How children with and without disabilities experienced the COVID-19 Quarantine time in China

Abstract:

Objective: To understand what children experienced from their perspective, and how they coped with COVID-19 quarantine period.

Method: questionnaire was distributed via web and regular web contacts – e.g. emails, During April 20th to April 30th, during 10 consecutive days data was collected. Overall, 516 Chinese children (include children with disabilities 27% 139/516) responded (age range 7-10 years) from 25 provinces of China. Triangulation of qualitative analysis method was employed to summarize the information.

Results: Our results showed: 1) All children gained knowledge about how to help stop the virus spreading and protect themselves; 2) more than half of the children (57% N=292) expressed that new and different special interests developed during this challenging period. In addition, quality interactions with parents and or peers, and self-leisure abilities were main facilitating factors towards better well-being of the children during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Conclusion: Spending time in self-leisure activities and the quality of interactions with immediate members of the family have shown to be strong positive influences on the child’s well-being, especially during the COVID-19 quarantine time. In China, a lesson learnt during the COVID-19 lockdown from the self-reported experiences of children with and without disabilities was that the presence of facilitating factors – including enjoying self-leisure time and quality time with families - made certain children more resilient than others.

Keywords: COVID-19, quarantine, family interaction, well-being of children, influence factors, China