

# *Strategies for Strengthening Mental Health Education for Left behind Children in Rural Areas*

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**Keywords:** Rural left behind children; Psychological health education; strategy

**Abstract:** In rural areas, left behind children face unique challenges due to long-term separation from their parents or guardians who go out to work. This article explores the importance of strengthening mental health education for left behind children in rural areas and proposes various strategies to meet their mental health needs. The study emphasizes the importance of parental participation, school counseling mechanisms, diverse educational activities, and social support. By implementing these strategies, the overall happiness of left behind children can be ensured, the harmony and stability of rural society can be maintained, and the quality of the future rural population can be improved. This requires the joint efforts of families, schools, and society to provide these children with the necessary emotional support and help them thrive in the face of challenges.

## **1. Introduction**

Rural left behind children refer to those who stay alone in rural households for a long time due to reasons such as parents or guardians going out to work. They are facing problems such as lack of family affection, emotional loneliness, and psychological pressure. Therefore, it is crucial to strengthen mental health education for left behind children in rural areas. This paper will explore strategies for mental health education for left behind children in rural areas to address this important social issue. In rural areas, parents often leave their hometown to work in the city in order to seek a better livelihood, which has led to the existence of a large number of left behind children. Left behind children who lack family care and supervision for a long time may face mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, and inferiority. This not only poses a threat to the growth and development of children themselves, but may also have a negative impact on the harmony and stability of rural society and the future population quality.

## **2. The significance of strengthening mental health education for left behind children in rural areas**

### **2.1 Ensuring the physical and mental health of left behind children**

Left behind children often feel lonely, anxious, and depressed due to long-term separation from their parents, lack of care and companionship. Psychological health education can help them better understand and cope with these emotions, reducing the pressure of negative emotions<sup>[1]</sup>.

Psychological health education can cultivate the self-awareness and emotional management abilities of left behind children, help them establish positive self-esteem and confidence, and better face life challenges. Left behind children may have social difficulties due to long-term solitude. Psychological health education can teach them to establish healthy interpersonal relationships, improve communication and interaction skills with peers and adults, and help them better integrate into society. Education can teach left behind children ways to cope with setbacks and stress, helping them better adapt to different environments and situations. Psychological health education can help left behind children recognize the consequences of bad behavior, such as drug abuse and crime, thereby reducing the occurrence of these problematic behaviors. Through mental health education, potential psychological problems can be identified and intervened in a timely manner, preventing problems from worsening, and providing timely support and treatment for children. Psychological health education can stimulate the learning interest of left behind children, enhance their learning motivation, and improve their academic performance. Psychological health education helps to cultivate a positive attitude towards life and stimulate children's confidence and hope for the future<sup>[1]</sup>.

## **2.2 Maintaining the Harmony and Stability of Rural Society**

Psychological health education can help left behind children establish positive self-awareness and emotional management abilities, reducing the occurrence of psychological problems such as anxiety and depression. This helps them better adapt to life and improve their quality of life. Psychological health education can help left behind children better understand themselves and others, enhance moral values and social responsibility. This helps to reduce the occurrence of bad behavior and problems, such as crime and absurd behavior, and is conducive to social harmony and stability. Psychological health issues are not only harmful to individuals, but may also have negative impacts on society, such as increasing the burden of social welfare and increasing crime rates<sup>[2]</sup>. By providing mental health education, the adverse effects of these issues on society can be reduced and social harmony and stability can be maintained. Psychological health education helps left behind children better adapt to social life and cultivate their ability to establish positive relationships with others. This not only helps their personal development, but also contributes to the harmony of social relationships, reducing conflicts and contradictions. Rural areas often lack resources and have relatively low levels of education. By strengthening mental health education, the comprehensive quality of left behind children can be improved, providing a better foundation for their education, promoting the development of rural education, and laying the foundation for social harmony and stability<sup>[2]</sup>.

## **2.3 Improving the Quality of Future Rural Population**

Rural left behind children may face psychological problems such as loneliness, anxiety, and inferiority due to long-term separation from their parents. Through mental health education, they can learn to actively cope with these difficulties, cultivate healthier psychological qualities, and be more likely to overcome various challenges and better adapt to social life. Psychological health is closely related to academic performance. Providing mental health education to left behind children can help them improve their learning motivation and effectiveness, thereby enhancing their overall quality and competitiveness. This will provide more opportunities for their future career development. Psychological health education can help left behind children establish better interpersonal relationships and social adaptability. This is crucial for their future integration into society and the workplace, as it helps them better collaborate and communicate with others. Psychological health education helps left behind children understand the hazards of problematic

behaviors, such as smoking, alcohol abuse, and drugs, thereby reducing the likelihood of their occurrence. This helps to maintain the stability and tranquility of rural society. Through mental health education, left behind children can better understand their own values and goals, and shape positive life values<sup>[3]</sup>. This will help them play a more active role in their future social roles and contribute to the development of the community and society. Rural areas also need high-quality and innovative talents to promote sustainable development of the rural economy and society. Strengthening mental health education for left behind children can help cultivate more outstanding talents and provide more support for the development of rural areas.

### **3. Strategies for Strengthening Mental Health Education for Left Behind Children in Rural Areas**

#### **3.1 Parents should increase the frequency of returning home and accompanying time**

Parents can strengthen their parent-child relationship by returning home more frequently and increasing their company time. This helps to establish stronger emotional bonds, improve the happiness and security of left behind children, and alleviate their sense of loneliness and anxiety. Parental companionship can not only provide emotional support, but also psychological support. They can listen to children's problems, concerns, and emotions, help them deal with negative emotions, and teach them to actively cope with stress and difficulties. By interacting more with parents, left behind children can learn more social skills and cultivate healthier ways of expressing emotions. This helps them establish healthier and more positive relationships with peers and adults. Parental companionship can promote children's learning and educational development. They can help children complete homework, provide learning guidance, and encourage the development of interest and curiosity in learning<sup>[4]</sup>. The care and recognition of parents can enhance the self-esteem and confidence of left behind children. They will feel valued and cared for, which helps shape a positive self-awareness. By increasing parental companionship time, the risk of left behind children falling into bad behavior due to lack of supervision can be reduced. Parents can better guide children's behavior and help them develop good habits and values. Parents can become important carriers of mental health education, teaching children how to manage emotions, handle problems, and establish a positive mindset<sup>[3]</sup>.

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promoting the development of rural education, and laying the foundation for social harmony and stability<sup>[4]</sup>.

### **3.3 Carry out various forms of theme education activities for left behind children**

Teachers should organize regular mental health education courses and develop different educational content tailored to the age, gender, and psychological characteristics of left behind children. The course can include topics such as emotional management, interpersonal relationships, stress management, and self-esteem development. Teachers should organize art activities such as painting, music, and dance to encourage left behind children to creatively express their emotions, improve their cognitive and expressive abilities, and also help release negative emotions. Teachers should organizing outdoor activities such as sports competitions, camping, and mountaineering can enhance children's confidence and team spirit through teamwork and self challenge, while also helping to alleviate stress and anxiety. Teachers should invite professionals such as mental health experts and psychologists to give lectures and workshops, teaching left behind children and parents knowledge and skills related to mental health, in order to better cope with psychological problems. Teachers should organize parent-child interaction activities to promote communication and interaction among family members, and help parents better understand and support the mental health needs of left behind children. Teachers should establish channels for psychological counseling services, provide psychological health counseling for left behind children, and ensure that they can receive professional psychological support in a timely manner. Teachers should establish a support community for left behind children, allowing them to establish friendships and family relationships in the community, and increase the social support system<sup>[5]</sup>.

### **3.4 Strengthen mental health education in daily school teaching**

Through daily school teaching, rural left behind children can learn knowledge about mental health, including emotional management, coping with stress, and building healthy self-esteem. This helps them better understand and cope with their emotional and psychological problems. Psychological health education can help children develop emotional intelligence, which involves understanding and managing their own emotions as well as understanding the emotions of others. This will help them establish positive interpersonal relationships and improve their social skills. Educators can observe and identify children who may have mental health problems in the school environment, and then provide appropriate support and guidance. This helps in early detection and intervention of potential problems, preventing them from worsening. Rural left behind children often face academic pressure as they may need to cope with more responsibilities and difficulties compared to urban children. Psychological health education can help them learn to manage learning pressure, improve learning efficiency, and reduce the risk of anxiety and depression. Psychological health education can encourage children to view themselves positively and cultivate healthy self-esteem. This is very important for preventing issues such as low self-esteem and self guilt. School mental health education can help parents better understand and support their children. By collaborating with parents, a comprehensive support system can be provided to ensure that children receive appropriate psychological support both in school and at home.

### **3.5 Enhancing Social Care for Left Behind Children in Rural Areas**

The government can formulate relevant policies and regulations to clearly support the mental health needs of left behind children in rural areas and ensure the effective implementation of these policies. This can include providing financial support, developing regulations to protect the rights

and interests of left behind children, and monitoring implementation. Society can establish specialized support systems, including mental health service institutions, social work teams, and volunteer organizations, to provide mental health counseling, counseling, and support for left behind children in rural areas. These institutions can provide regular mental health assessments to help children cope with difficulties and stress. Society can carry out mental health education and training activities targeting left behind children in rural areas, helping them understand and cope with their emotional and psychological states. Education can include aspects such as emotional management, stress management, interpersonal relationships, and self-awareness. The government should establish social networks and support systems among left behind children to help them establish friendships and opportunities for mutual support. This can be achieved through schools, community activities, and online platforms to alleviate their sense of loneliness and anxiety. We should encourage parents or guardians in rural areas to actively participate in mental health education programs, fostering a deeper understanding of their left-behind children's needs and enabling them to provide better support. Family is an important factor in children's mental health, and it is necessary to promote positive family interaction and support. By utilizing various media platforms, social media, and engaging in community activities, we can increase public attention to the mental health issues faced by left-behind children in rural areas. This collective effort will help raise social awareness and motivate more individuals to actively participate in and support initiatives, activities, and projects aimed at addressing these challenges.

#### 4. Conclusion

The strategy of strengthening mental health education for left behind children in rural areas is of great significance. This not only helps to ensure the physical and mental health of left behind children, maintain the harmony and stability of rural society, but also improves the quality of future rural populations. To achieve this goal, this article suggests that parents increase the frequency of returning home and accompanying time, schools establish support mechanisms and carry out themed education activities, strengthen daily teaching of mental health education, and society should enhance care for this group and establish a support system. These strategies help to meet the needs of left behind children and create better conditions for their growth and social development in rural areas.

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