Social Support: Its Role in Preventing Depression among Physically Abused Teens

by Della Derscheid, B.A., RNC, PHN

Over the past decade the reported incidence of physical abuse among our nation’s youth has reached such epidemic proportions that, in 1990, the U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect declared a child abuse and neglect national emergency status (Wolfe & Wekerle, 1993).

In the American Indian population, in which adolescents 10-19 years represent nearly one quarter, (Manson, Ackerson, Dick, Baron, & Fleming, 1990) the rates of child abuse serve as indicators of the overall community’s health, pointing to the inherent problems among the adult population (Neligh, 1990).

The distinction between normal adolescent development and signs of depression may not be obvious. Symptoms of depression in adolescents include a consistent sad affect, state of hopelessness, and increased risk-taking behaviors (Reinherz, Frost, & Pakiz, 1991). Undiagnosed and untreated depression severely threatens young people’s well-being.

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of social support on the relationship between self-reported indicators of depression and history of physical abuse among American Indian adolescents.

Data for this study were obtained from the Indian Adolescent Health Survey, a 162 item questionnaire addressing physical and mental health status social, medical support utilization rates, adult and peer relationships, and protective...
GSAN Welcomes New Students

Welcome to the following students, who will be starting spring quarter:

Hans-Peter DeRuijer, RN, BSN, received his bachelors degree from the University of the State of New York - Albany in 1996. Hans has been most recently employed as a staff nurse for the Mayo Medical Center in Rochester, Minnesota. In addition, DeRutier has spent a large amount of time working overseas. In the last six years he has completed nursing assignments in Amsterdam, Berlin, and Thailand.

Gail McMahon, BSN, has been employed with the University of Minnesota as a cardiovascular nurse for the past 11 years. Last June, she received her baccalaureate degree from the University.

Ann Seitz, BSN, RN, PHN, LSN, was awarded a baccalaureate degree in Nursing from the University of St. Thomas in 1994. Seitz is currently employed as a school nurse for Inver Grove Heights Middle School, while spending her summers as a nurse for Camp St. Croix.

The GSAN program wishes them the best of luck in their academic endeavors.

Activities of Faculty & Staff
Linda Bearinger, Ph.D., M.S.: In February, served as a Visiting Mentor at the Child & Adolescent Health Research Center, School of Nursing, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. The center is funded in part by the National Institute of Nursing Research. As part of her visit, Bearinger lectured on the development of interdisciplinary and multicultural interventions research and on designing successful programs for vulnerable populations of young people.

Bearinger’s abstract, "Dimensions of Protective Factors Among American Indian Youth," was presented at the Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA) annual meeting in March 1996.

In March, Bearinger was also appointed to the Research Committee of the University of Minnesota School of Nursing.

Della Derscheid, B.A., RNC, PHN: She recently assisted in the development of the Evaluation tool for the Public Health Project (PEP) Pilot Implementation Inservice "An Introduction to Public Health Nursing Practice Guidelines", a special project of the Minnesota Department of Health, Section of Public Nursing.

Additionally, Derscheid is working as a member of the Public Health Nursing Practice Workshop Planning Committee for the 1997 Spring Conference, "PHN 2000: Skills for the 21st Century"

The School of Nursing’s research committee awarded Derscheid second place for her Plan B abstract "Social Support as a Modifier of Depressive Symptoms Among American Indian Adolescents with Physical Abuse Histories".

Renee Sieving, M.S., RNC, PNP: Conducted several guest lectures at the University of Minnesota School of Nursing, including "Prevention of Adolescent Substance Abuse" to Public Health Nursing students in February, "Adolescent Sexual Behavior: Clinical Applications" to Nurse-Midwifery and Women's Health Nurse Practitioner students in February, and "Techniques of the Adolescent Pelvic Exam" to Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Students in March.

GSAN Newsletter On-Line!!

The GSAN website now contains an on-line version of past newsletters. Try connecting at:

http://www.nursing.umn.edu/MS/Adolescent

and clicking on the URL for past newsletters. Be sure and check out the extras we have included in the new version, including the ability to search for new developments in adolescent nursing and healthcare as a whole. Remember, the GSAN On-line is a work in progress so feel free to update us with any comments.
UPDATE ON GSAN'S SUMMER INSTITUTE:
ADVANCED HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND
INTERVENTIONS WITH ADOLESCENTS

GSAN's Summer Institute, scheduled for June 10-14, 1996, is a 3 credit graduate course (also available for 3.0 Continuing Education Units) to develop assessment and intervention strategies for working with vulnerable teens. The course will include daily dialogue with community-based clinical and health promotion experts and interaction with adolescent actors to enhance interviewing skills.

The course will be held from 8:30 to 4:30 Monday through Thursday, and from 8:30 to 12:30 on Friday, on the Minneapolis campus. It will be taught by Renee Sieving and Linda Bearinger.

The registration brochure includes information about course objectives, daily course topics, accreditation, available hotel or dormitory housing, fees, and parking and travel arrangements. Maps, entertainment and sightseeing information will be sent with registration confirmation.

Enrollment will be limited, so reply early. To request a registration brochure, call the GSAN program office at (612) 624-3938 or Boni Petrich, Professional Development and Conference Services, at (612) 625-1832.

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