

A randomised, controlled feasibility study comparing the SAFE intervention with support as usual for families of children with autism

Rebecca McKenzie

The University of Plymouth, UK

Abstract

Alongside symptoms of autism and maladaptive behavior, children with autism and their families also report mental health problems. SAFE is a new family oriented intervention drawing upon attachment theory, systemic practice, multi-family therapy and preferences of people with autism.

A randomized controlled feasibility trial of SAFE was conducted to prepare for a definitive national UK trial to evaluate its effectiveness in promoting positive family change. Thirty-four families were recruited (randomized 2:1) to receive either (i) the intervention plus support as usual (SAFE+SUE) or (ii) support as usual (SUE). SAFE provided five 3-hour therapy sessions. The primary outcome measure was the Systemic CORE 15 (SCORE-15) assessing perception of family functioning. Secondary and process measures assessed therapists' adherence to the intervention and families' experience of the study materials, recruitment, and intervention, perceived changes in relationships, wellbeing and coping

Speaker Publications:

1. "Doing things differently: Exploring attachment patterns and parental intentions in families where a child has a diagnosis of autism, 2020, March.
2. "SAFE, a new therapeutic intervention for families of children with autism: study protocol for feasibility randomized controlled trial, Vol 9, May 2019
3. "Systemic-attachment formulation for families of children with autism, 2017 July
4. "Autism and attachment difficulties: Overlap of symptoms, implications and innovative solutions, Vol7 , Issue 9 , 2017 May.
5. "Young Women's Experience of Anorexia, Family Dynamics and Triangulation/ Vol 281, 2019.



[2nd European Autism Congress](#); February 28-29, 2020- Budapest, Hungary.

Abstract Citation:

Rebecca McKenzie, A randomised, controlled feasibility study comparing the SAFE intervention with support as usual for families of children with autism, Autism 2020, 2nd European Autism Congress; February 28-29, 2020- Budapest, Hungary (<https://autism.psychiatryconferences.com/abstract/2020/a-randomised-controlled-feasibility-study-comparing-the-safe-intervention-with-support-as-usual-for-families-of-children-with-autism>)



Biography:

Rebecca McKenzie is a Developmental Psychologist and Associate Professor of Early Childhood Studies at The University of Plymouth in the UK. Professor Rudi Dallos is an Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychology at The University of Plymouth and a family therapist.