

Stress Management of Working Single Mothers: A Single-System Approach

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Women involved in family and work roles are becoming a norm in United States. However, having juggled a variety of roles among working mothers, particularly single mothers, in workplace and family has lead to different impact on micro, mezzo and macro levels. Past research studies made evident that single working mothers encounter adverse health effects in terms of physical and mental health, family disruption, economics and social consequences. As such, effective stress management strategies specifically for working single mothers should be identified to help them maintain a balance in performing their multi-roles.

The study is a single-system (A-B) design that measured the effectiveness of humor guided imagery techniques in reducing self-reported stress levels. It is targeted at working mothers, who are currently encountering life stressors. A 41-year-old Hispanic woman participated twice in each of 3-week baseline and intervention measurements, respectively. Results were collected by visual and statistical analyses for each instrument. They indicated a trend toward improvement in the desired direction, and this intervention was found to be statistically, clinically, and theoretically significant. Implications for social work and further study include adoption of this intervention in stress management practices. A benefit would be utilizing a larger sample size study with control groups.