

Summary Information from George's (2011) Meta-Analysis

George, J. T. (2011). *Efficacy of Outdoor Behaviour Healthcare (OBH) for adolescent populations: A meta-analysis*. Doctor of Psychology, University of Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN.

Abstract

There exists a lack of therapeutic resources available to adolescents with psychological and behavioral disorders (Davis-Berman & Berman, 2008). Many of the common approaches to working clinically with adolescents require long-term involvement and much verbal exchange; however, the adventure programming industry offers a unique treatment now commonly referred to as Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare (Davis-Berman & Berman, 2008). This method utilizes adventure and outdoor environments and perceived risk to engage adolescents in treatment.

Programs such as these provide clinical treatment supervised and facilitated by licensed mental health professionals. The current dissertation evaluates and differentiates Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare (OBH) programs from other adventure or wilderness programs by examining terminology and the literature on these programs. Empirical outcome research on these programs is becoming more readily available as professionals in the industry work toward legitimizing the approach as a treatment for adolescents. Along with the call for more research from OBH professionals, there is growing attention toward unregulated, negligent wilderness programs. This has invariably led to public challenges to the legitimacy of all related programs. There is a strong need to objectively evaluate program characteristics and the associated therapeutic changes to balance the negative perspectives about these programs.

To determine the overall effectiveness of OBH programs on adolescent participants, this study carried out an updated meta-analysis of OBH programs that differed from previous meta-analysis within the adventure programming industry. Prior meta-analyses did not limit included studies to OBH programs and included research based on programs that were not facilitated by mental health professionals. The current study utilized a systematic literature review that yielded 25 studies of programs meeting OBH criteria. An overall effect size of 0.45 was computed, indicating a medium effect on outcomes as a result of OBH treatment. Based on this analysis, OBH programs appear to be a promising intervention for adolescents with emotional and behavioral difficulties.

Author/ Year	Focus	Client Group	No. of Studies	No. of effects	No. of Participants	ES Baseline (Base-pre)	ES Program (Pre-Post)	ES Follow-Up (Post-FU)
George (2011)	Outdoor Behavioural Healthcare	All	25	233	4172	-	.45	-

Studies Included in Meta-Analysis (N=25)

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