



Feedback to a prototype self-help computer program for anxiety disorders in adolescents

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Abstract

Computer-based therapy is a potential treatment delivery method to help reach many adolescents who have an anxiety disorder but who do not access traditional psychological services. At Macquarie University's Anxiety Research Unit we have developed *Cool Teens*, a computer-based, self-help program for this audience. The aim of this study was to examine adolescents' presentation ratings, multimedia preferences, and attitudes to a prototype version of the *Cool Teens* CD-ROM. Nine adolescents who had previously been treated for an anxiety disorder and 13 non-clinical teens used the prototype and completed a feedback questionnaire. Participants rated all multimedia components positively, but showed a preference for live video in some sections. They reported the CD-ROM was easy to use and visually appealing. The adolescents who had previously been through group treatment all reported they would use a program such as *Cool Teens* either to prepare or to practice following group sessions. Three of these nine participants reported a preference to use a CD-ROM instead of attending group therapy. We conclude that interactive computer-based cognitive behavioural therapy may be an acceptable method of delivering treatment to some adolescents.

Keywords

anxiety disorders, media, self-help, adolescents, cognitive behavioural therapy, computer-based therapy

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