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RESEARCH BRIEFS

December 2012

Georgia Southern College of Education

Special Educators and Nonsuicidal Self-Injurious Behavior: Self-Injury Training, Exposure and Self-Efficacy

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Abstract

Nonsuicidal self-injurious behavior (NSSIB) is one of the most perplexing and challenging behaviors special educators come across in their schools. Thus, there is a need for special educators to be equipped with information regarding NSSIB to help identify students with disabilities who engage in these behaviors and provide them with appropriate support or referrals. This study examined the effectiveness of training received by 390 special educators on NSSIB and their self-efficacy regarding the training. Results revealed that although many special educators serve students who engage in self-injurious behaviors, many did not receive training on how to implement strategies for students who self-injure. Those special educators who received training were more confident in their abilities to work with students who self-injured compared with those special educators who did not receive training.

Practical Application

Findings suggest a need for special educators to receive training concerning NSSIB—particularly, how to identify and intervene with students who self-injure. Therefore, within university programs, preparation should begin within teacher education programs which provide a curriculum to preservice teachers that will prepare them to interact with a range of students, including those who self-injure. Particular attention should be given to providing preservice special education teachers with education regarding how to identify students who self-injure and effective intervention strategies to use with these students. For those special educators who are already in school and recognize they lack training on NSSIB, they should consider seeking opportunities for professional development to prepare them to work with students who self-injure. Particular types of training topics include: basic knowledge, identification, and intervention strategies.

Citation

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