The results indicate that treatment effects are maintained during follow-up conducted six months after the end of treatment.

TF-CBT treatment outcomes in parents

The effects of the TF-CBT intervention were evaluated for parents accompanying the children.

The change analysis indicates a significant decrease in the level of psychological distress and PTSD symptoms among parents. For parents, treatment outcomes are also maintained at the follow-up.

Reference of the original article, available in English and French: