

Research to Practice Summary Chris Newlin

ARTICLE:

Maclloed, E., Gross, J., & Hayne, H. (2013). The clinical and forensic value of information that children report while drawing. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 27(5), 564-573.

SUMMARY:

There is a growing body of research that showing that, if children are offered the opportunity to draw, they report more verbal information compared to telling alone.

The purpose of this study was twofold:

1. To replicate the finding that drawing increases 5- and 6-, and 11- and 12-year old children's reports of events that made them feel happy or angry and to extend this finding to include events that made them feel worried (or nervous) or proud (or confident).
2. To examine the type of information that children report while drawing during a drawing interview – would drawing help children to report forensically relevant episodic details and to report clinically relevant evaluative information about their emotional experiences?

Subjects/Design:

30 5-6 year olds and 30 11-12 year olds – recruited from two schools in a small town

Each child was interviewed by a female experimenter.

Rapport – interviewer engaged the child in a conversation led by the child

Narrative Practice – when the child appeared comfortable, the interviewer began the formal interview – child asked to provide a narrative account of 4 personal experiences (happy, proud/confident, angry, and worried/nervous)

- “Can you tell me a time when you were _____ (happy, proud/confident, angry, worried nervous)?

Drawing – For one positive emotion and one negative emotion, the child was asked to tell about the experience in as much detail as possible. For the other positive and negative emotion, the interviewer gave the child crayons and paper and asked the child to draw and tell about the experience in as much detail as possible.

Emotional Intensity – after the child described each emotional experience, the interviewer had the child indicate the number on the Feeling Thermometer (0-10) representing the strength of the emotion

Interview relevant clauses were coded as either Evaluative or Event, using the scheme developed by Tom Lyon. Evaluative content was either:

- Feelings or emotions relevant to the experience
- Thought, idea, or expectation relevant to the experience

Findings:

1. Overall, children rated their emotional experiences as relatively strong (average score was 7+)
2. No difference in the ratings for emotions which were told or told while drawing
3. Drawing while describing emotions approximately doubled the amount of information shared by children from both age groups
4. Drawing while telling yielded more event-specific information, but not evaluative content
5. QUOTES:
 1. “Taken together, the results of the present research replicated and extended prior research on drawing with 5- to 12-year old children. Children who were given the opportunity to draw reported more information about events that made them happy or angry. These same effects were also observed when children were interviewed about events that made them feel proud (confident) or worried (nervous). Across all four emotions, children who were given the opportunity to draw reported approximately twice as much information as did children who told only.” (p. 569)
 2. “In the present experiment, we assessed the clinical and forensic value of the extra information children reported while drawing. We found that drawing increased the amount of forensically relevant information that children reported. That is, the extra information elicited by drawing was not limited to information about objects or physical details; children who drew also reported additional details about the ‘who, what, when, where, how, and why’ of their prior experiences.” (p. 569)

National Children’s Advocacy Center (2014). The clinical and forensic value of information that children report while drawing. Research to Practice Summary. Huntsville, AL: Author.

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