



This is a monthly publication from Jennifer O'Brien, the Adolescent Health Coordinator at the Minnesota Department of Health (see contact information at the end of this publication). This E-Newsletter will cover adolescent health/ youth development related research, data, resources, learning and funding opportunities for interested professionals. Past issues of the newsletter are available online at: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/youth/>

June 2008

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Research

1. Toward a Needs-Based Typology of Homeless Youth

Journal of Adolescent Health 42 (2008) 549–554

Carrie E. Coward Bucher, M.A.

Abstract

Purpose: Research on homeless youth consistently suggests a need for a broad matrix of services to facilitate a successful transition into housed society. This paper seeks to develop distinct matrices of services for youth according to their involvement in, or experience with, high-risk factors. Such a typology may increase the ability of providers to maximize the impact of scarce resources and organize treatment and reintegration efforts to match the needs of vulnerable youth.

Methods: Seven risk categories were identified in the literature: abusive experiences, involvement in prostitution, involvement in criminal activities, suicidal ideation/attempt, living circumstances, alcohol/marijuana use, and the use of drugs other than alcohol and marijuana. K-means cluster analysis was then used to separate 422 homeless youth based on their involvement in or experience with these categories.

Results: Four distinct treatment needs were identified: Group 1—minimal treatment; Group 2—therapeutic housing with an emphasis on substance abuse; Group 3—therapeutic housing with an emphasis on behavior management; Group 4—comprehensive treatment.

Conclusions: According to this typology, less than 18% of this sample are adequately served by the current system of federal intervention, whereas the largest group is in need of comprehensive services to successfully re-enter housed society.

2. Access to Care for Youth with Special Health Care Needs in the Transition to Adulthood

Journal of Adolescent Health 43 (2008) 23–29

Debra S. Lotstein, M.D., M.P.H., Moira Inkelas, Ph.D., Ron D. Hays, Ph.D., Neal Halfon, M.D., M.P.H., and Robert Brook, M.D., Sc.D.

Abstract

Purpose: To describe access to care and identify factors associated with access for low-income young adults who aged out of a public program for children with special health care needs (CSHCN).

Methods: This was a cross-sectional survey of graduates of the Title V CSHCN program in one California county. Subjects were 77 graduates (55% female) aged 21–24 years with ongoing health care needs. Measures of access to care included having the following: a regular source of care for the main health condition; all needed care since turning 21 years of age; any delayed or forgone care in the past 6 months; health insurance; and continual insurance since turning age 21. Individuals lacking any one access measure were defined as experiencing an adverse transition event.

Results: Of the subjects, 24% lacked a usual source of health care, 27% had gone without some needed health care since turning 21, and 39% had delayed needed care. Although 10% of respondents were uninsured at the time of the survey; 40% had a gap in insurance coverage since turning age 21. Overall, 65% reported at least

one adverse transition event affecting access to care. Factors associated with experiencing no adverse transition event were receiving Supplemental Security Income, having received special education services, and having been born with the main health condition.

Conclusions: Insurance gaps and delayed care are prevalent among these low-income young adults despite ongoing health problems. Greater transition support might improve access by linking them with a usual source of care, identifying insurance options, and encouraging regular use of care.

3. American Academy of Pediatrics Releases Statement on Strategies To Improve Adolescent Health Care

Achieving Quality Health Services for Adolescents provides recommendations and criteria for assessing the quality of adolescent health care and discusses the need for comprehensive efforts to improve the quality of primary care delivered to adolescents in the United States. The policy statement, developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics' Committee on Adolescents, focuses on quality issues that relate to staying healthy -- preventive care themes. Topics include adolescent health status and risky behaviors, primary care access and utilization, access to quality care for adolescents, emerging quality measures for adolescent care, and opportunities and challenges for primary care. Conclusions and recommendations are included. The policy statement is available at [<http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics:121/6/1263>].

Resources

4. Updated Report Describes Programs Proven To Affect the Behaviors Or Sexual Health Outcomes of Young People

Science and Success: Sex Education and Other Programs That Work to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections identifies effective programs to help young people reduce their risk for pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV. The second edition, recently published by Advocates for Youth, describes 26 programs that met rigorous criteria for inclusion and strongly affected the behaviors or sexual health outcomes of young people exposed to the program. Twenty-three of the programs include information about abstinence and contraception within the context of sexual health education. Of the three that do not include sexual health education, two are early childhood interventions, and one is a service-learning program. The programs and their evaluations are divided into three sections in the report. Section 1 describes programs designed for and evaluated in school settings, including some that are linked to reproductive health care. Section 2 describes programs implemented by community agencies outside the school or clinic environment. Section 3 describes clinic-based programs. A table summarizing programs' settings as well as the grade range, locale, and populations served by each is included. The full report is available at [<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/programsthatwork/toc.htm>]. An executive summary is also available at [<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/ScienceSuccessES.pdf>].

5. Program Assessment Tool for Youth Development

How well do you integrate youth development into your programs? Use this interactive tool to determine which elements of youth development are strongly integrated into your program and which are not. Then utilize the NEW resource pages to help you think about new ways to enhance your program.

Go to the [<http://cals-cf.calsnet.arizona.edu/fcs/bpy/assessment.cfm>]

For more information or if you have any questions please contact Karen Hoffman Tepper at karenht@ag.arizona.edu

6. Bone Health Campaign

The bone health campaign ordering form is now live and linked. You can get there by visiting http://www.girlshealth.gov/bones/games_fun/index.html then click "Free Stuff" or by visiting the parents site at <http://www.girlshealth.gov/parents/bones/> then click "Order materials to help build strong bones".

Conferences

7. From Research to Practice: Designing Youth-Friendly Reproductive Health Services

August 11, 2008, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Rondo Community Outreach Library,
461 N Dale Street, St Paul, MN
\$30 MOAPPP Member/\$65 Non-member

This workshop is for health educators, family planning clinic staff and youth-serving professionals. Laura Davis, Advocates for Youth, Washington, DC, reviews the latest research on adolescent contraceptive use, addresses best practices for youth-friendly reproductive health services, explores ways to expand contraceptive and condom access for underserved teens, and provides information on replicable, evaluated programs. This program is offered in conjunction with the Minnesota Reproductive Health Update (go to www.hcet.org for more info). For more information and registration, go to the program flyer on the MOAPPP website (<http://www.moappp.org/Documents/events/2008/Aug11Flyer.pdf>) or contact Jill Farris 651-644-1447 x18 or jill@moappp.org. Registration deadline is August 7.

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