

FEASIBILITY AND OUTCOMES OF A WEB-BASED PROGRAM TARGETING PSYCHOTIC-LIKE EXPERIENCES AMONG YOUNG CANNABIS USERS

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Introduction and Aims: Psychotic-like experiences (PLEs) are subclinical psychotic symptoms that occur in 17-28% of young people, and have been associated with an increased risk of developing psychotic, depression and anxiety disorders. Cannabis has a robust causal association with the onset of psychotic disorders, and up to 90% of current users report PLEs. Young cannabis users with PLEs are unlikely to seek professional help due to concerns about confidentiality and stigma. This paper reports the results of an uncontrolled pilot study testing the feasibility and outcomes of Keep it Real, the first web-based program for reducing PLEs and cannabis use in young people

Design and Methods: 213 young people (16-25 years), who had used cannabis in the past month, had a total score of ≥ 18 (at least 3 PLEs 'sometimes' or 1 PLE 'nearly always') in the past 3 months on the 15-item Community Assessment of Psychic Experiences (CAPE15) participated in the study.

Results: High follow-up rates were achieved at 3 (89%) and 6 months (85%) follow up.

Participants achieved significant reductions (all $p < .001$) in the frequency of PLEs and their associated distress, as well as the frequency of cannabis use and related problems at 3 and 6 months follow up.

Discussion and Conclusions: While this study provides preliminary evidence of the positive impact of Keep it Real, a full scale RCT is required to determine the efficacy of the program in young cannabis users with PLEs, compared to the minimal web-based information they may otherwise receive.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

The Australasian Professional Society for Alcohol and other Drugs (APSAD) recognises the considerable contribution that industry partners make to professional and research activities. We also recognise the need for transparency of disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by acknowledging these relationships in all written publications.

The authors received no pharmaceutical or industry funding for any of the studies presented in this symposium.