Is a Picture Worth a Thousand Words?

The Clinical and Legal Value of Children's Art

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How are drawings used in clinical and legal contexts?

Evidence to support this use?
How are Drawings Used?

1. Projective Techniques

2. Communication Techniques
Projective Techniques

Intelligence

Human Figure Drawings (HFD)
Relation Between HFD and IQ

Willcock, Imuta, & Hayne (2011)

$r = .40$
Relation Between HFD and IQ

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$r = .40$
How are Drawings Used?

1. Projective Techniques

2. Communication Techniques
Claims about Communication

• Drawing helps children to talk about their adjustment to hospitalisation (Rae, 1991).

• Drawing helps children to talk about their sibling’s cancer (Sourkes, 1991).

• Drawings helps children from violent neighborhoods to talk about their future (Lewis et al., 1995).
Does Drawing Enhance Communication?

- Event
- Manipulate interview technique
- Measure content and accuracy of children's reports
- Firestation, Chocolate Factory, Police Station, Pony Rides, Albatross
- Some children tell and some draw and tell
- Transcribe interviews verbatim
Does Drawing Enhance Communication?

**Butler, Gross, & Hayne, 1995**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delay</th>
<th>Tell</th>
<th>Draw</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1 Day</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Month</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
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**Gross & Hayne 1999**

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<td>1 Year</td>
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Accuracy?

![Accuracy Chart]

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<tr>
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<td>6 Months</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Year</td>
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- **Tell**
- **Draw**
Additional Findings

• Drawing facilitates children’s reports of their own emotional experiences  
  (Gross & Hayne, 1999; Macleod, Gross, & Hayne, 2013; Patterson & Hayne, 2011)

• Drawing is effective with 3- to 16-year-olds  
  (Crawford, Gross, Brown, & Hayne, 2011; Patterson & Hayne, 2011; Wesson & Salmon, 2001)

• Drawing facilitates children’s reports of factual and forensically valuable information  
  (Gross, Hayne, & Drury, 2009; Macleod, Gross, & Hayne, 2013)

• The effect size across studies ranges from .60 - 1.90  
  (Crawford, 2011; Driessnack, 2005).
5- to 12-year-olds (N = 33)

Interviewed in the clinic about their presenting problem
Conclusions

• No evidence for the projective value of children’s drawings (intelligence, psychological well-being, sexual abuse status)

• Opportunity to draw increases amount of information reported about a range of forensically- and clinically-relevant events over delays as long as 1 year.

• Drawing is effective with 3- to 16-year-olds.

• Under ideal questioning conditions, drawing does not influence accuracy.
Caveat

Any interview technique is only as good as the professional who uses it.
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