Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

08 Nov 2026

The effectiveness of art therapy with a painting approach on emotional regulation, hopelessness, loneliness, and shyness in children of divorce.

Protocol summary

Study aim
Determining the effectiveness of art therapy with a painting approach on emotional regulation, hopelessness, loneliness, and shyness in divorced children

Design
This study is a randomized, double-blind, parallel-group clinical trial conducted in Phase 2 on 30 children of divorce (15 in each group). The sample allocation is done by simple randomization using the RAND function in Excel software; first, each participant receives an identification code and is divided into two groups of 15 based on a random number.

Settings and conduct
This research will use a field experimental research method and an extensive pre-test and post-test design. The research will be conducted in the city of Izeh. All participants, clinical caregivers, and evaluators who interpret the data will be kept confidential and all information will be kept anonymous.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria
Inclusion Criteria Be between 7 and 12 years old Be children of divorce. The children and their parents must consent to participate in the research. Exclusion Criteria Having a physical illness that interferes with the treatment process. Use of psychiatric medications.

Intervention groups
Intervention group: Art therapy intervention with a painting approach based on the therapeutic protocol of Shelani et al. (2017) is implemented in a group setting in 8 45-minute sessions, one session per week. Control group: Do not receive any intervention.

Main outcome variables
Emotional regulation; hopelessness; loneliness; shyness.

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information
IRCT registration number: **IRCT20260810070612N1**
Registration date: **2026-08-24, 1405/06/02**
Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2026-08-24, 1405/06/02**
Update count: **0**

Registration date
2026-08-24, 1405/06/02

Registrant information
Name
Ruhollah lajmoraki bagheri
Name of organization / entity
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Iran (Islamic Republic of)
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Recruitment status
Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date
2026-09-11, 1405/06/20

Expected recruitment end date
2026-09-21, 1405/06/30

Actual recruitment start date
empty

Actual recruitment end date
empty

Trial completion date
empty

Scientific title
The effectiveness of art therapy with a painting approach on emotional regulation, hopelessness, loneliness, and shyness in children of divorce.

Public title
The effectiveness of art therapy with a painting approach
Purpose
Education/Guidance
Inclusion/Exclusion criteria
Inclusion criteria:
Be between 7 and 12 years old Be children of divorce. The children and their parents must consent to participate in the research.
Exclusion criteria:
Having a physical illness that interferes with the treatment process. Use of psychiatric medications.
Age
From **7 years** old to **12 years** old
Gender
Both

Phase
N/A
Groups that have been masked

- Care provider
- Outcome assessor
- Data analyser

Sample size
Target sample size: **30**
Randomization (investigator's opinion)
Randomized
Randomization description
In this study, a simple randomization method is used to assign participants to two experimental and control groups. The randomization unit in this study is the divorced children of Izeh city who are eligible for the study. First, a complete list of volunteers who have been selected based on the study entry criteria is prepared. Then, each participant is assigned a unique numerical identification code. These codes are entered into the Random Number Generator software and a random number is generated for each individual. After generating these numbers, the participants are sorted in ascending order based on the value of the random number. Then, the individuals are assigned to two groups; sequentially, the first 15 people on the list are assigned to the experimental group (art therapy with a painting approach) and the next 15 people are assigned to the control group. With this method, the order of entry into the study and the researcher's knowledge of the participants will not play any role in determining the group. To ensure allocation concealment, the person responsible for entering data and performing the randomization process in the software will be independent of the intervention administrators and study evaluators and will not have access to information about the session implementation process or changes in the allocation of individuals. Participant identification codes will also be kept confidential and separate from their other personal information. Therefore, it will not be possible to predict the assigned group for each participant before the randomization process.
Blinding (investigator's opinion)
Double blinded
Blinding description
In order to control bias and improve the internal validity of the study, this study was designed with a double-blind protocol; in this way, the clinical caregivers, outcome assessor, and data analyst will be kept unaware of the allocation of children of divorce to the experimental and control groups. In this process, the outcome assessor will collect data at all stages of the pretest, posttest, and follow-up, without knowing the assigned group of the participants, in order to prevent bias in the measurement; also, all raw data will be provided to the statistical analyst with anonymous codes (such as groups 1 and 2), and the true nature of the groups will not be revealed until the end of the data analysis process. All allocation steps will be performed by an individual independent of the research team, and decoding of allocation codes will be done only after the final completion of the statistical analyses.
Placebo
Not used
Assignment
Parallel
Other design features

Secondary Ids

empty

Ethics committees

1

Ethics committee
Name of ethics committee
Behbahan Islamic Azad University Ethics Committee
Street address
Shahid Bayani St., Amir Kabir Blvd.
City
Behbahan
Province
Khouzestan
Postal code
6361713198
Approval date
2026-07-21, 1405/04/30
Ethics committee reference number
IR.IAU.BEHBAHAN.REC.1405.185

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied
Problems caused by divorce in the family
ICD-10 code
Z63.5
ICD-10 code description
Disruption of family by separation and divorce

Primary outcomes

1

Description
Emotional regulation
Timepoint
before performing the intervention and two weeks after completion of the intervention
Method of measurement
Gross Emotion Regulation Questionnaire 2003

2

Description
Despair
Timepoint
before performing the intervention and two weeks after completion of the intervention
Method of measurement
Beck Hopelessness Questionnaire, 1974

3

Description
Loneliness
Timepoint
before performing the intervention and two weeks after completion of the intervention
Method of measurement
Loneliness Questionnaire, De Thomas et al., 2004

4

Description
Shyness
Timepoint
before performing the intervention and two weeks after completion of the intervention
Method of measurement
Stanford University Shyness Questionnaire, 1977

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description
Intervention group: Art therapy sessions with a painting approach will be based on the treatment protocol designed by Shelani et al. (2017). The sessions of this intervention will be conducted in 8 45-minute sessions (one session per week) in a group for the experimental group. Art therapy is an approach that aims to reduce frustration, loneliness, and shyness, and develop emotional regulation skills through externalizing and processing internal conflicts, helping children of divorce to manage their reactions to the challenges of parental divorce by replacing inhibited emotional patterns with creative and symbolic expression. This approach has main educational and therapeutic axes in 8 sessions that lead to improved mental health and emotional adjustment; these axes are: First session: Getting to know and communicating, introducing art as a tool for expressing emotions and drawing a picture of "your world" without restrictions on form and color; Second session: Identifying and being aware of emotions through drawing "happy and sad moments of life"; Session 3: Expressing and processing anger through drawing "Moments of Anger" using strong colors and angular lines; Session 4: Identifying and processing anxiety through drawing "Anxious Situations" and incorporating coping solutions into the drawing; Session 5: Discovering and representing emotions related to divorce conflict through dual drawing "Life Before and After Divorce"; Session 6: Changing attitudes and cultivating positive emotions through drawing "A New and Optimistic World"; Session 7: Strengthening feelings of self-worth, expressing oneself, and overcoming loneliness and shyness through drawing "Capabilities and Connections with Others"; and finally Session 8: Consolidating emotional skills, summarizing learning, and drawing a group drawing centered on hope for the future. The main emphasis of this therapy is to provide a safe environment for the unconscious expression of emotional conflicts and replacing feelings of isolation and helplessness with self-awareness and efficient emotional regulation.
Category
Behavior

2

Description
Control group: They receive no intervention or treatment.
Category
N/A

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center
Name of recruitment center
Behravan Psychological Counseling and Services Center
Full name of responsible person
Ruhollah Lajam Oraki Bagheri
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Corner of Moghadam Dead End, Opposite Civil Registry Office, Gharishvandi St., Shahid Fattah St.
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Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor
Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
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Grant name
Grant code / Reference number
Is the source of funding the same sponsor organization/entity?
Yes
Title of funding source
Islamic Azad University
Proportion provided by this source
100
Public or private sector
Public
Domestic or foreign origin
Domestic
Category of foreign source of funding
empty
Country of origin
Type of organization providing the funding
Academic

Person responsible for general inquiries

Contact
Name of organization / entity
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Ruhollah Lajmoraki bagheri
Position
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Person responsible for updating data

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Sharing plan

Deidentified Individual Participant Data Set (IPD)
No - There is not a plan to make this available
Justification/reason for indecision/not sharing IPD
Participant data is completely confidential and I do not intend to publish it.
Study Protocol
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available
Statistical Analysis Plan
No - There is not a plan to make this available
Informed Consent Form
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available
Clinical Study Report
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available
Analytic Code
No - There is not a plan to make this available
Data Dictionary
No - There is not a plan to make this available