

Using DMM Family Functional Formulations in interventions for children with neurodevelopmental disorders

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Two centers for treatment of neurodevelopmental disorders

- A range of disorders, of different severity, from autism to mental retardation (chromosomic anomalies and other causes), to learning disabilities to language delay
- Staff feels a need for supervision: neuropsychological diagnosis not guiding some critical aspects of intervention

Questions arising from practice

- How to work on relationships, when the family problem is focused on the functioning of the child?
- As most families don't follow up on referrals to psychotherapists (and some psychotherapists resent referrals done by colleagues, and not by the families themselves) what are the alternatives?

A research question

- Does the DMM Family Functional Formulation (FFF) improve the efficacy of treatment of neurodevelopmental disorders?

Two groups compared

- 1) Treatment as usual, including:
 - thorough neuropsychological assessment,
 - rehabilitative treatment,
 - activation of additional psychological and medical treatments
- 2) FFF added to assessment

Comparisons:

1. Recovered functionality (measurable)
2. Success of intervention as perceived by the family
3. Success of intervention as perceived by the staff
4. Adaptation of the family
 - in general
 - regarding the intervention

Current state of project

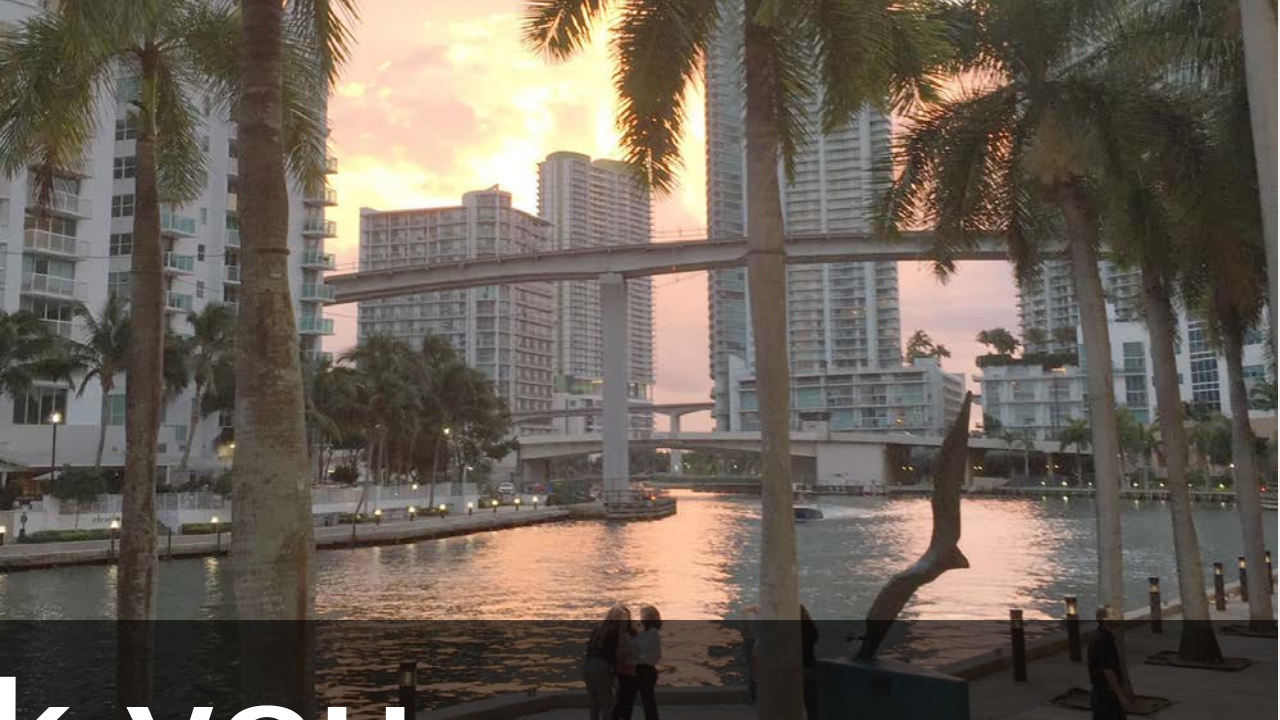
- Existing caseload (about 40) assessed for effects of intervention and state of family adaptation
- Incoming cases (18 so far):
 - are given DMM assessments and an FFF is constructed
 - will be assessed after comparable time of intervention

What we have learned so far

- Giving the assessments: not a mechanical process, requires thought and dialogue with the family (risk of drop out).
- More reflective abilities in parents = less compliance to proposed treatments.

What we have learned so far

- When one parent more reflective (B or R → B), the other takes the leadership.
- Relationship issues do not necessarily require another intervention: different ways of carrying out rehabilitative interventions can have effects on family organization.



Thank you

