
ABSTRACT

School counseling for a junior high school girl with suicidal ideation who has been raised in an abusive environment

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Previous studies have shown that growing up in an abusive environment increases the risk of acting out and that a mentalizing approach has the effect of reducing this behavior. However, few previous studies have discussed this in the field of clinical practices in Japanese schools. Therefore, this paper discusses a case in which the author was involved as a school counselor and adopted a mentalizing approach with a junior high school girl who experienced abuse, acted out, and who had suicidal ideation. Her mentalization and acting out showed significant improvement through monthly interviews alone, which suggests that a mentalizing approach would be effective in clinical practices in schools. The study suggested that when dealing with students who have been raised in an abusive environment, we need to: consider the degree of their attachment trauma and help-seeking ability and develop this ability; carefully and repeatedly assess risks and other factors; fine-tune the level of psychological support during the interviews; and carefully fulfil our safety obligations, considering that it may induce further abuse by parents.

Key Words: abuse, mentalizing, suicidal ideation, acting-out, help-seeking ability
