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## Effectiveness of Life Skills - Based Group Counseling on Emotional Wellbeing of Adolescents: A Social Work Study

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Adolescence (ages 10–19) is a transitional period marked by rapid physical growth, cognitive shifts, and emotional volatility. Key challenges include managing puberty and body image, navigating peer pressure and social media, establishing identity, and coping with increased academic stress and mental health issues like anxiety or depression. **Objectives:** The study aimed to explore life-skills-based group counseling with adolescents, evaluate its effect on their emotional well-being, design and pilot a social-work-focused counseling module, and compare participants' experiences before and after the intervention. **Methods:** The methodology used a qualitative case-study design with pre-test/post-test measures: 40 adolescents from Hukkeri and Chikkodi blocks were purposively sampled, completed a focus-group checklist before and after an 8-session life-skills counseling series (self-awareness, stress management, interpersonal skills), allowing comparison of emotional well-being themes across the two time points. **Results:** Pre-intervention, adolescents struggled to name emotions, faced peer-pressure stress, and rarely sought help. Post-intervention, they used richer emotional vocabulary, applied breathing and problem-



solving skills, and leaned on peers for support; they reported feeling more in control and more willing to discuss feelings, with observations of stronger group cohesion and less conflict. **Conclusion:** School-based group counseling can rapidly improve rural teens' emotional expression, coping, and peer support, giving policymakers a practical tool for scarce-resource settings. In social work setting group counseling is important tool for emotional wellbeing of adolescents.

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### **Introduction :**

Adolescence is a crucial developmental stage that is characterized by profound changes in the body, mind, and emotions. Teens frequently face a variety of difficulties that may have an adverse effect on their mental health as they negotiate the difficulties of growing up. Hormonal fluctuations, social dynamics, scholastic expectations, and the quest for independence can all contribute to a setting that is susceptible to mental health problems. In order to provide assistance and promote a smooth transition into adulthood, it is essential to comprehend the prevalent mental health challenges that teenagers encounter.(Mind 24-7, 2024)

Life Skills help an individual handle the expectations and demands of today's society. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in India has acknowledged the importance of developing both scholastic and co-scholastic areas, and as a result, life skill education is now a mandatory component of its curriculum. UNICEF, UNESCO, and WHO list the ten key life skills as follows: 1. self-awareness 2. Critical Thinking 3. Think creatively. 4. Decision Making 5. Problem-solving 6. Effective Communication 7. Interpersonal Relation 8. Empathy 9. Dealing with stress 10. Dealing with emotion.(Goyenka, 2026)

### **Group Counseling :**

In group counseling, a counselor works with a small group of people to address situational or developmental concerns. It seeks to foster self-awareness, settle disputes between people, and create a nurturing atmosphere. Group therapy goes through a number of phases, such as an initial orientation phase, a transition phase where participants start sharing honestly, a working phase where more complex personal concerns are handled, and a final termination phase. In order to create a transparent and trustworthy environment, effective group counseling takes into account elements like group size and makeup as well as setting goals and rules.( Jayalaxmi K, 2022)



## **Process of Group Counseling**

Group counseling focuses on treating an individual in a group environment to facilitate growth.(Psychology Town, 2025)

- 1) Rapport Building
- 2) Assessment
- 3) Goal Setting
- 4) Intervention
- 5) Evaluation
- 6) Termination
- 7) Follow Up

## **Emotional Wellbeing**

The National Center for Emotional Wellness (NCEW) describes emotional wellness or well-being as an awareness, understanding, and acceptance of feelings and an ability to manage effectively through times of change or challenge. (Danielle wade, 2024)

## **Factors of Emotional Wellbeing**

(Vishaka Balla, 2026)

- 1) Family dynamics
- 2) Financial issues
- 3) Grief and loss
- 4) Loneliness and isolation
- 5) Physical problems, accidents or injuries
- 6) Lifestyle changes
- 7) History of trauma



8) Changes in mood, like persistent sadness, hopelessness, irritable attitude most of the day.

### **Emotional and Social Benefits of Group Counseling**

Group therapy provides distinct benefits that make it an appealing alternative for many persons seeking mental health care.(Rego Park Counseling, 2026)

- 1) Reduced isolation : Connecting with individuals who understand your experiences.
- 2) Improved social skills: Communicate in a secure and supportive setting.
- 3) Enhanced self-awareness: Gain insights from interpersonal feedback.
- 4) Increased empathy: Gain a better grasp of other people's viewpoints.
- 5) Stronger support network: Create significant ties outside of the group setting.

### **Social Work :**

Using the dynamics of group interaction to foster healing and personal development, a group social worker specializes in providing support, therapy, and counseling for individuals in a collective context. In contrast to conventional one-on-one social work, group social work leverages the power of shared experiences, allowing participants to relate to and gain knowledge from peers who encounter comparable difficulties. These experts lead groups via organized sessions, whether they are intended to promote social skills and community development or to address coping mechanisms for particular problems like addiction, bereavement, or trauma. By using a variety of therapeutic approaches, they establish a secure and supportive space where participants may express themselves, grow in empathy, and acquire fresh insights. (NASW, 2026)

### **Review of Literature**

#### **1) Better Life (2025)**

Life skills therapy is a structured therapeutic approach that helps individuals develop practical abilities to navigate life's challenges. The principle focus is on equipping people with skills necessary for emotional regulation, effective communication, and decision-making. Life skills therapy aids in promoting resilience, personal development, and mental well-being by fostering these competencies. Life skills therapy empowers individuals to foster self-reliance, improve interpersonal relationships, and augment well-being by surmounting challenges related to personal, social, and professional functioning.



## 2) Zipora Shechtman (2025)

Compared to individual treatment, group therapy offers a naturalistic environment that lessens stigmatization while providing a wealth of emotional and social support, making it an ideal therapeutic modality for teenagers. Groups support the development of closeness, companionship, social skills, and a sense of belonging. Adolescents, however, pose particular therapeutic difficulties. They frequently lack passion for psychological intervention and sophisticated therapy, and they are usually referred by others rather than by themselves. Teenagers are capable of displaying strong defiance, rage, and resistance. Because traditional talk therapy might be very intimidating, unique indirect and projective strategies are needed, which calls for group facilitators with specialized training.

### Objectives

- 1) To study life Skills based group counseling.
- 2) To assess the impact of life skills based group counseling on emotional wellbeing of adolescents.
- 3) To develop and implement the social work oriented life skills based counseling modules.
- 4) To compare the pre-Intervention and post - Intervention Study.

### Research Design

Researcher used qualitative pre-test /post-test case study design in the study.

**Sampling design and size:** Researcher used purposive sampling design and 40 adolescent students were used for focus group discussion.

### Universe of the Study

The universe of the study consisted of adolescents aged between 13 and 19 years studying in schools located in the Chikkodi Educational District of Karnataka.

### Unit of the study

Unit of the study consisted only Chikodi and Hukkeri blocks of Chikodi educational district of Karnataka State.

### Tools



Researcher used focus group discussion checklist in pre-intervention and post-intervention time.

### Process of the study

Pre-intervention : Researcher arrange pre-intervention discussion for adolescents.

Intervention: Researcher engage 08 sessions for adolescents weekly 02 sessions.

Post-intervention :Researcher arrange post-intervention discussion for adolescents.

Follow Up : Researcher conducted follow up activities for life skills implementation.

### Life skills based group counseling interventions sessions

Session . No	Theme of the Session and Contents	Objectives	Training Methods/Tools	Outcomes	Resource Person
01	Introduction to Life Skills a) Meaning of life skills b) Types of life skills c) Importance in personal and social development.	To understand the concept and importance of life skills in everyday life.	Interactive lecture, group discussion, brainstorming on daily life challenges.	Participants understand life skills and their relevance in managing life situations effectively.	Researcher
02	Understanding Adolescence a) Physical, emotional, cognitive, and social changes during adolescence.	To help adolescents understand adolescence as a developmental stage.	Experience sharing, myth–fact discussion, guided interaction.	Improved acceptance of developmental changes and reduced confusion or anxiety.	Researcher
03	Self-Awareness – Knowing Self Self-concept,	To enhance self-awareness among	Self-reflection exercises, “Who Am I?” activity,	Increased self-understanding, self-confidence,	Researcher



	strengths, weaknesses, interests, values.	adolescents.	group discussion.	and clarity about personal identity.	
04	Understanding Stress Meaning of stress; causes; signs and effects of stress.	To identify stress and its sources in adolescent life.	Stress mapping activity, group discussion, facilitator input.	Adolescents recognize personal stressors and early signs of stress.	Researcher
05	Coping with Stress Decision Making Problem Solving Time Management Positive Relationship	To develop decision-taking, problem solving, time management, positive relationship skills to cope with stress.	Case studies, decision-making exercises, group discussion, Role plays on relationship scenarios, Preparation of personal time tables	Enhanced ability to make responsible decisions and manage stressful situations.	Researcher
06	Understanding Emotions Types of emotions; emotional triggers; healthy expression of emotions.	To help adolescents identify and understand emotions.	Emotion cards, group sharing, guided discussion.	Improved emotional awareness and emotional expression.	Researcher
07	Coping with Emotions Managing anger, fear, sadness, frustration; emotional regulation strategies.	To equip adolescents with skills to manage emotions effectively.	Role play, relaxation techniques, mindfulness exercises.	Better emotional control, resilience, and healthy coping behavior.	Researcher



08	Consolidation & Feedback Recap of sessions Importance of practicing life skills daily	To review learning To encourage application of life skills	Quiz or game-based review Feedback sharing	Reinforcement of learning Motivation to apply skills Sense of achievement	Researcher
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### Data Collection Source

Researcher data collected from Primary Sources like Focus group discussion and case study method and secondary source of data like journals, websites, magazines, newspapers etc.

**Data Analysis design:** Researcher used Thematic analysis.

### Discussion

#### Thematic Analysis of Focus Group Discussion

To complement the qualitative findings, a **Focus Group Discussion (FGD)** was conducted with 40 **adolescents** selected from the study sample. The participants were selected to ensure **equal representation of gender and type of school**.

#### Composition of FGD Participants

Category	Number of Participants
Government High School, Karagaon Tq - Chikkodi	05 Boys + 05 Girls =10
Government High School, Belkud Tq - Chikkodi	05 Boys + 05 Girls =10
SLBS High School, Yadagud Tq-Hukkeri	05 Boys + 05 Girls =10
Rani Channamma High School, Hukkeri	05 Boys + 05 Girls =10
<b>Total Participants</b>	20 Boys +20 Girls = 40
Standard	9th Standard
Age	Approximately 14-16



Major Problem Theme	Difficulty in Managing Emotions
Counselor/Trainer	Researcher /Resource Person
Moderater	Each High School, Headmaster

The focus group discussion aimed to explore adolescents' perceptions of emotional wellbeing, their emotional challenges, and their experiences with the life skills training intervention.

### **Overall Summary of Focus Group Discussion**

The thematic analysis of the focus group discussion clearly indicates that adolescents experienced several emotional challenges prior to the life skills intervention, including limited self-awareness, difficulty managing emotions, and inadequate coping strategies for stress. After participating in the life skills training sessions, participants reported improvements in emotional awareness, emotional regulation, decision-making, and interpersonal relationships. The adolescents also expressed increased self-confidence and greater ability to manage everyday challenges.

These qualitative findings support the quantitative results of the study and demonstrate that the life skills intervention contributed positively to improving the emotional wellbeing of adolescents.

### **Findings**

- 1) Adolescents face serious emotional challenges in day-to-day life.
- 2) Adolescents have lack of emotional wellbeing strategies.
- 3) Adolescents have no any life skills based group counseling activities.
- 4) Students develop Coping with emotions skills in post discussions time compare to pre discussion time.
- 5) Many number of adolescents say opinion is need life skills training.
- 6) Female Adolescents Face more emotional challenges compare to male adolescents.
- 7) Adolescents have low self - Awareness level.

### **Suggestions**

- 1) Provide emotional wellbeing education.
- 2) Provide life skills based group counseling to adolescents.



- 3) Provide life skills education and training to adolescents.
- 4) Provide psychological support and psychosocial rehabilitation to adolescents.
- 5) Adapt life skills education subjects to school curriculum.
- 6) Every school should appoint social and emotional wellbeing counselors and career counselors.
- 7) Appoint social work graduates for school social workers.

### **Conclusion:**

Life skills training / education takes into account psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that help students to take right decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with others, and cope with managing their lives in a healthy and productive manner. Especially Group counseling offers several distinct advantages that set it apart from individual therapy. One of the most significant benefits is the opportunity to gain multiple perspectives on shared issues. When individuals are dealing with personal struggles, it can be difficult to see beyond their own experiences. Social Work oriented life skills based group counseling is necessary to social and emotional wellbeing of adolescents.

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