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LA PROMOCIÓN DE LA RESILIENCIA PARENTAL EN FAMILIAS CON HIJOS CON PROBLEMAS DE CONDUCTA

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Resumen. En este artículo realizamos una revisión a cerca del concepto de resiliencia y sus principales implicaciones para la práctica. Con el objetivo de profundizar en las implicaciones prácticas de este concepto, se realiza un análisis de los distintos programas de intervención destinados a padres y madres que tienen hijos *preadolescentes* y *adolescentes* con problemas de conducta. Dada la ausencia de intervenciones basadas en promover la resiliencia parental, se presenta un programa destinado a la prevención y la promoción de competencias parentales para apoyar la parentalidad positiva y promover en los padres una mejora en su nivel de resiliencia y bienestar emocional. Entre sus objetivos están: desarrollar estrategias de afrontamiento para gestionar las situaciones adversas que se plantean en el día a día de cara a la tarea de educar a sus hijos/as; promover habilidades parentales que permitan a las familias actuar con eficacia ante los problemas de conducta de los hijos/as, facilitar una buena gestión emocional de los problemas de conducta y ser capaz de recuperarse del impacto que causan los mismos. El programa sigue una metodología experiencial, las familias son agentes activos en el proceso de cambio, y se acompaña de una implementación y una evaluación rigurosa para analizar los cambios que se van produciendo a medida que se avanza en la intervención.

Palabras clave: resiliencia; problemas de conducta; parentalidad positiva; educación parental; metodología experiencial

THE PROMOTION OF PARENTAL RESILIENCE IN FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN WITH BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

Abstract. In this article we make a review of the concept of resilience and its main implications for practice. We carried out an analysis of different intervention programs for parents with preadolescent and adolescent

children to broaden our understanding about the practical implications of this concept. Given the absence of interventions based on promoting parental resilience, we present a program for the prevention and promotion of parental competencies to support positive parenting and promote in parents an improvement in their level of resilience and emotional well-being. The main objectives of this program are: the development of strategies to manage the adverse situations that arise in the daily life related to the task of educating children; to promote parental skills that enable families to effectively respond to children's behavioral problems, to facilitate good emotional management of behavior problems, and to be able to recover from the impact caused. The program follows an experiential methodology, families are active agents in the process of change, and is accompanied by a rigorous implementation and evaluation to analyze the changes that occur as the intervention progresses.

Keywords: resilience; behavior problems; positive parenting; parental education; experiential methodology

Introduction

The task of educating a child is a difficult task, even more so when we find children with behavioral problems (aggressiveness, rebelliousness, social and emotional problems, disobedience). These problems are a concern in the family environment (Montiel-Nava, Montiel-Barbero & Peña, 2005; Robles & Romero Triñanes, 2011) to the point that, according to an epidemiological study conducted with a sample of 1,220 parents, 59.6% believe that their child has behavioral problems and 52% believe they need psychological help to solve these problems (Cantero-García & Alonso-Tapia, 2018). The way in which parents deal with such problems affects not only the behavior of their children but also the parents' own psychological well-being (Luengo Martín, 2014; Pérez, Menéndez & Hidalgo, 2014). The management of these behaviors can sometimes become a stressful life situation, an adverse situation, so sometimes parents may demand help to cope with this type of situations. Such situations can come from sudden events or major crises that the family is going through but also from more normative and expected situations, such as the vital transition that represents the arrival of children to pre-adolescence and adolescence (Rodríguez, Martín and Rodrigo, 2010).

In these situations, parents usually ask themselves questions such as: - what am I doing wrong? what is going wrong? why me? why my child? what can I do? who can help me? - To answer these questions it is considered necessary, on the one hand, to work with parents on basic aspects of positive psychology, such as: their level of resilience and emotional well-being, aspects that will contribute to the improvement of the psychological well-being of parents, as well as to the improvement of the family climate, and on the other hand, to work on the promotion of effective educational guidelines, based on the exercise of positive parenting, that will help them to exercise their parental role in an adequate way; in addition, it is considered that these guidelines can also contribute significantly to the improvement of the emotional well-being of parents and to the improvement of the behavioral problems of their children.

The aim of this study is, on the one hand, to review the concept of resilience, as well as the multiple definitions that have been given of this concept in recent times and its application to the family environment. And, on the other hand, to know the different interventions oriented to work on the resilience of parents who have children with behavioral problems. Due to the lack of this type of programs, the decision was made to describe the design of an intervention proposal to work on these aspects.

The origin of the concept of resilience goes back to research such as that of Rutter (1987) in which he argues that when faced with a difficult situation it is important to

reduce the perception of threat, as this can lead to maladaptive coping. In addition, this author emphasizes that it is important to give meaning to experiences and neutralize negative ones. However, improving the environment or eliminating adversities does not necessarily make people more resilient since the mere elimination of stressful situations does not help to cope adequately. Despite the numerous investigations that have been carried out in recent times, there is still a problem of conceptualization in relation to this term, which has given rise to the multitude of existing definitions (Windle, 2011). Among them we highlight the definition of Luthar (2006) in which he emphasizes positive adaptation or recovery in the face of adverse situations or experiences, and this involves the two elements: 1) significant threat and 2) positive adaptation. Other authors consider resilience to be the stable balance in behavior in the face of a traumatic event without affecting performance and daily life (Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck, 2007). More recently, Windle (2011) defines resilience as the process of negotiation, management and adaptation to significant sources of stress or trauma, a process in which the resources of individuals, their lives and their environment facilitate this capacity to adapt and recover in the face of adversity. Furthermore, this author points out that resilience is not a static trait; on the contrary, resilience is a dynamic process that varies throughout the life cycle, depending on the environments and situations. Along the same lines, Alonso-Tapia, Nieto and Ruiz (2013) define resilience as positive adaptation or recovery in the face of potentially aversive situations that have a high risk of generating a maladjustment of the person. As can be seen, the differences between the various authors cited are more in form than in substance, as they all point to the two elements cited by Luthar. However, given that our intervention is going to focus on the parents - the family - it is necessary to approach the concept of family resilience.

Family resilience can be understood considering family members in their individuality (Cowan et al., 1996; Hetherington and Blachman, 1996; Kim, 1998; Woodgate 1999 a,b) or considering the family as a unit, from a systemic perspective (Patterson, 1995; Walsh, 1996). This last meaning means that the concept of family resilience brings a new perspective to the concept of resilience. As opposed to individual resilience, family resilience occurs when the dynamics of family interactions contribute to the family as a whole - not only each of its members - not sinking in the face of adversity (Lee et al., 2004). This is also taken up by authors such as Cicchetti (2010), who points out that the main indicators of family resilience are: a) mental flexibility, b) ability to reflect on emotions (one's own and others'), c) having a positive self-image, d) creation of a safe and protective environment (stable, sensitive and secure). Along the same lines, we highlight Olson's (1997) circumplex model, which highlights key aspects such as: a) family cohesion, b) family adaptability and c) family communication.

More recently, authors such as Rodrigo, Máiquez, Martín and Byrne (2008) go further and differentiate between family resilience and parental resilience. The former refers to the dynamic process that allows the family as an open system to react positively to threats. The most characteristic features of the resilient family are family cohesion, affection in the couple, family appreciation and commitment, ethical attitude towards life, positive stress management, optimism and positive outlook, sense of control over life events, flexibility and perseverance. On the other hand, for Rodrigo et al. (2008) parental resilience is understood as the dynamic process that allows parents to develop a protective and sensitive relationship with their children's needs despite living in an environment that fosters suboptimal behaviors. The traits that characterize parental resilience are recognition of their role as parents, motivation for change, optimism and possibilism instead of victimhood and fatalism, and greater reciprocity in relationships. This idea is

in line with what authors such as Barudy and Dantagnan (2005) propose to speak of resilient parenting. This differentiation and clarification of concepts is not sufficient if we do not have reliable instruments to measure these concepts. For this reason, recent research (Almeida, 2015 ; Martín, Cabrera, León, & Rodrigo, 2013) have developed instruments to assess parental competence and resilience, although these authors go a step further, there is still much work to be done and to facilitate this type of resilience it will be necessary, therefore, not only to focus attention on the coping processes that underlie the resilience of each individual but also on the interaction processes - of exchanging perceptions of the situation, of attributions of the observed phenomena, of possible ways of coping with problems, of ways of assuming and regulating emotions, etc.- that shape the functioning of the family in the face of adversity over time.

All the aspects gathered here lead us to carry out a search on different interventions that have been made to promote parental resilience in parents with a specific adverse situation such as behavioral problems. So far, we have not been able to find any intervention to evaluate the effectiveness of a program aimed at promoting resilience in this group, so due to the lack of scientific evidence of interventions aimed at this purpose, we propose the design of a parental education program that covers the theoretical aspects mentioned here.

The program, Get over yourself, don't throw in the towel!

In recent times, the incorporation of parental education programs has been booming (Martínez-González, 2009; Rodrigo, Máiquez, Martín, & Byrne, 2008; Triana & Rodrigo, 2010; Rodrigo, Byrne, & Álvarez, 2016). Thus, we can verify that there are many psychoeducational support programs both national and international: Strengthening Families Program (Kumpfer and Molgaard, 1990), Parent Training Program (Barkley, 1997), Triple-P (Margaret and Sanders, 2001), Incredible Year (Webster Stratom et al, 2003), Adolescent Mothers and Fathers Support Program (Oliva et al, 2007), Coping Power (Lochman and Wells, 2002; Lochman et al., 2007), EmPeCemos (Romero, Villar, Luengo, Gómez-Fraguela and Robles, 2009), Living Adolescence in the Family: A program of parental support in adolescence (Rodríguez, Martín and Rodrigo, 2015). All of them promote the use of appropriate parental competencies to deal with children's behavioral problems in childhood as well as in pre-adolescence and adolescence. These programs are focused on the different evolutionary stages, teach effective techniques for the good management of behavioral problems and are carried out with an active and participatory methodology. In addition, through the training programs, parents learn how a change in their own behavior can promote a change in their children's behavior, which implies an improvement in the daily interactions between them (Kazdin, 1995).

However, it is notorious the scarcity of programs that work on resilience and emotional well-being of parents living with this problem. For this reason, it was decided to design the intervention program, Get over yourself, don't throw in the towel!, in which special importance is given to the resilience and emotional well-being of parents as an influential variable for the improvement of children's behavioral problems. This idea is in line with what is proposed by authors such as Amorós, Fuentes-Peláez, Molina, and Pastor (2010) who point out that the educational practices established in the family dynamics are a fundamental part of parental resilience and the capacity to exercise positive parenting. The program is offered as a versatile resource that can be applied in different areas, such as, educational, clinical, or as a prevention and promotion program from the Social Services area. This program is in line with the Recommendation Rec

(2006) 19 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on policies to support positive parenting on the use of parenting education programs to support positive parenting.

Target population

The program is aimed at families who have children between the ages of nine and thirteen, who have high levels of stress due to their children's behavioral problems. It is also aimed at those families who consider that they need to improve their way of dealing with their children's behavioral problems or those other families who believe in the opportunity offered to them to reflect on their way of educating, the consequences it entails for their children and to enrich themselves with other models. In this way they improve their emotional well-being and optimally cope with the adversities that arise in connection with their children's behavioral problems.

Parental objectives and competencies

General objectives

- Promoting resilience and improving the emotional well-being of parents.
- Improve children's behavioral problems.

Specific objectives

- Deepen on the behavioral changes of the children in each evolutionary stage.
- Work on the importance of assertiveness and empathy in family communication to improve the relationship with children.
- Approach parental stress situations and learn strategies for their management.
- Recognizing one's own emotions and dealing with negative emotions (aggression, anger, rage, anger, sadness) caused by children's misbehavior.
- Promote adaptive coping styles and reduce the use of emotion-focused coping strategies (self-blame, rumination, isolation).
- Promote humor as a tool to face difficult circumstances.
- Introduce alternative educational practices to physical punishment to respond to misbehaviors.
- Work on conflict resolution in the family nucleus.

During the development of the program, it is intended that parents acquire new cognitive, social, and emotional competencies that contribute to design the new roles involved in the performance of the parental task. It is about parents designing their own parental role, in their own scenario and family context, which is unique. For this purpose, it is not intended to administer prescribed prescriptions, but rather that families can think about their role as parents, taking into account not only the evolutionary characteristics of their children, but also their own emotional characteristics and those of the context in which they develop. Therefore, this program not only aims to work on parental competencies to improve behavioral problems, but also to promote the emotional competencies of parents to improve their well-being, thus contributing to improve the competencies of their sons and daughters.

Thus, at the emotional level, resilient skills related to assertiveness, self-esteem, self-control, active coping strategies in stressful situations, conflict resolution, and a

positive view of problems and crises are promoted in parents. In addition, the program seeks to promote other educational skills, among which we can highlight: a) the application of strategies to regulate children's behavior, and b) the use of strategies to improve family communication. Finally, the program promotes competencies aimed at improving parental self-efficacy, the internal locus of control, the perception of the parental role, and the overcoming of adversities that may arise in the family environment.

Program contents

In order to meet the objectives and achieve the competencies described above, the program is structured in 12 sessions of 90 minutes, which will be carried out on a weekly basis. In addition, a session zero or initial session will be developed whose main objective is to promote the familiarization of the facilitator with the group of parents and vice versa, in addition to establishing the first rules of the group (confidentiality, respect, etc.). In addition, the families are introduced to the objectives-contents of the program and briefly reflect on the importance of working on behavioral problems. The following is a brief description of each of the sessions.

Session 1. -How do our children behave? The objective is to reflect on the importance of knowing the behavior of children, as well as the characteristics of the evolutionary stage in which they are at. In addition, the importance of addressing the behavior in specific terms is emphasized, avoiding labeling the child with negative attributes. Parents are encouraged to identify the spiral of negative interactions that may be affecting their relationship with their child and the need to pay attention to positive behaviors, which may go unnoticed, is emphasized. Throughout the session, appropriate forms of praise are discussed, modeled, and practiced.

Session 2. -We put ourselves in our children's shoes. Educating in and from assertiveness and empathy is one of the fundamental processes involved in the development of family relationships and specifically in the development of positive interactions between parents and children. Working on all this in one session would be too extensive, so it has been decided to divide this session in two: in the first part, we will work on assertiveness and empathy; in the second part, which will take place next week, we will work on active listening skills and positive communication skills. Throughout this session, we will reflect on the characteristics that differentiate an assertive person from an aggressive or passive one. In addition, we will reflect on the importance of putting ourselves in the other person's place to better understand his or her way of acting.

Session 3. - We learn to communicate in the family. This session is dedicated to enhance communication skills that are necessary for a good family functioning, which will be the basis and support of other parental strategies that we will see in other sessions. Good listening and adequate communication will allow the family to develop the ability to value themselves positively, to cooperate, to understand, to manage their emotions, and to relate adequately with others. The fact that parents can work on their assertiveness will contribute to the improvement of the family climate, as well as their own wellbeing.

Session 4. - Without stress we are better off. Approaching stress situations and their consequences for the family dynamics, as well as working on techniques for its management are some of the aspects that will be worked on in this session. Parents of children with behavioral problems are subjected to various sources of chronic stress, so

throughout this session they will learn different techniques to deal in a healthier way with the stress caused by the behavioral problems of their children.

Session 5. - We know ourselves. In this session we will work on the importance of self-control and self-regulation. Promoting these skills together with the reduction of parental stress, assertiveness and empathy will contribute to the improvement of the family climate. We start from the idea that parents are role models with an unquestionable impact on children, therefore, it is considered necessary to deepen on these skills that allow a better understanding of their own emotions and contribute significantly to the improvement of conflict resolution.

Session 6. - We regulate behavior I. Effective commanding, setting reasonable and predictable limits, and ignoring some behaviors are three of the strengths that need to be reinforced in families with children with behavior problems. After having practiced praise in the first few weeks, this session introduces parents to the topic of limits and family discipline. Parents will learn to formulate their orders and requests appropriately, avoiding excessive unnecessary instructions in a chain or formulated in the form of a question. The "ignore" technique will be introduced as a technique for responding to misbehavior.

Session 7. - We regulate behavior II. This session is dedicated to the use of punishment as a consequence of misbehavior. In this session parents will learn to recognize the characteristics that define an effective punishment (immediacy, consistency, proportionality) and will learn, mainly, to establish and put into practice a particular type of punishment: logical and natural consequences. In addition, they will learn to establish a system of reasonable, predictable consequences, appropriate to the child's age and ability (withdrawal of privileges, extra work). The "time-out technique" is one of the most useful disciplinary options and is presented as an alternative to physical punishment. However, it will be emphasized that the use of negative consequences should be minimized in favor of behavior-reinforcing forms of interaction.

Session 8. - We value our children's good behaviors. In this session we reflect on the importance of reinforcement, although praise is a powerful reinforcer, it is often necessary to resort to other types of reinforcement combined with praise to get children to acquire behaviors or achieve goals that are particularly difficult for them. This session addresses parents' expectations of the behaviors to promote in their children and delves into the appropriate use of tangible reinforcement as a complement to praise. Parents will be able to design a system for those behaviors they wish to establish or consolidate in their children.

Session 9.- Positive thoughts and feelings. Throughout this session we will work on the importance of changing negative thoughts for more optimistic ones, the importance of changing irrational ideas, self-instructions. This session also deals with coping with negative emotions. The importance of the emotional well-being of parents for the improvement of their children's behavioral problems will be emphasized again.

Session 10. - Overcoming difficulties without throwing in the towel. Throughout the session we will reflect with the participants on the concept of resilience and the importance of keeping in mind the aspects discussed in the different sessions, as well as the different strategies and coping styles for the improvement of their parental self-efficacy, emotional and family well-being, as well as for the improvement of their children's behavioral problems. More specifically, throughout this session we will work on acceptance, non-rumination, the search for solutions, and learning potentials, thinking

about how to grow and how to overcome adversities, analyzing things from the point of view of responsibility, strengthening self-concept, positive thinking, problem solving, facing fears.

Session 11.- With H for Humor and L for Love. In this penultimate session, we will work on "humor" as a tool to reduce anger and worry. The aim is to make parents aware of the importance of taking things with a sense of humor, as well as of the benefits it produces: it reduces stress, acts as an analgesic, improves people's mental health, helps to reduce depression and anxiety.

Session 12.- Final session. The final session is dedicated to recapitulate the techniques learned, both for the management of the children's behaviors and for the improvement of the parents' emotional well-being. Once again, we emphasize the importance of parental well-being in order to act effectively. Finally, parents are prepared for coping with behavioral problems that may arise once the program ends, different strategies to prevent relapses will be presented, and self-efficacy will be enhanced to face the challenges of raising their children.

Experiential methodology

The program uses the experiential methodology that has already been validated in parental education programs (Martín, Máiquez, Rodrigo, Correa and Rodríguez, 2004; Rodrigo, Martín, Máiquez and Rodríguez, 2005). The true meaning of the experiential model implies following a process of reflection and analysis of educational practices and their consequences in family life or in the development of the children in order to finally encourage the verbalization of personal objectives for change. Thus, we find the need to elaborate activities that encourage participation and the exchange of experiences among the participants. Throughout the different sessions, group techniques typical of the experiential methodology will be used, such as the case technique, video-feedback, work in small groups, guided discussion, guided fantasy, role-playing, tasks to work on at home and/or commitments. In addition, other types of dynamics will be developed for specific activities. All these techniques will be adapted to the objectives of each session.

With this methodology, the facilitator's role is to help build knowledge in a shared way in the group and, for this purpose, a series of principles must be taken into account, such as regulating the emotional climate of the group, building knowledge as a member of the group, working on the basis of the needs and concerns of the families, encouraging negotiation and the search for consensus among group members, supporting personal initiative and reinforcing feelings of belonging to the group.

Program implementation

The implementation of the program is one of the most relevant aspects that can facilitate or, on the contrary, complicate the effectiveness of the work with families (Rodrigo, 2016). Therefore, we must ensure fidelity to the principles and methodology of the program, in addition to adapting the program to the characteristics of the context and thinking about the conditions that allow improving the results.

To carry out the program, the research team will meet and present it to the different educational centers. Once the program has been presented, it will be disseminated by means of posters, leaflets, web resources, etc., in order to subsequently select the families

that have a suitable profile for this type of program or those that voluntarily wish to form part of the group.

Once the groups have been formed, an inauguration ceremony will be held with University personnel, school personnel, and the families who will attend. The program will then be implemented through weekly meetings of approximately one and a half hours. At the end of the intervention, a closing ceremony will be held with the presentation of diplomas to the families, thanking them for their participation and collaboration. Finally, a final report will be made evaluating the implementation of the program and its results.

Program evaluation

In order to carry out a rigorous evaluation of the program, it will be carried out in three different moments throughout its implementation: 1) initial-final evaluation, 2) process evaluation, 3) final evaluation and 4) follow-up. Table 1 [Insert] describes the instruments to be used in the different phases of the evaluation. The closure of the program does not mean that the researchers will terminate the intervention but rather that 6 months after the end of the program a new follow-up measure will be taken to determine whether the effects evaluated are maintained in the long term.

Final comment

The aim of this study was to review the concept of resilience, as well as to deepen in concepts related to this term such as family resilience and parental resilience. After the review we can conclude that, although much progress has been made in this field in recent times, it is necessary to continue working to unify definitions and prevent this term from overlapping with others. In addition, it is necessary to continue in the line of research initiated by authors such as Alonso-Tapia, Nieto, and Ruiz (2013); Martín et al., (2013) and to construct valid and reliable elements that allow us to measure resilience and parental resilience, as well as to know the coping strategies behind resilient families. The present study is in line with what authors such as González (2009) propose. In addition, it covers some of the lines of research that have been raised in other recent studies (Bravo and López, 2015) in which it is recognized that one of the main challenges is to increase family resilience intervention programs. Accordingly, this article provides a practical and useful tool to work from Social Services, clinical or educational settings.

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MOMENTOS	INSTRUMENTOS	DIMENSIONES EVALUADAS	INFORMANTES
Contexto	Características sociodemográficas.	Perfil sociodemográfico.	Padre/Madre
Inicial/final con post-test inmediato y aplazado	Cuestionario de Clima Familiar, perspectiva de los hijos (CFPC-H, 2016)	Evalúa la percepción de los hijos sobre la forma de actuar de los padres ante los problemas de conducta.	Hijo/Hija
	Cuestionario de Afrontamiento de los Problemas de Conducta de los hijos (CRPC, 2016).	Evalúa cinco formas de afrontamiento, tres de ellas de tipo positivo - pensamiento positivo; apoyo y cooperación y dos de tipo negativo - pérdida de motivación/desánimo y pérdida de control del propio comportamiento.	Padre/Madre
	Cuestionario Afrontamiento Adultos + Escala Resiliencia (CRAF-PC, 2017).	Evalúa distintas estrategias de Afrontamiento en situaciones específicas como son los problemas de comportamiento de los hijos. Además, evalúa la Resiliencia tanto general como específica.	Padre/Madre
	Adaptación Española Bienestar psicológico de Ryff.(2006).	Evalúa el bienestar psicológico de los padres.	Padre/Madre
	Escala de satisfacción con la vida (SWLS).(1985)	Evalúa el juicio global que hacen las personas sobre la satisfacción con su vida.	Padre/Madre
	Inventario parentalidad Adulto-adolescente. versión A. (Bavolek y Keene, 2001)	Evalúa expectativas inapropiadas, empatía, creencia uso de castigos, inversión de roles y autonomía/ control.	Padre/Madre
	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), versión autoinforme. (2016)	Evalúa problemas emocionales y comportamentales en la adolescencia.	Hijo/Hija
Cuestionario de Estrés parental. (Abidin, 1995)	Evalúa el estrés del padre /madre o cuidador.	Padre/Madre	
Proceso	Fichas de seguimiento de las sesiones.	Valoración e implementación del programa	Padre/Madre
Final	Cuestionario Final.	Valoración y satisfacción con el programa.	Padre/Madre

Tabla 1. Instrumentos para la evaluación del programa.