

# Feasibility and Implementation of a Virtual Behavioural Support Intervention for Children with ADHD

Tasmia Hai, Jean-François Lemay, Jamie Gaber, Amy Kowbel, Courtney Miller, Gabrielle Wilcox & Emma Climie

Department of Pediatrics & Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary

## BACKGROUND

- **COVID:** Limited access to services as families were less able to access supports.
- A shift to online intervention was crucial and necessary.
- This led to the creation of the online **ADHD-VIBES** program (**VI**rtual **BE**havioural **S**upport Intervention for Children with ADHD)

## OBJECTIVES

1. To determine the feasibility of the ADHD-VIBES program.
2. To measure changes in behavioural, mental health, academic motivation, and engagement challenges.
3. Obtain feedback from participating families regarding the programs

## METHOD

- **Participants:** A total of 12 boys between the ages of 8 to 11 years old ( $M = 9.62$ ,  $SD = 0.94$ ), and their caregivers, took part in this program (3 groups of 4 children)
- A survey was disseminated to parents participating in the online intervention to obtain feedback following the end of the intervention.
- Feedback regarding the feasibility of the program was obtained from the facilitators and the partner agency

Table 1: Weekly Intervention Structure

Week	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Child Sessions</b>	Understanding Emotions and executive functions	Body & Mind Calming Strategies	Understanding thoughts	Communication & Problem Solving	Bullying, Peer Conflict and Social Connections	Building Confidence
<b>Parent Sessions</b>	Neuroscience of ADHD brain and executive functions	Self-Regulation	Understanding thoughts	Communication & Problem Solving	Bullying, healthy screen time	Behaviour management

Table 2: Weekly Timeline

Screening	Pre-Intervention	Week 1	W 2	W 3	W 4	W 5	W 6	Post-Intervention	Follow Up (2 months)
<b>Assessments completed by Parents</b>									
Demographics	Conners-3	Intervention						Conners-3	Conners-3
BAARS-IV	BASC-3							BASC-3	BASC-3
	BRIEF-2							BRIEF-2	BRIEF-2
	PSI-4-SF							PSI-4-SF	PSI-4-SF
<b>Assessments completed by Children with ADHD</b>									
WASH-II	BASC-3	Intervention						BASC-3	BASC-3
	MES							MES	MES
	ESQ							ESQ	ESQ

## Key Messages

- Parents involved in this study described the ADHD-VIBES program as “a chance to learn strategies, problem solve, discuss and seek advice on how to best support their child with ADHD.”
- Qualitative feedback indicated that parents were satisfied/very satisfied with the ADHD-VIBES intervention. The pilot intervention was considered feasible and successful.
- The intervention showed improvement on BASC- 3 Depression subscales. Additionally, significant increase in anxiety observed at the 2-month follow-up likely attributed to return to school. (See Fig.1 and 2)

## RESULTS

### Feedback Survey Results:

- **Group**
  - Parents agreed that session length (1 hour) and intervention program length (6 weeks) was appropriate
  - Parents also liked the 2:1 facilitator to child ratio during the virtual sessions
  - Parents preferred future groups to occur during the wintertime
  - Most families did not feel the need for additional booster sessions
- **Intervention**
  - Most parents found the group either helpful/somewhat helpful
  - Parents reported the group met their expectations
  - Parents preferred having more time to discuss their struggles managing their child’s ADHD and take-home assignments
- Parents reported their child interacting with other children as the most helpful feature of the ADHD-VIBES program

### Child Behaviour Results:

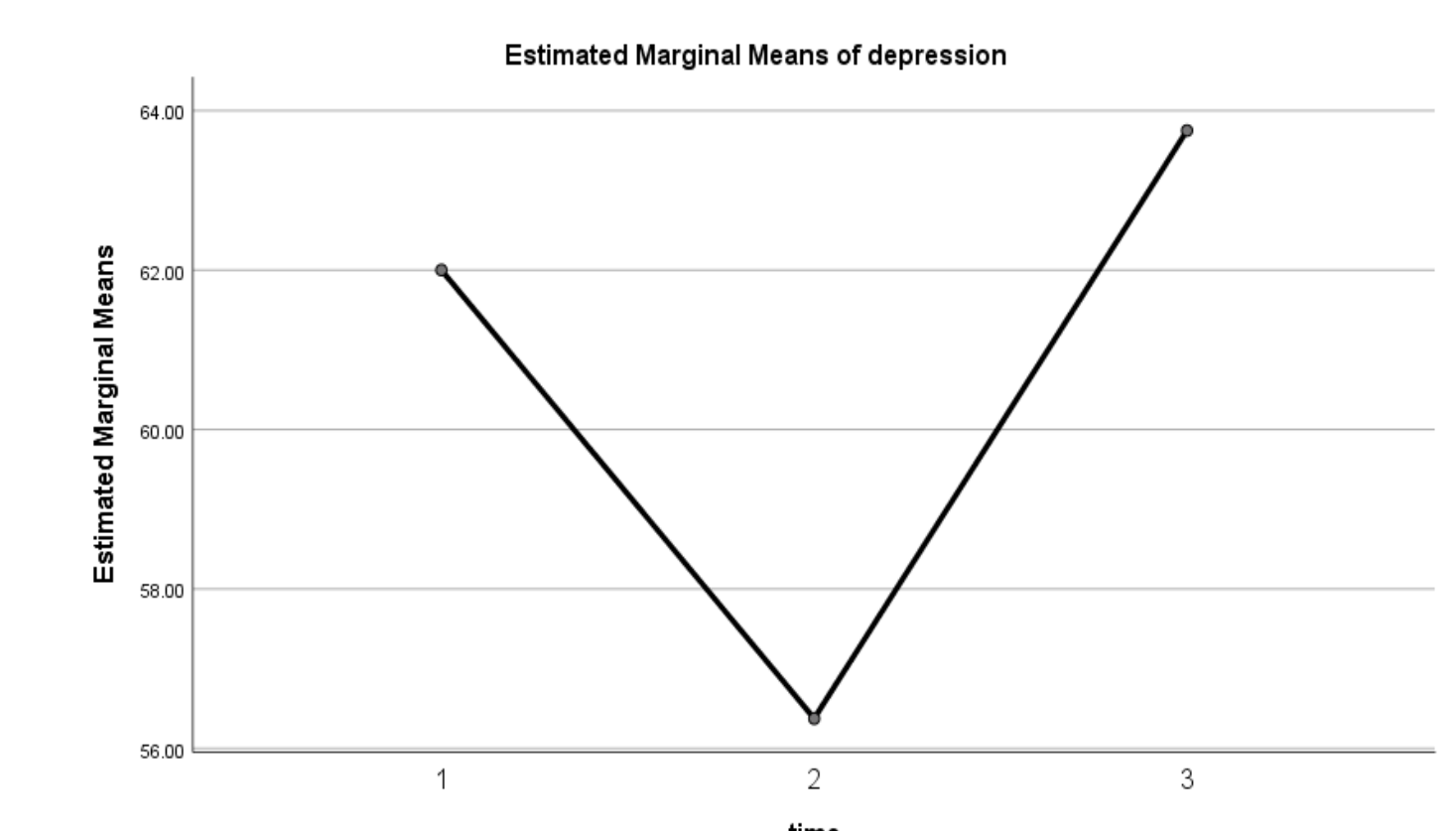


Figure 1: On the BASC-3 Depression subscale, lower levels of depression from pre (T1;  $M = 62.00$ ,  $SD = 6.48$ ) to post (T2;  $M = 56.38$ ,  $SD = 4.66$ ) intervention ( $F = 5.65$ ,  $p = .0160$ ) were observed.

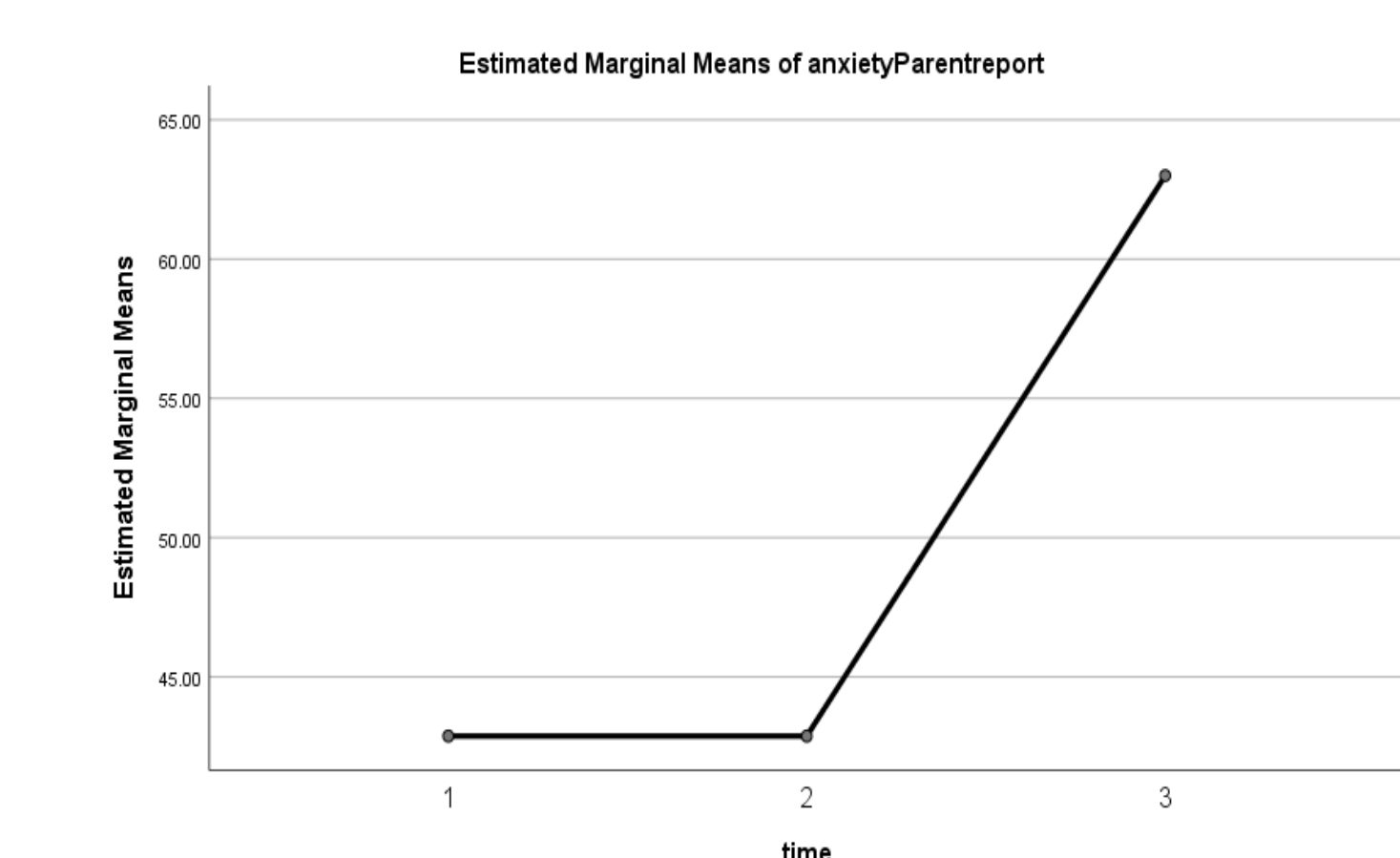


Figure 2: On the BASC-3 Anxiety subscale, significant increase in anxiety at the two-months follow up, ( $F = 6.21$ ,  $p = .012$ ) after completion of the ADHD-VIBES program were observed.



Thanks to all families & children who participated in this study and to CanLearn Society (our community partner-website <https://canlearnsociety.ca>)