



A Systematic Review on the use of Planned Creative Arts Interventions with Adoptive Families

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Introduction

During 2021-22, over 25% of ASF cases were creative arts therapies for 2448 adoptive parents and children and 2795 individual children

Currently, there are low numbers of planned interventions and replicable results

As professionals, we need to guarantee quality as well as quantity with consistent interventions and results

Interrogation Questions

What intervention was used?

Did the parents engage?

What creative activities were used?

What emotive words were used at the end of the intervention?

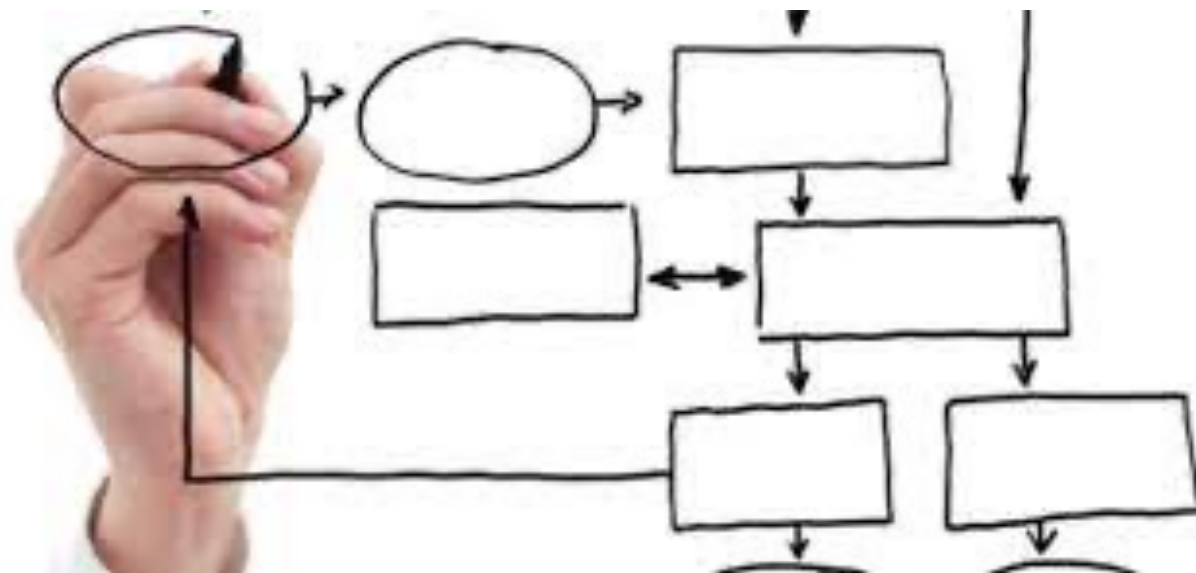
Was there an increased sense of positivity in the family?

Method

Lachal's Four Step Systematic Review Process & a Narrative Analysis

Review completed in 2022

Search Protocol registered with Centre for Reviews and Dissemination

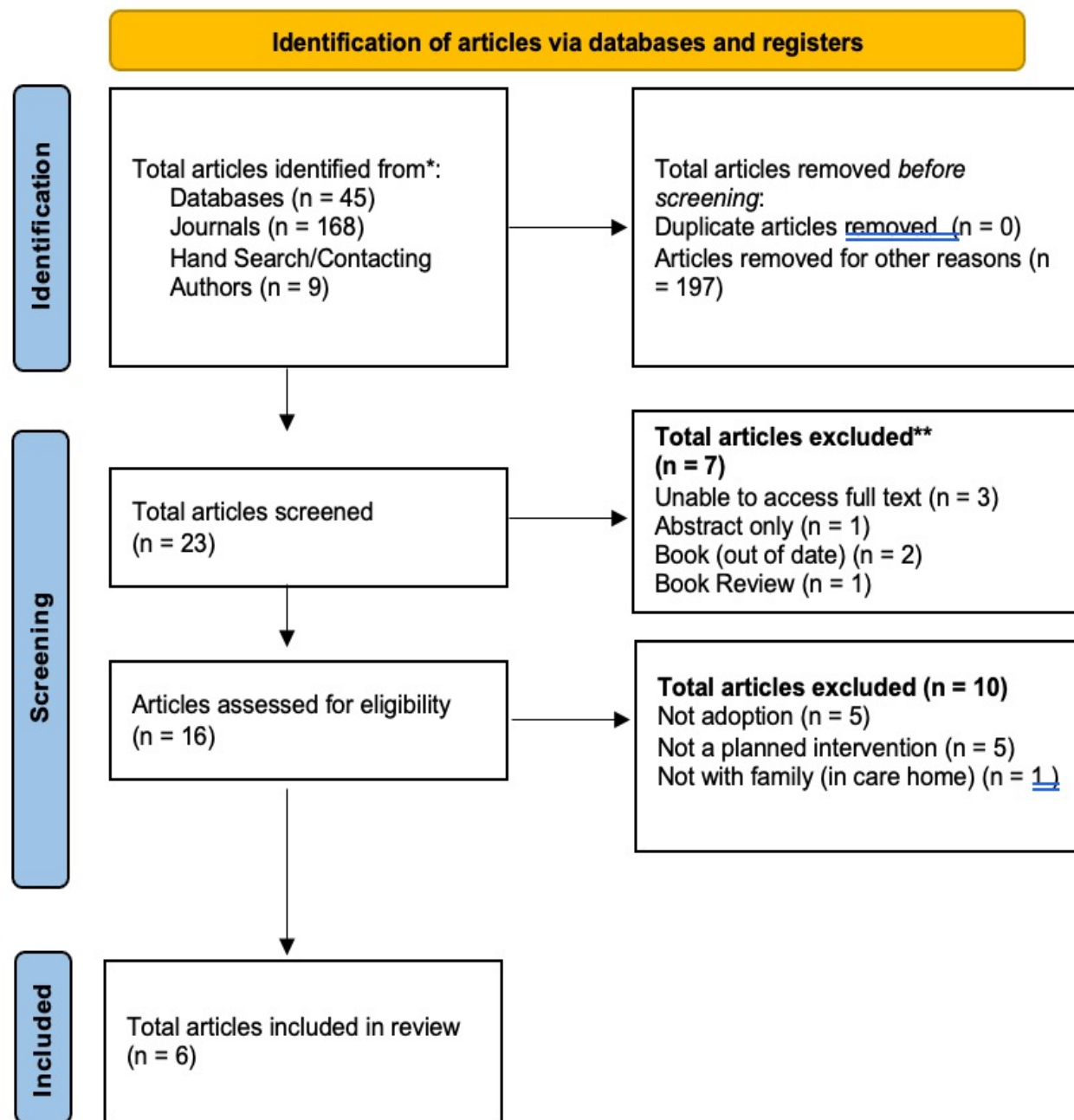


Search Strategy

- 45 Databases
- 168 Journals
- 9 hand searched articles
- Recorded on Zotora and spreadsheet

First Search Terms	Second Search Terms
Adoption AND adopt* Parent* OR family OR families, Child* OR Adoles* Creative art* OR music therap* OR dramatherap* OR art therap*, Intervention OR planned+intervention	Adopt* (proximity search) (child OR adolescent OR parent OR famil* OR father OR mother) Creative OR art OR music OR drama Therapy OR treatment OR intervention

Prism Flowchart



Strategy for Data Synthesis (Lachal, 2017)

Step 1: Carefully
reading and re-
reading articles



Step 2: Coding



A line-by-line coding
of the document
will be used to
interrogate the
document. The
following questions
will be used to
interrogate the
papers and results
recorded
appropriately.



Step 3: Group and
Categorise Themes



Step 4: Subjective
Analysis

Results – 6 Articles in Review

Two Creative Arts articles:

- Moore (2010) – Dramatherapy
- McAlpin (2013) – Music Therapy

One Mentalisation Intervention:

- Midgley, et al (2017)-
Adopting Minds

Three Systematic Reviews:

- Kerr and Cossar (2014)
- Drozd, et al (2017)
- Harris-Waller (2018)

In total:

- 6 articles reviewed
- 28 interventions detailed

Data Collection



Overall, there is a lack of quantitative research studies in creative arts therapy

This hinders progress in the field as commissioners, professionals and families themselves are not fully informed to the benefits of the work

Data Collection



Moore and McAlpin used qualitative outcomes – self created questionnaires, interviews and observations

Midgeley et al, used quantitative and qualitative – five validated questionnaires and interview

Kerr & Cossar, Drozd et al and Harris-Waller did not find a pattern, with poor reporting of outcomes generally

Interrogating the Data



I. What intervention was used?



21 DIFFERENT
INTERVENTIONS WERE
USED



8 FOCUSED ON BUILDING
ATTACHMENT BONDS

“As attachment theory is concerned with relational functioning and the ability of caregivers to help children regulate emotions interventions which target children alone are not in keeping with the principles of the theory”.

(Kerr & Cossar, 2014, pg. 428).

I. What intervention was used?

Moore used dramatherapy and story work, focusing on water, clay, dolls and candles. Parents were offered psychoeducation before the child intervention started



McAlpin used music to promote social skills, encourage bonding and development. Parents and child were involved in each session.



Other interventions were based on mentalisation, parent-child interactions, play, reading groups and parenting peer groups.

II. Did the parents engage?



Overall, the articles reviewed did not report well on if parents engaged in the work

Moore did not clearly report on how parents engaged or on the numbers of participants

McAlpin did have good reporting methods and 10 out of 13 families engaged in all sessions and evaluations

Midgeley et al. reported that five families took part in the evaluation process from 36 referrals

Kerr & Cossar, Drozd et al. and Harris-Waller did not report on parental engagement in interventions



III. What creative activities were used?

Moore used water, clay, dolls and a house and candles with story telling and symbolism

McAlpin used Kindermusik, which contained singing, movement and at home activities

Several interventions were play based either through prescribed activities or free play

One intervention used books and was based in a library



III. What creative activities were used?

Symbolism and metaphor in creative activities are equal to empathising with another

Metaphor can help clients feel 'unstuck' as they imagine situations from all sides.

This is then linked to mentalisation – an important factor in building positive relationships and sense of self and wellbeing

Play and creativity between parent and child supports attachment through affect attunement



IV. What emotive themes were found?

Acceptance

Ambivalence

Balancing birth family and adoptive family

Unresolved feelings towards parent's own childhood and family life

Expressing feelings with being judged

Reduction in parental stress

Increased positive attachment feelings

V. Was there an increase in positivity around the attachment relationship?



Increased time
intentionally
between parent
and child

A stronger sense of
family

Increased use of
play and music in
the home

Parents felt more
confident

Reduction in
challenging
behaviours

Parents felt
listened to and
supported

Conclusions



Supporting creative arts therapists to develop skills in qualitative and quantitative research



Using both methods in reporting research galvanizes results



Qualitative methods help to deepen understanding of human experience



Quantitative methods support the testing of these questions whilst enabling consistent care to be given to all



Conclusions

There were many interventions and outcomes measures used in the articles and streamlining those available may be beneficial

Adoptive families are a unique audience and therapeutic care needs to be tailored to the needs of the families

Sharing best practice from creative arts therapists around the work is key to providing good care for adoptive families

Support creative arts therapists to plan, write and disseminate good work to help move the profession forwards



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