**10-YEAR FOLLOW UP OF ADOLESCENTS WITH AUTISM**

**WHO RECEIVED IBI AS YOUNG CHILDREN**

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**Objective**

There is a solid body of research supporting the efficacy of early Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI) for young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and this form of intervention is considered strongly evidence-based according to recent meta-analyses and systematic reviews (Eldevik et al., 2009; National Autism Center, 2015; Perry, Koudys, & Blacklock, 2016). However, very little research has explored whether treatment gains are maintained over time, with only a few exceptions (e.g., McEachin , Smith, and Lovaas, 1993). Considering the time and money being devoted to this form of intervention, research into long-term outcomes is critical, especially in community-based programs such as the large Ontario program.

In this study, we will report on 10-year follow-up data for adolescents who received IBI as young children. The study was designed to address the following research questions: 1) What is the current profile of this group of adolescents on a range of developmental and diagnostic measures? 2) Do children's outcome categories (good, medium, poor) show stability or change over four time points? 3) Do group mean scores change significantly over time on three primary outcome measures: cognitive level, adaptive skills, and autism severity?; and 4) What is the pattern of stability or change (is there clinically significant change?) in individual scores?

**Methods**

The sample includes 21 adolescents (current age 14-20 years) who received IBI in the Ontario program, who were first studied by Prichard (2011). We will report on data obtained at four time points: Time 1: prior to IBI (about age 3); Time 2: upon completion of IBI (about age 6); Time 3: about 3 years after the completion of IBI (about age 9); and Time 4: about 7 years later (i.e., 10 years after the end of IBI; about age 16). Three main outcome measures are reported: IQ, adaptive skills, and autism symptom severity. Group data with statistical comparisons and individual data with indicators of clinically significant change will be presented.

**Results**

The current profiles reflected the large diversity among this population with some adolescents functioning in the average range and others retaining severe levels of disability. Comparisons over time showed a pattern of general stability in categorical outcome and specific scores. Group data indicated a pattern of signficant improvement in age equivalent scores concurrent with slight decreases in mean standard scores over time since IBI. Individiual scores were generally stable from the end of IBI, e.g., for IQ there was 93% stability from T2 to T3 and 90% from T3 to T4.

**Discussion/Conclusion**

Although the sample is rather small, it is a unique sample in the literature and addresses a crucial question. There was great variability among children at each data point, as is typical for this population. However, there was generally a pattern of stability from the end of IBI with steady improvement in skill acquisition, albeit sometimes at a slower rate than peers. Results support the long-term effectiveness of IBI.

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