

Using Motivational Interviewing in Treatment of Pediatric Obesity

Indian Health Service

Pediatric Obesity Webinar Series

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Learning Objectives

- Examine evidence for Motivational Interviewing (MI) and explore how the spirit and strategies of MI work can be applied in pediatric obesity treatment teams
- Apply strategies to adapt MI for cultural and developmental context
- Utilize tools and resources to assist families in the management of childhood obesity

Motivational Interviewing (MI)

What MI is:

- “An evidence-based method for promoting change and growth”
- Reliant on both relational context and technical skill
- Guiding
- Learnable
- Simple

What MI is not:

- A fast track to patient compliance
- Advice or a proscriptive set of skills to apply in a certain order
- Directive or passive
- An inherent skill that some have
- Easy

MI Evidence Base

- First article published in 1983
- As of 2022, more than 1,900 controlled clinical trials and more than 200 published meta-analyses and systematic reviews

Conclusion

Motivational interviewing in a scientific setting outperforms traditional advice giving in the treatment of a broad range of behavioural problems and diseases.

Rubak et al., 2005

Bischof et al., 2021

Conclusion: MI has been found useful for strengthening the motivation for behavioral change in patients with various behaviorally influenced health problems and for promoting treatment adherence. It can be used to optimize medical interventions. Further research is needed with respect to its specific mechanisms of action, its efficacy in reinforcing health-promoting modes of behavior, differential indications for different patient groups, and the cost-efficiency of the technique across the spectrum of disorders in which it is used.

MI Evidence: Pediatric Obesity Treatment

- Single studies, systematic reviews and meta-analyses demonstrate utility of MI for children and adolescents with overweight and obesity (e.g., Kao et al., 2023; Lutaud et al., 2023; Suire et al., 2020)
- Especially beneficial for marginalized or disadvantaged groups (Miller and Rollnick, 2023)
- Consider age of child when deciding how to deploy MI, generally focusing on parents with younger children, the parent and child in middle childhood, and adolescents with parent support (Hampl et al., 2023)
 - Example: Values-based MI intervention for adolescents for caloric intake (Bean et al., 2018)

“In sum, MI appears to hold promise in the treatment of overweight amongst younger children, while affects in adolescents have been more mixed. Thus, it may be beneficial to tailor how MI is implemented based on sociocultural factors, for example, race or ethnicity, age, as well as behavioral and motivational factors.” –p 929

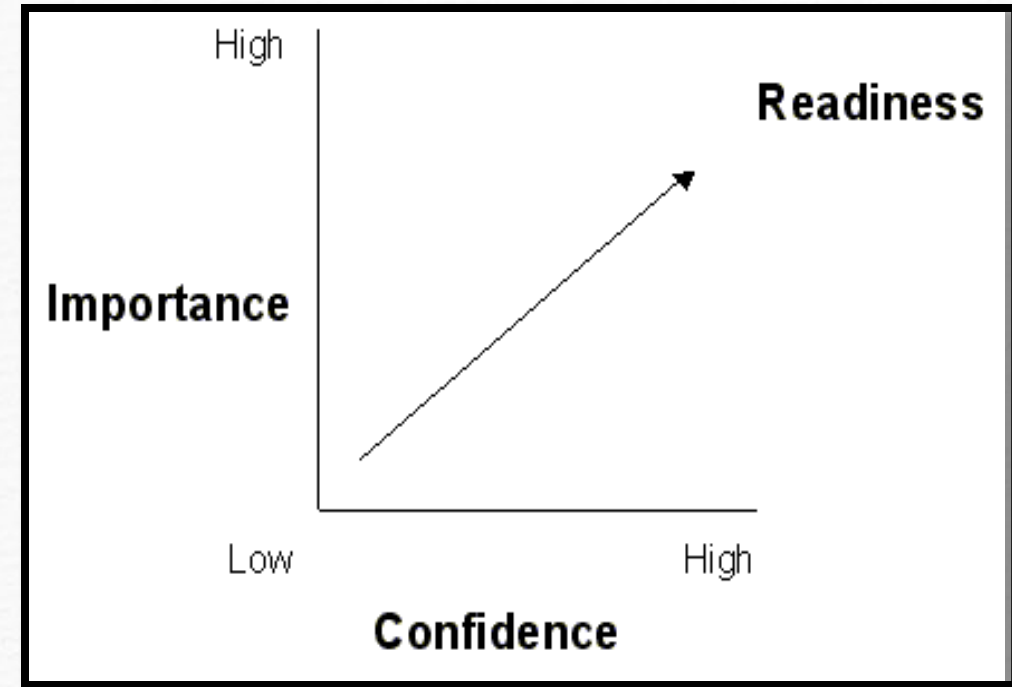
from Woolford, SJ, Villegas, J, Resnicow, K. (2024). Motivational interviewing for the prevention and treatment of pediatric obesity: A primer. *Pediatric Clinics of North America*, 71, 927-941.

Case Study

- 17-year-old female referred to specialty pediatric obesity clinic by pediatrician due to obesity and hyperlipidemia
- Two younger siblings are also eligible due to obesity and are enrolled in the clinic
 - 9-year-old male
 - 4-year-old female
- Visits for all siblings are usually scheduled on the same day to minimize transportation challenges for the family
- Both mother and father are involved

Behavior Change

- Ambivalence is simultaneously wanting to and not wanting to change
 - This is *normal*, not resistance
- Motivation itself can fluctuate and be influenced
 - Useful to treat motivation as a vital sign in any behavior change effort
- MI can facilitate increased readiness to change by amplifying the importance of the change and/or the person's confidence



Practicing MI

Style and Spirit

- Relational
- Strengths-based and autonomy-supportive
- Guiding
 - Partnership
 - Acceptance
 - Compassion
 - Empowerment

Skills and Strategies

- Engaging
- Focusing
- Evoking
- Planning

MI Prayer in the Navajo Tradition

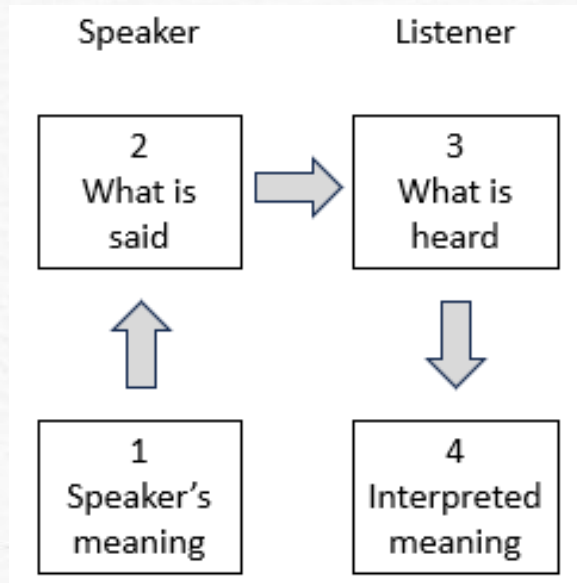
Guide me to be a patient companion,
to listen with a heart as open as the sky.
Grant me vision to see through her eyes
and eager ears to hear her story.
Create a safe and open mesa on which we may walk together.
Make me a clear pool in which she may reflect.
Guide me to find in her your beauty and wisdom,
knowing your desire for her to be in harmony:
healthy, loving, and strong.
Let me honor and respect her choosing of her own path,
and bless her to walk it freely.
May I know once again that although she and I are different,
yet there is a peaceful place where we are one.

Bill Miller

MI Task: Engaging

Skillful listening

- Active listening
- Curiosity



OARS

- Open-ended questions
 - Help you learn, create forward momentum
 - More reflections than questions
- Affirmations
 - Simple – focuses on what person did or said
 - Complex – focuses on attribute
- Reflections
 - Simple – stays close to what they said
 - Complex – extends or makes a guess
- Summarize
 - Helps to continue focusing the conversation

MI Task: Focusing

- Determine the topic of conversation
 - Happens in many ways, including an open question, your own observation or referral need
- Identify one or more goals toward which you will move *together*
 - Goals are important components of motivation and should be clear
- Stay focused on shared goals
 - Avoid the wandering trap
 - Also make it doable

“A focus, like a treatment plan, *should* unfold over time, adjusting to changing needs and conditions. That’s normal.”

(Miller and Rollnick, 2023, p 70)

MI Task: Evoking

- Recognize change talk
- Invite change talk
- Strengthen change talk

By increasing the ratio of change talk to sustain talk, the likelihood of that change increases.

Types of Change Talk

- Preparatory (DARN)
 - **Desire:** Want, wish, like, love
 - **Ability:** Can, could, able, possible
 - **Reasons:** If-then
 - **Need:** Have to, need, must, got to
- Mobilizing (CATs)
 - **Commitment:** Will, promise, guarantee
 - **Activation or Openness:** Willing, consider
 - **Taking Steps:** Action in direction of change
 - **Sustain Talk:** Tips balance toward status quo; want to reduce this

MI Task: Planning

- Clarify goal(s)
- Generate list of alternatives for moving toward change
 - What has the person considered or tried before? What possibilities interest them?
- Narrow down and choose among options or steps toward change

Challenges to Practicing MI

- Expert trap
- Persuasion trap
- Wandering trap
- Time trap
- Fixing reflex
- Maintaining neutrality
- Vertical ambivalence

Motivational Interviewing Resources

- *Motivational Interviewing: Helping People Change and Grow, Fourth Edition.* William R. Miller and Stephen Rollnick. 2023.
- *Building Motivational Interviewing Skills: A Practitioner Workbook, Second Edition.* David B. Rosengren. 2017.
- *Motivational Interviewing in Health Care: Helping Patients Change Behavior, Second Edition.* Stephen Rollnick, William R. Miller, and Christopher C. Butler. 2022.

Additional Tools and Resources

- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) resources:
 - Policy Statement on stigma experienced by children and adolescents with obesity released in 2017
 - Implicit Association Test (IAT) for weight bias:
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>
 - Clinical Practice Guideline for the evaluation and treatment of children and adolescents with obesity released in 2023
- American Psychological Association (APA) resources for clinicians and for children and families: <https://www.apa.org/obesity-guideline>
- Stop Obesity Alliance family guide for talking to children about weight and health: <https://www.apa.org/obesity-guideline/discussing-weight/talking-to-children.pdf>
- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics guide for talking to children about weight and obesity: <https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/weight-and-body-positivity/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-weight>

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Chokma!

Feel free to contact me any time.

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