

Virtual Reality Technology as a Stress Inoculation Tool for NICU Caregivers

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Abstract

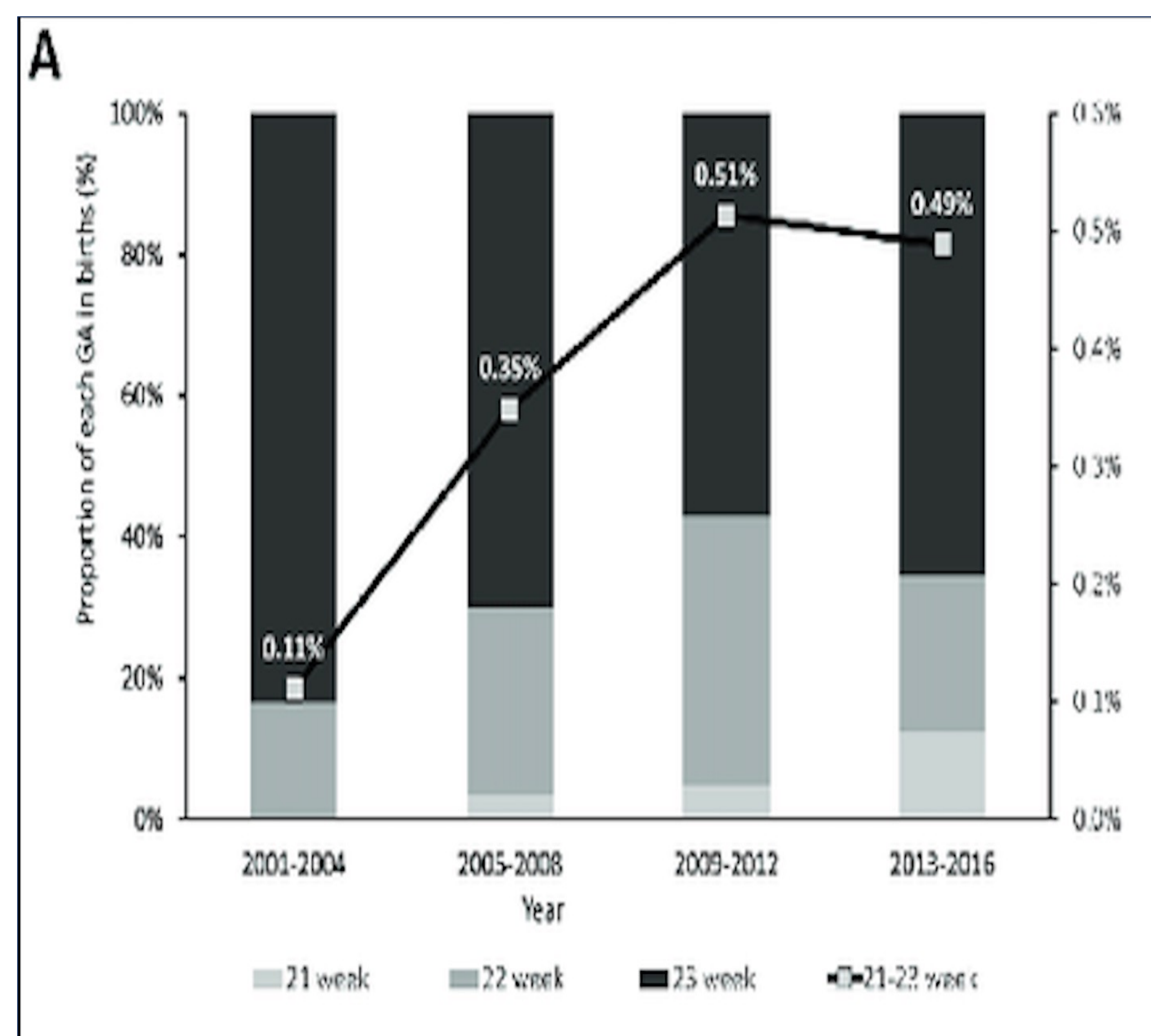
The use of VR-supported coaching and stress inoculation therapy (SIT) will decrease postpartum stress and anxiety symptoms in NICU caregivers.

Introduction

NICU caregivers have a higher prevalence of PTSD, ranging from 24 to 44%.^{1,2}

The prevalence of postpartum anxiety for NICU caregivers ranges from 24-35%.³

Infants in the NICU increasing from 3.2 to 4.5 patients per 1000 live births between 2006 and 2010.¹



Purpose

Specialized treatments for postpartum PTSD and anxiety are needed to best support NICU parents and families.

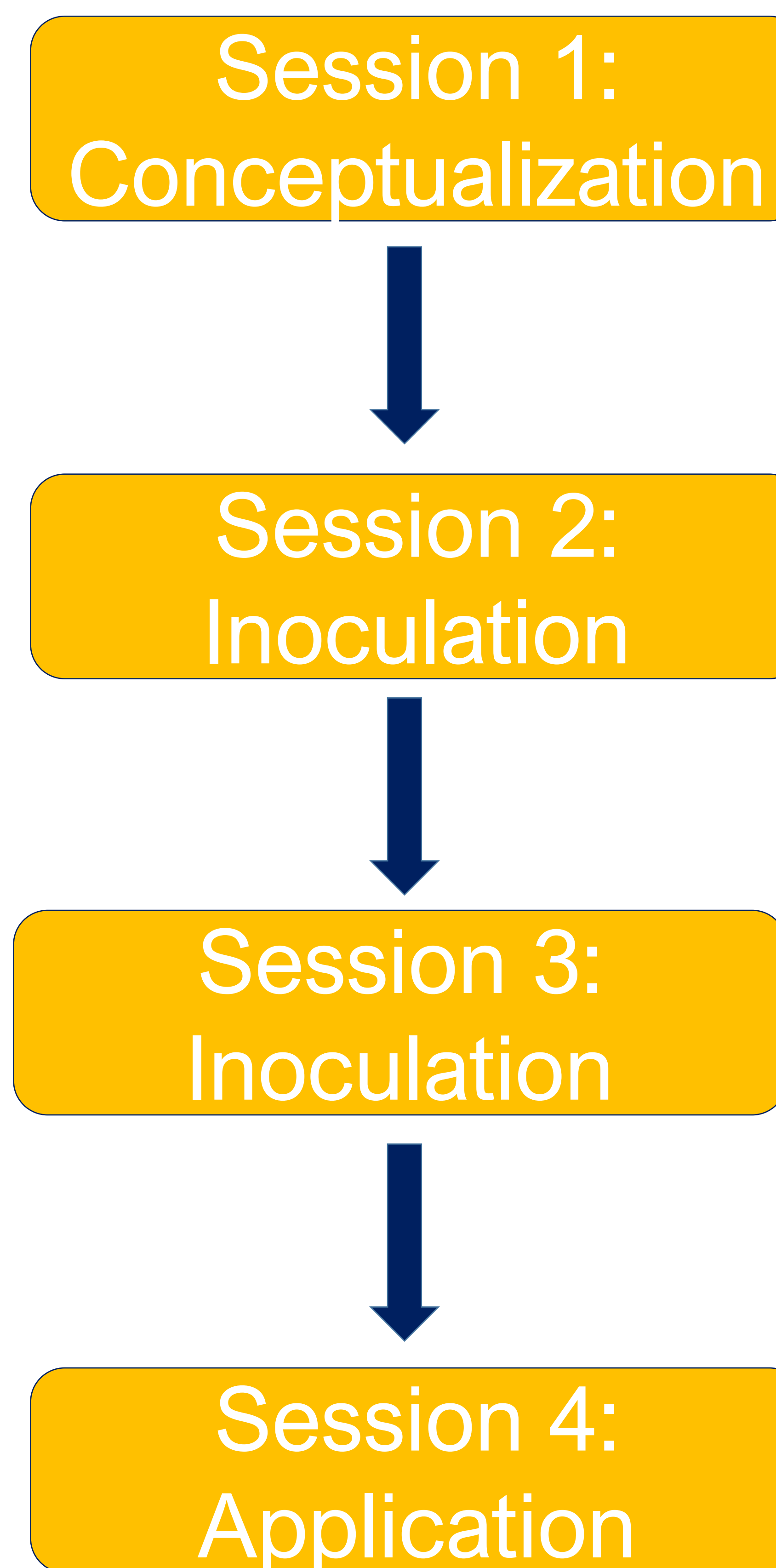
Methods

1. Provide SIT specifically designed for NICU parents using VR technology.
2. Administer VR-supported stress inoculation to NICU caregivers
3. Assess anxiety and PTSD symptoms using validated self-report measures.



Methods (Cont.)

Coach-led VR-enhanced SIT will help current NICU caregivers:
(1) Become proficient in relaxation skills
(2) Apply these skills in experiential practice in order to reduce their stress response.



Measures

Before Session 1:

1. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Checklist (PCL-)
2. Impact of Event Scale-Revised (IES-R)
3. Parental Stressor Scale (PSS-NICU)
4. State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI)

During Sessions:

1. Subjective Units of Distress (SUDS)
2. Pulsometer

After 4 Sessions:

1. Usability Survey

References

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