Preventing Mental Health Problems in Youth: The YouthMood Project

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Universal School-Based Trials

- 27 RCTs evaluating universal anxiety and depression prevention programs in schools

- 4 trials evaluated the program with classroom teachers

Program	Anxiety (ES)	Depression (ES)
FRIENDS	0.62–0.63*	0.30–0.33*
Problem Solving for Life (Trial 1)	-	0.03–0.36*
Problem Solving for Life (Trial 2)	-0.08–0.07	0.04–0.05
Penn Resiliency Program	-	0.14–0.51*

Aims

- To establish whether MoodGYM is effective in reducing students' vulnerability to anxiety and depression

- To test MoodGYM with a larger and more diverse sample, following promising results from the pilot studies

- To establish the 'true' preventive effects of the MoodGYM program

Participants

- 30 schools participated

- 56% of participants were female

- 17% lived on a farm or rural property
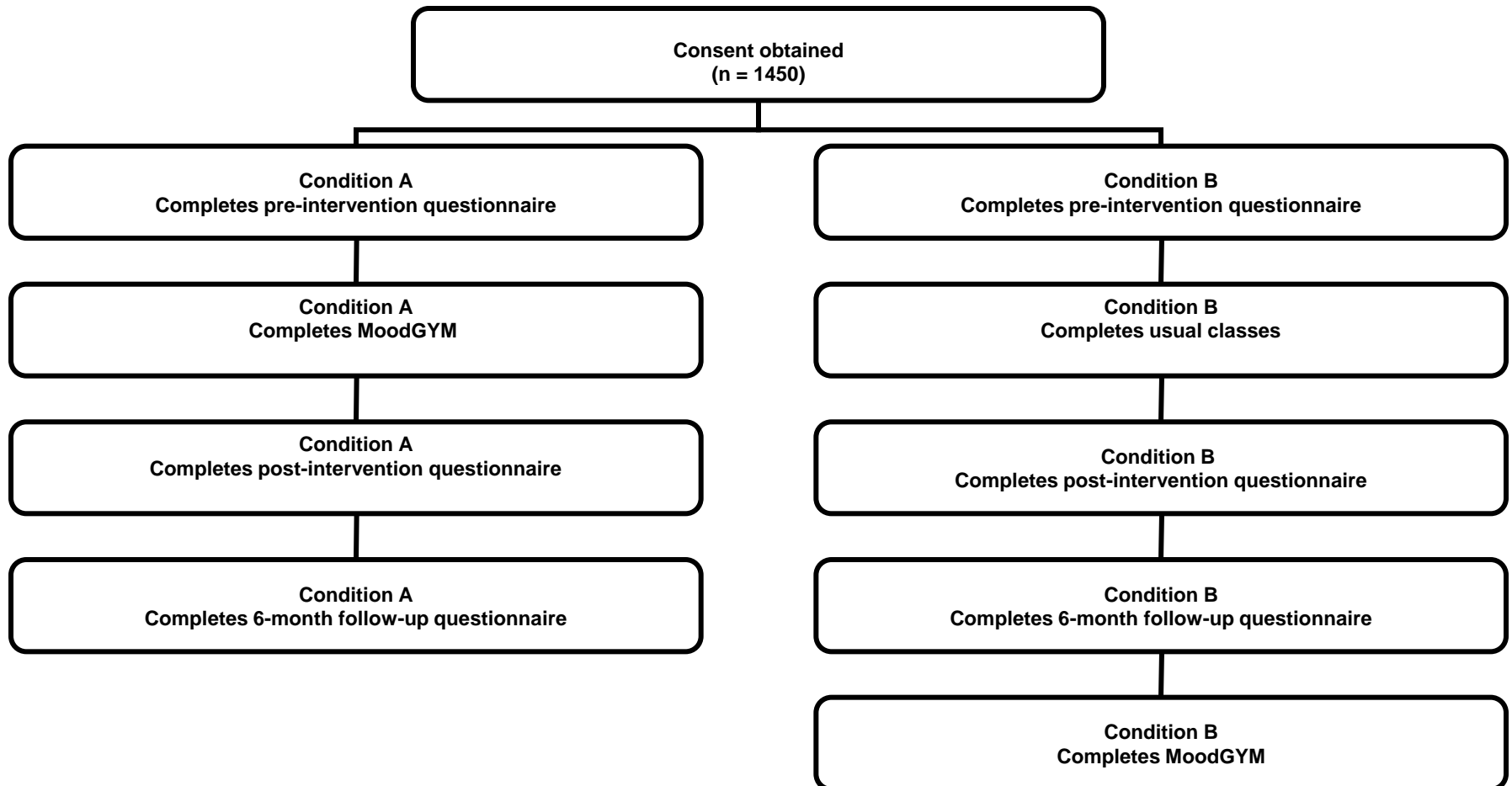
- Mean age = 14.33 years

Measures

- Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D)

- Revised Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale (RCMAS)

- Depression preventive sub-sample: CES-D < 24

- Anxiety preventive sub-sample: RCMAS < 19

The MoodGYM Program

- http://moodgym.anu.edu.au

- Online CBT program

- Five Modules: Feelings, Thoughts, Unwarping, Destressing and Relationships

- Interactive quizzes and exercises

Procedure

Consent obtained
(n = 1450)

Condition A
Completes pre-intervention questionnaire

Condition B
Completes pre-intervention questionnaire

Condition A
Completes MoodGYM

Condition B
Completes usual classes

Condition A
Completes post-intervention questionnaire

Condition B
Completes post-intervention questionnaire

Condition A
Completes 6-month follow-up questionnaire

Condition B
Completes 6-month follow-up questionnaire

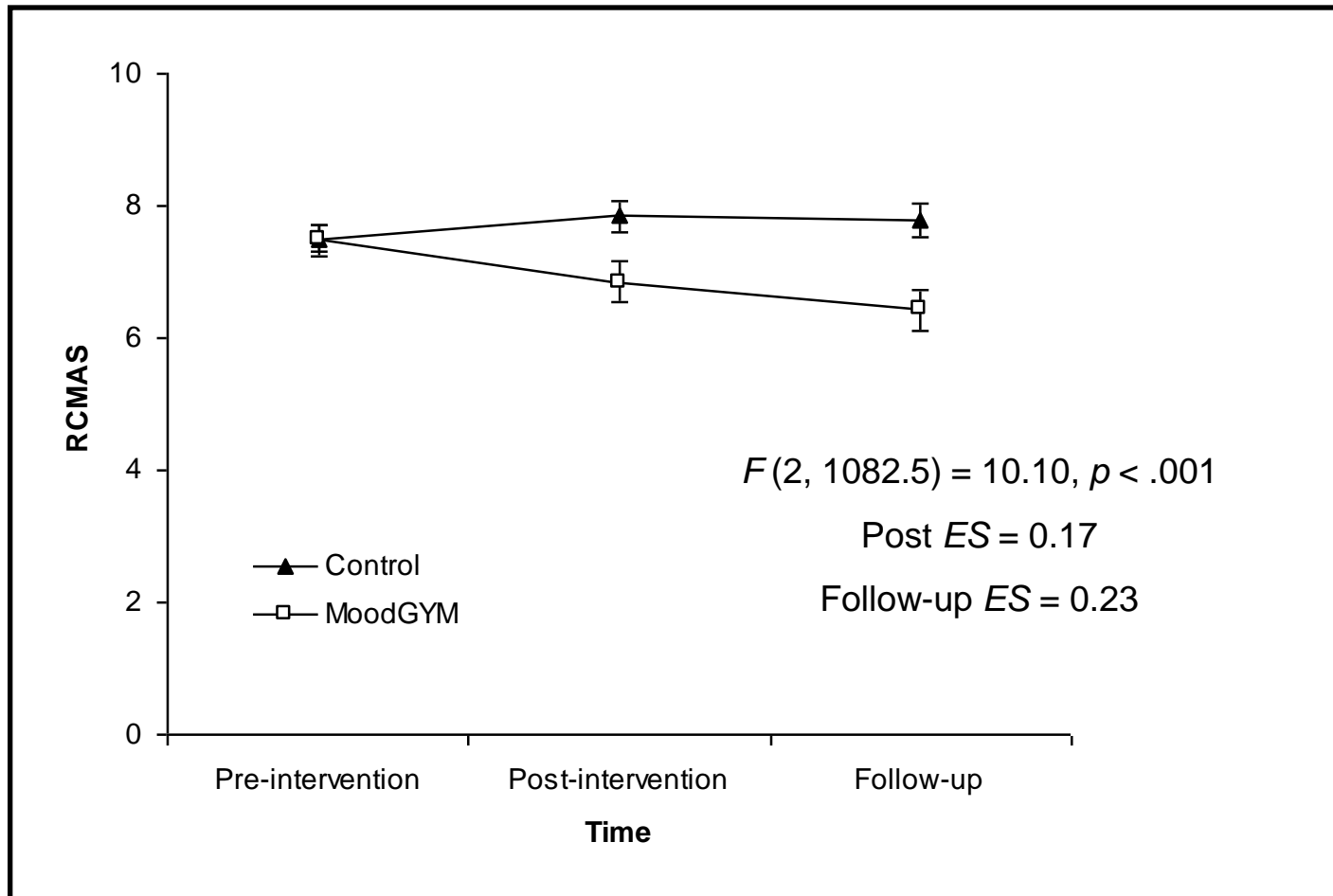Condition B
Completes MoodGYM

Data Analysis

- Mixed models repeated measures ANOVA

  - Repeated measures
  - Students clustered within classes

- ICC ~ 0.03

  - Class effects minimal

- ITT analysis

Mixed Model ANOVA- Anxiety

$F(2, 1082.5) = 10.10$, $p < .001$

Post $ES = 0.17$

Follow-up $ES = 0.23$

Planned Contrasts- Anxiety

- Pre-test to Post-test:

    - MoodGYM pre to post change = -0.63

                        vs.

        Control pre to post change = 0.33

    - $t\,(1113.0) = 3.30$, $p = .001$

- Pre-test to Follow-up:

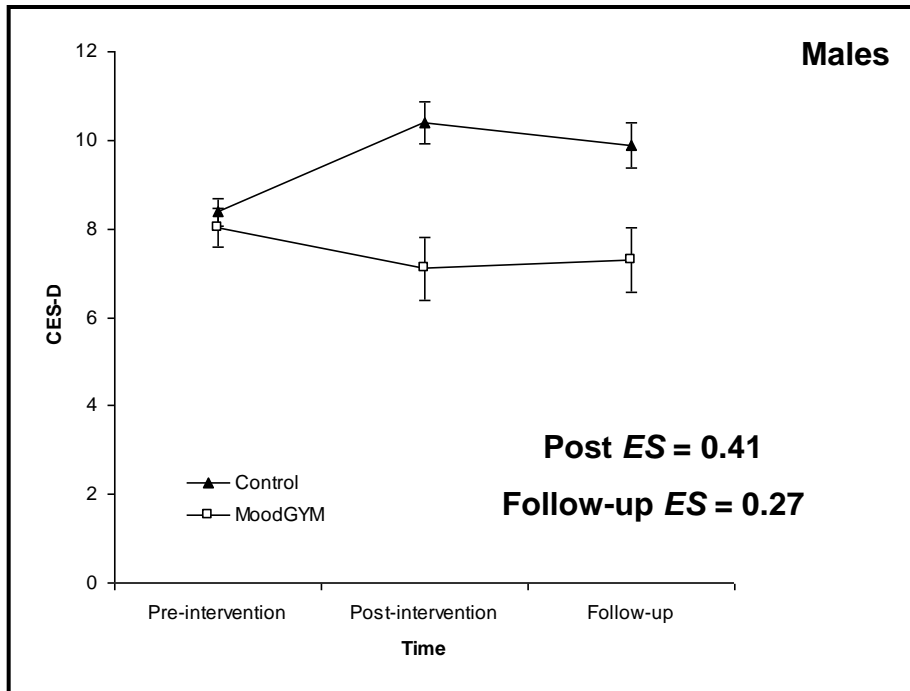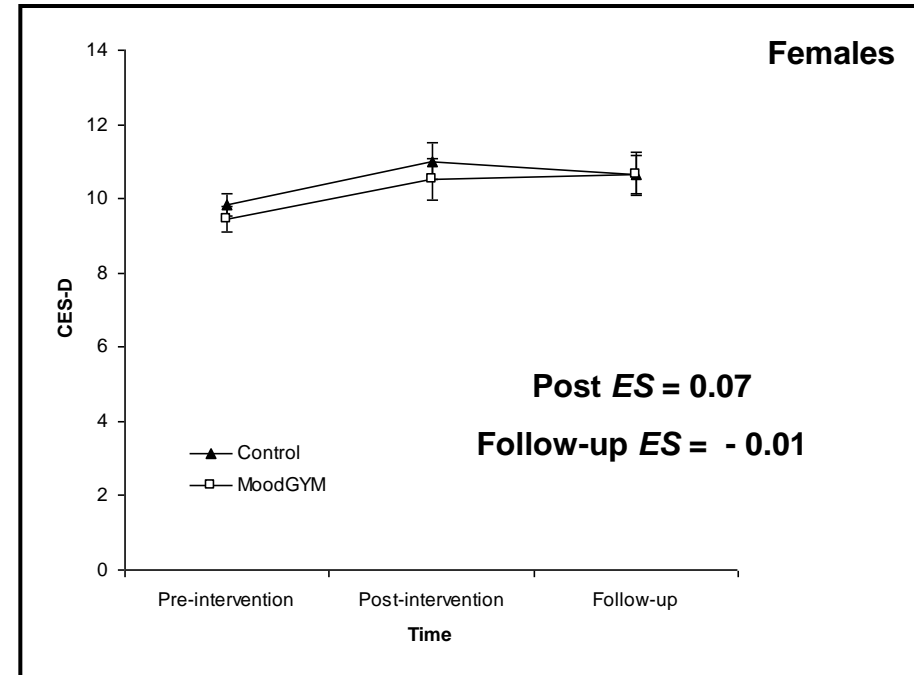   - MoodGYM pre to follow-up change = -1.06

                        vs.

        Control pre to follow-up change = 0.28

    - $t\,(1081.1) = 4.11$, $p < .001$

Mixed Model ANOVA- Depression

$F(5, 1425.6) = 2.13, p = .06$

Planned Contrasts- Male Depression

- Pre-test to Post-test:

  - MoodGYM pre to post change = -0.92

    vs.

    Control pre to post change = 2.02

  - $t\,(1075.5) = 3.80$, $p < .001$

- Pre-test to Follow-up:

  - MoodGYM pre to follow-up change = -0.74

    vs.

    Control pre to follow-up change = 1.49

  - $t\,(1039.1) = 2.67$, $p = .008$

Anxiety Caseness Analyses

- Post-intervention

  - Intervention condition = 0.8%
  - Wait-list control condition = 2.2%
  - $\chi^2 (1) = 3.27$, *p* = .07

- 6-month follow-up

  - Intervention condition = 0.8%
  - Wait-list control condition = 1.9%
  - $\chi^2 (1) = 2.09$, *p* = .15

Depression Caseness Analyses

- Post-intervention

  - Intervention condition = 2%
  - Wait-list control condition = 8.9%
  - $\chi^2 (1) = 7.95$, $p < .01$

- 6-month follow-up

  - Intervention condition = 4%
  - Wait-list control condition = 9.6%
  - $\chi^2 (1) = 4.45$, $p = .03$

Conclusion

- Effective classroom resource

- Internet interventions can be successfully implemented in schools

- Suitable for a variety of classroom environments

Acknowledgements