

Developmental Disabilities Community: Effectiveness of Internet Safety Program

Molly Bastin

Advisor: Gary Dick, Ph.D.

School of Social Work, College of Allied Health Sciences



Background

- The internet is a very vulnerable place for people with developmental disabilities.
- Any person who uses the internet will more than likely experience the dangers of it.
- The Developmental Disabilities (DD) community oftentimes uses the internet as an outlet, but do not know the safety issues.
- Created a program so that the community can effectively learn the dangers of the internet while showing them ways to protect themselves and keep it a positive community.

Purpose

- The purpose of this study is to look at the effectiveness of an internet safety curriculum on adults with developmental disabilities.

Importance to Social Work

- Developmental Disabilities community are taken advantage of everyday on the internet.
- Social workers can give better resources to teach clients about internet safety.
- Advocate for client's safety on the internet.
- Online experiences could be the cause to the client's anxiety or depression.

References

Anderson, J., & Rainie, L. (2020, August 17). The Future of Well-Being in a Tech-Saturated World. Retrieved December 07, 2020, from <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2018/04/17/the-future-of-well-being-in-a-tech-saturated-world/>

Participants

- 6 Participants
- All above 18 years old
- Receive care from Clermont Board of DD
- They participate by replying to prompts during each sessions Zoom meeting

Methods

- Quantitative Study
- Internet safety program via Zoom
- 6 session format
- Administer pre and post test

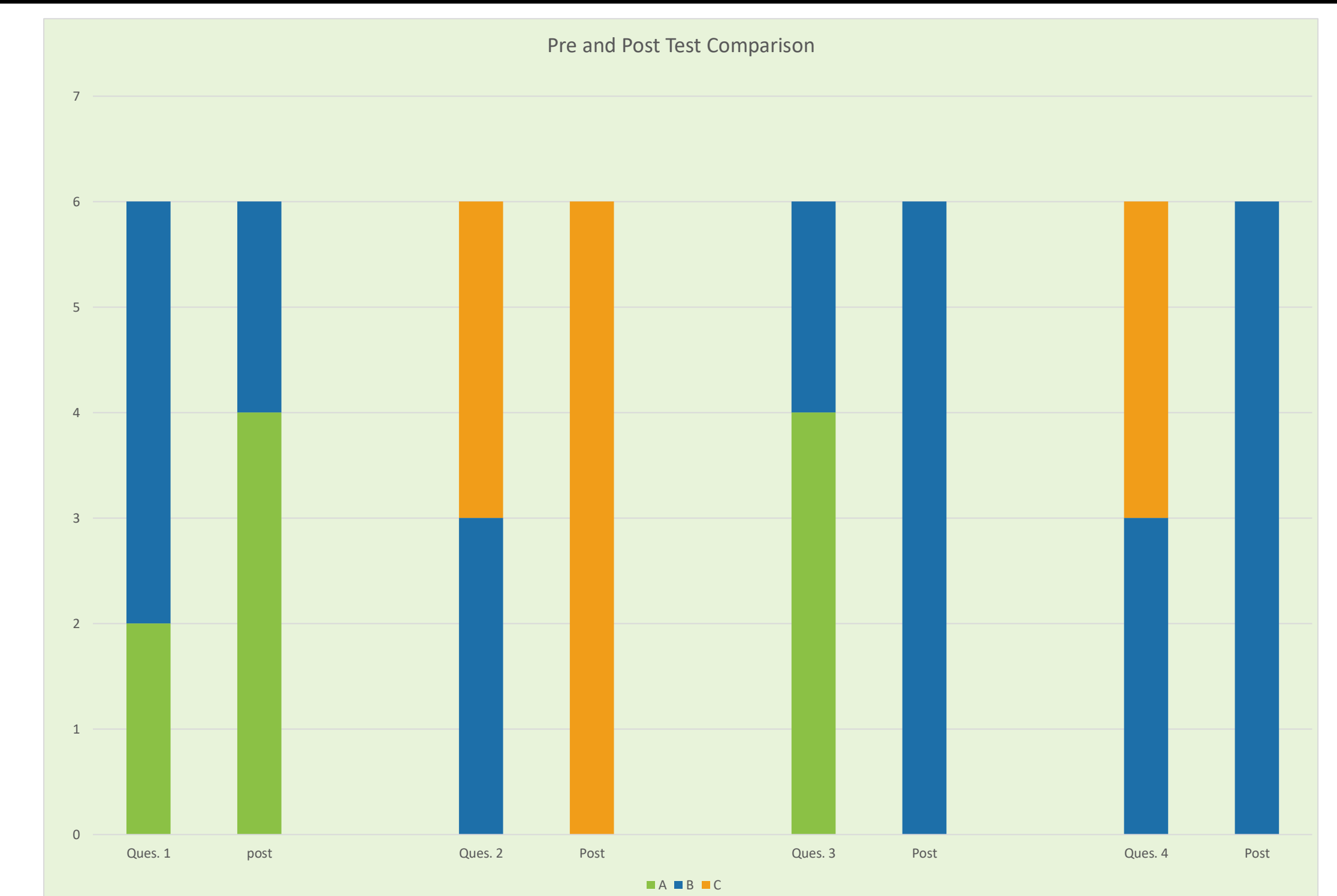
Limitations

- Program had to be administered online.
- Some participants didn't have ability to reply to prompts.
- Semester time limit.
- Small sample size.

Pre and Post Questionnaire

- 1.) How often do you feel safe online?
 - a.) always
 - b.) sometimes
 - c.) never
- 2.) If someone you do not know on the Internet asks you to send them money, you should:
 - a.) Send it to them right away.
 - b.) Respond to them to get more information.
 - c.) Do not respond and do not send any money.
- 3.) It is never okay to use your personal information on the Internet, even if you are trying to buy something.
 - a.) true
 - b.) false
- 4.) If you are in an uncomfortable situation online, do you feel you know how to deal with the situation.
 - a.) always
 - b.) sometimes
 - c.) never

Results



From these results we can conclude that the internet safety program was effective, and the clients feel more comfortable online and better prepared to handle negative situations.

Discussion

Throughout the 6 sessions you could see the group becoming more knowledgeable about internet safety. With Covid-19 I think they also really like being apart of a group and being able to talk to people. Every person left the group learning a new way to be safe online that they didn't know before.

Conclusions

- Internet Safety programs are effective and should be available for the DD community.
- It creates a safer environment for the clients and allows caretakers and parents to know their child can handle dangerous situations online.