

Development of Blended Mode of Family Services in Hong Kong: Much More Work Remains to Be Done

香港家庭服務混合模式的發展：道遠而任重

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Questions

Do Clients Benefit from Blended Mode of Family Services?

What do Family Workers Say about Blended Mode of Services?

What are the Constraints and Future Directions of Blended Mode of Family Services in Hong Kong?

Do Clients Benefit from Blended Mode of Family Services?

Overview of Results

Agency	Programme Name	Service Model	Digital Technology	Key Findings
Caritas	《我願意+》 《Marriage+》 From Me to We 新婚篇 婚姻自助 電子書	● Couple Relationships	Self-learning eBook	✓ <u>Male participants</u> in the experimental group demonstrated significantly higher and progressively increasing perception of their spouses' willingness to share daily responsibilities compared to the control group ($F=3.653, p<.10$). ✓ Improvement in emotional regulation strategies ($F=3.738, p<.10$) and marital commitment ($F=5.598, p<.05$) for female participants. ✓ Improvement in <u>marital satisfaction</u> for both male and female ($F = 3.718, p <.10$).
CMAC	「燭」起親子路 6A 品格教育小組	● Parent-Child Relationships ● Parental Self-Care	e-Activity (e.g. Photo App, Video creation, ePoll)	✓ Improvement in Parental self-efficacy ($F=-2.362, p<.05$), parent-child communication ($F=-1.477, p<.05$), positive emotion ($F=-2.760, p<.05$) and strength-based parenting knowledge & practices ($F=-3.390, p<.05$; $F=-2.001, p<.05$) for parents. ✓ Improvement in Empathy/Listening ($F=-.514, p<.05$) and Emotional Expression ($F=-1.172, p<.05$) for children.
HKCYS	繪本的寶藏 (社交 X 情緒) 小組	● Parent-Child Relationships ● Children's Emotion	Video / APP / Youtube	✓ Children have shown improvements across all five dimensions of social-emotional learning (SEL): Self-Awareness ($F=.639, p<.05$), Self-Management ($F=-.675, p<.05$), Social Awareness ($F=-.566, p<.05$), Relationship Skills ($F=-.961, p<.05$), and Responsible Decision-Making ($F=-.845, p<.05$). ✓ Children demonstrated a significant improvement in emotion regulation skills ($F=-1.169^*, p<.05$), along with a significant reduction in generalized anxiety ($F=1.200, p<.05$) and social anxiety ($F=1.286, p<.05$).
HKCS	安全圈家長小組	● Parent-Child Relationships	Zoom / iPad / Videos	✓ Parents showed significant improvements in parental responses, including increased Interest and Curiosity (IC) in children's mental states ($F=5.18, p<.01$), reduced Distress Reaction (DR) ($F=7.11, p<.001$) and Punitive Responses (PR) ($F=3.44, p<.05$) to children's negative emotions, decreased Minimization Reaction (MR) ($F=2.99, p<.01$), and enhanced Encouraging Expressions (EE) toward positive emotions ($F=4.10, p<.05$). ✓ Parents demonstrated improved mental health ($F=2.50, p<.01$) compared to controls.

Overview of Results

Agency	Programme Name	Service Model	Digital Technology	Key Findings
TWGHs	「愛·初心」夫婦工作坊暨家庭日營	● Couple Relationships	PPG heartrate measurement	✓ Compared to control, dyadic adjustment of experimental group improved at post-intervention ($\gamma = 2.29 \cdot p < .05$) and 3-month follow-up ($\gamma = 1.00 \cdot p < .10$). Simple time effect indicated quality of Life improved at post-intervention (Mean Change = 2.30 $\cdot p < .05 \cdot 95\%$ CI [0.72, 3.88]) and 3-month follow-up (Mean Change = 1.15 $\cdot p < .05 \cdot 95\%$ CI [0.22, 2.08]).
ISSHK	親子網上講故事小組	● Parent-Child Relationships ● Children's Emotion	Zoom	✓ Improvement in family functioning ($F=4.12, p<.05$) and parent-child closeness ($F=3.65, p<.10$) ✓ Enhancement in parental Encouraging Expression (EE) ($F=2.88, p<.10$) and reduction in Distress Reaction (DR) to children's negative emotions ($F=3.42, p<.05$).
NAAC	情緒抗逆力工作坊「壓力即刻走」小組	● Parent-Child Relationships ● Parental Self-Care	WhatsApp, Self-practice e-materials	✓ Improvement in parent-child closeness ($M=-2.01, p<.01$) and family functioning ($M=.16, p<.10$) ✓ Improvement in parents' negative emotional state ($F=4.46, p<.05$), perceived stress ($F=2.90, p<.10$), emotional resilience ($M=-9.30, p<.001$), , coping ability ($F=5.11, p<.05$) and other related variables
HKFWS	提升有特殊學習需要學童家長的情緒抗逆力計劃	● Parental Self-Care	WhatsApp, Self-practice e-materials	✓ Improvement in parents' coping ability ($F=3.24, p<.05$), social support ($F=3.69, p<.05$), emotional resilience ($F=8.05, p<.001$) and depressive symptoms ($F=3.20, p<.05$) ✓ Improvement in family support ($F=6.80, p<.001$), family functioning ($F=4.51, p<.05$) and perceived children's hyperactivity symptoms ($F=5.94, p<.05$)
CFSC	「2023-2024 開心星期五」親子遊戲活動計劃	● Parent-Child Relationships ● Children's Emotion	Electronic games, e.g Switch	✓ Improvement in parental self-efficacy in discipline ($F=3.37, p<.10$), parent-child closeness ($F=11.08, p<.01$) and reduction in academically-focused play belief ($F=4.11, p<.05$) ✓ Improvement in children's emotion regulation ($F=4.71, p<.05$) and dysregulation ($F=15.6, p<.001$)

Overview of Results

Items	Key Insights
Family Functioning By General Functioning Subscale (GF6+) of Family Assessment Device (FAD)	✓ 9 projects ✓ Sample size: 399 (ex) vs 409 (con) ✓ Significant improvement in general family functioning in the experimental group ($F=6.55$, $p=.011$)
整體來說，活動加入的電子元素，是否令您及家庭成員更投入活動？	✓ N=178 ✓ Overall Satisfaction = 83 %
你認為這個活動能擴闊你對網上通訊的應用和知識 / 啟發你利用電子通訊媒體作資料搜尋，以幫助促進家庭關係嗎？	✓ N=289 ✓ Overall Satisfaction = 86%
你認為活動能有助你透過包括電子元素的活動，促進人際互動技巧嗎？（如：親子溝通技巧，管理子女情緒技巧，理解伴侶情緒技巧）	✓ N=178 ✓ Overall Satisfaction = 91%
你認為這個活動能透過運用電子通訊媒體促進正向的家庭關係嗎？（如：家庭互動 / 溝通）	✓ N=289 ✓ Overall Satisfaction = 86%
你認為這個活動能有助改善家庭成員之間的關係（如：夫婦婚姻 / 親子關係）嗎？	✓ N=384 ✓ Overall Satisfaction = 93%

Summary of Results

Theory-Driven, Research-Based

1. Circle of Security, Positive Psychology, Strength-Based, CBT.....

Use of ICT:

1. Not very high tech devices used
2. Only whatsapp, video games, zoom, youtube, e-book production, heartrate measurements

Overall Outcomes:

1. Significant improvement in general family functioning in the participating families
2. The inclusion of ICT (blended mode) appears to be well received by clients, and they found ICT elements enhance family functioning

Summary of Clients' Benefits

Parent-Child Relationships

- children with or without SENs
- e.g. parenting skills, training children's emotional resilience
- 6 agency projects

Parental Self-Care

- e.g. mindfulness, emotional resilience
- 3 agency projects

Couple Relationships

- e.g. couple communication, adjustment and commitment
- 2 agency projects

Children's Emotion Management

- e.g. emotion regulation training, emotional resilience for children with general and special needs
- 3 agency projects

- Quite a number adopted established intervention approaches: Circle of Security, Positive Psychology, Child-Parent Relationship, Play Therapy, CBT, Mindfulness
- Mainly quasi-experimental design with pre-, post- and follow-up

Summary of Clients' Benefits

Parents:

1. Improved mental health of parents (e.g. anxieties, depressive moods)
2. Emotional regulation skills (e.g. empathy)
3. Parental self-efficacy
4. Parenting skills (e.g. Less punitive responses)

Children:

1. Improved mental health (e.g. externalizing and internalizing behaviours)
2. Social-emotional learning (e.g. self-awareness, self management)
3. Emotional regulation skills

Parent-Child Interactions:

1. Positive parent-child communication
2. Parent- child closeness

Couples:

1. Marital commitment
2. Perception of spousal willingness to share responsibilities
3. Marital quality of life
4. Dyadic adjustments (e.g. agreeableness, communication, cohesion)

Family members' perception of ICT Use: Comparison to face-to-face services (N=95)

The comparison between ICT use and face-to-face modes in family services

- 63% found online scheduling more convenient.
- 67% found it easier to select content,
- 64% appreciated the flexibility of online activities that allowed them to learn and practice at their own pace
- 67% found it easier to share personal experiences,
- 63% reported enhanced social networks after groups ended

What do Family Workers Say about Blended Mode of Services?

Background about the Research

Aim: To identify the key contextual, mechanistic and outcome-related factors influencing the adoption and implementation of ICT in family services

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1. Semi-structured qualitative interview of 15 family service workers was conducted, supplemented by a survey of 95 service users in Hong Kong
 2. Participants were involved in the Jockey Club SMART Family-Link II project to develop and implement blended mode of services in family service centers
 3. Analysis framework: Realist-Context-Mechanism-Outcome Approach (Pawson and Tilley, 1997)
 4. Content analysis was used to extract themes from the transcripts
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Realist-Context- Mechanism- Outcome Approach -

Outcomes of
incorporating DTs into
family services

Content	Frequency
1. Direct client effects	31
1.1 Improved clients' well-being and family functioning	16
(1) Developed parenting skills and addressed parenting stress	6
(2) Enhanced family relationships	4
(3) Enhanced self-efficacy in using DTs	3
(4) Facilitated mutual and social support	2
(5) Performed personal strengths (children)	1
1.2 Enhanced clients' motivation and engagement	15
2. Indirect effects	33
2.1 A rise in visits and use of family services	24
2.2 An increase in diversity of family service beneficiaries	9

Realist-Context- Mechanism- Outcome Approach -

Contexts promoting and
sustaining the use of
DTs

Content	Frequency
1. Social and environmental influences	91
1.1 The transformative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic	33
1.2 Ethical issues and regulations of DT use	33
1.3 Organizational culture of accepting DT use	18
1.4 The world trend of digitalization	7
2. Financial and manpower support	36
2.1 Project funding for DT use	21
2.2 Institutional promotion of sustainable development of DT use	15

Realist-Context- Mechanism- Outcome Approach -

Mechanisms (Process,
Content and Perception)
Affecton Adoption of ICT

Content	Frequency
1. Content: actual design and use of digital tools	46
1.1 Digital family service delivery	29
(1) Digital information provision	10
(2) Existing service facilitation	15
(3) Therapeutic innovation	4
1.2 Enhanced work efficiency by streamlining administrative tasks	17
2. Process: ongoing digital training and support	43
2.1 Identified challenges encountered by workers and clients	23
(1) Technical difficulties	17
(2) Lack of digital devices	6
2.2 Training and support for addressing challenges	20
(1) Direct assistance and additional preparatory work	18
(2) Training to acquire digital skills	2
3. Perception: acceptance and embrace of DT	28
3.1 Expected to experience how DT use was better than traditional modes	10
3.2 Needed to address parental concerns by distinguishing therapeutic tools from recreational gaming	8
3.3 Appreciated attending online services from home	5
3.4 Recognized accessibility and convenience of digital services	5

Realist-Context- Mechanism- Outcome Approach -

Adoption and implementation of
digital technologies

Content	Frequency
1. Delivered services in blended modes	12
1.1 Provided face-to-face services with more therapeutic components	8
1.2 Integrated DTs into existing face-to-face services	4
2. Bridged service gaps in existing programs through digital innovation	4
2.1 Provided preventive and developmental services through digital platforms	4
3. Streamlined workflows using DTs	5
3.1 Used service management system to digitalize the process of service delivery	5

Some Thoughts about ICT Developments in Family Services in Hong Kong

Contexts	Mechanisms	Implementation	Outcomes
• Ethical and professional guidelines • Ongoing financial and IT supports • Cultural Change of family service • Education for professional-to-be	• Service user-centered DT-relevant interventions • Multiple levels of digitalization to meet different service user needs • Enhance workers' and service users' digital capital and knowledge	• Multi-element & Flexibility • Blended modes may be currently practical • Digital therapeutic intervention	• When compared to face-to-face services, should be measurable to encourage continued adoption

Digital Technological Imagination



Q & A

