Risk-taking behaviour and abuse among young people seen in Australian General Practice

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“The pain of children who are abused by people who should protect them... youth who are bullied by other youth, and people who inflict violence on themselves... no country, no city, no community is immune...

...but neither are we powerless against it”

Overview

- Prelude
- Background
- Aim
- Systematic review
  - Methods
  - Results
- Secondary Analysis
  - Method
  - Preliminary Results
- Future direction
General practitioners struggle with young people.

Abuse and violence are prevalent and not studied enough.

Research and exploration to inspire General Practitioners to understand young people and put them into the ‘can-do’ basket.

(Jarrett et al 2011, Cummings and Kang 2012, State of Australia’s Young people, 2009)
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3.5 million Australians are aged 12 – 24 years

- Indigenous young people 2.5%
- Born in Australia 79.8%.

(State of Australia’s young people, 2009)
Background

- **Alcohol use**
  - 20% 15-17 year olds
  - ~100% of 18-24 year olds

- **Smoking tobacco**
  - 10% young people
  - 27% of 18-24 year olds smoke daily

- **Illicit drugs**
  - 20% 16 year olds
  - 40% 18-25 yr olds

(State of Australia’s young people, 2009)
Road safety risks

- 20-24 yr olds were overrepresented in dangerous or negligent driving stats

- 12.1% of young people reported driving a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol in 2007

(State of Australia’s young people, 2009)
Risky sexual behaviour

Only 2/3 young men (61%) and less than half of young women (46%) reported that they had ‘always’ used condoms in the previous 12 months.

(State of Australia’s young people, 2009)
Exposure to Bullying aged 8-18 yrs (at least once a week)

- >20 % of males
- 15 % of females

(State of Australia’s young people, 2009)
Exposure to Violence & abuse

- **1 in 4 Victorian Children** and young people have witnessed intimate partner violence. *(Office of Women’s Policy 2002)*

- **12.9% 16-55 yrs old women** have experienced fear of a partner or ex-partner in the past year. *(Hegarty et al 2012)*

- **1 in 3 young people** who had engaged in sexual intercourse reported unwanted sex. *(State of Australia’s young people, 2009)*
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Aim

- Is there an association between risk-taking behaviour and abuse or bullying in young people presenting to routine Australian general practice?
Overview

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- **Systematic review**
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Young People</th>
<th>General Practice</th>
<th>Abuse</th>
<th>Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adolescen*</td>
<td>“primary care”</td>
<td>“child abuse”</td>
<td>Alcohol*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth*</td>
<td>“primary health care”</td>
<td>“intimate partner violence”</td>
<td>“unplanned pregnancy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen*</td>
<td>“general practi*”</td>
<td>“domestic violence”</td>
<td>“unintentional pregnancy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“young pe*”</td>
<td>“family practi*”</td>
<td>“intimate partner abuse”</td>
<td>“unprotected sex”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“young adult”</td>
<td>“family doctor”</td>
<td>“dating violence”</td>
<td>“unsafe sex”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“family physician”</td>
<td>Victimi?ation</td>
<td>“substance use”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bull*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Delinquen*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>smoking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“illicit drug”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inclusion criteria: young people, any risk-taking behaviour, abuse, bullying and violence, English only.

Exclusion criteria: articles focused on adults, focused on mental health.
Systematic Review – Databases

- Google scholar
- Medline ISI
- Psychinfo
- Cochrane Database
- CINAHL
- Pubmed
- References in Literature
• Google scholar
• Medline ISI
• Psychinfo
• Cochrane Database
• CINAHL
• Pubmed
• References in Literature

~5000 ARTICLES ➔ 41 ABSTRACTS ➔ 26 ARTICLES critically appraised
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Systematic review – 26 articles

Population

- Primary care clinic: 1
- Household: 8
- Schools: 8
- Paediatric outpatient: 1
- Literature review: 4
- Hospital department: 1
- Emergency: 1
- Public health clinic: 1
Systematic Review results – Associations with risk taking behaviour

- Adverse childhood experiences
  - Victims of violence
    - Parental violence
    - Intimate partner abuse

- Gender M>F
- Age 16-18yrs peaks
- Social factors: peers, family, legal, expectations
- Behaviour/clustering
- Individual characteristics

Systematic Review results – Protective factors

- Individual
  - Moral values
  - Insightful
  - Goal-oriented

- Positive parental attitudes and support
  - Parental involvement in all aspects of life
  - Other trustworthy adults

- Social
  - Good peer group influence
  - Societal expectations and law enforcement

(Kodjo et al 2002)
Significant associations between abuse and risk-taking behaviours such as substance abuse and risky sex.

Sexual victimisation and physical victimisation have a positive correlation.
(Silverman et al 2001; Foshee et al 2004, Kim-Godwin et al 2009)
Perhaps it is a vicious cycle...

Systematic Review – Gaps in evidence

- Primary care populations rarely studied
- No Australian studies of abuse and risk taking
- Retrospective studies
- Varying definitions of abuse, violence/scope of types of abuse
- Varying measures and definitions of risk-taking behaviour in different studies
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## Methods

- Secondary analysis of data collected from young people aged 14-24 years attending General in Victoria

- The PARTY study
Cluster randomised controlled trial
42 General Practices
Victoria, Australia
902 young people aged 14-24 years surveyed at baseline
GPs also surveyed
Unique data set
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**Demographics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (yrs)</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>ATSI</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean 19.6 y</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>n=12 (1.34%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(sd 2.87)</td>
<td>n=220</td>
<td>n=757 (83.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Outside Australia</td>
<td>n=143 (15.9%)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>n=682</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>(24.4%)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Demographics – Age distribution (%)

Mean age 19.57 years
Bullied (all ages) n=902

Bullied in last 3 months (%)

Never in last 3 mth

Bullied
Afraid of family member (age 17 and over) n=740

Afraid of family in last 12 months (%)

- Never in last 12 mth
- Afraid Family
Afraid of partner (age 17 and over)

Afraid of partner in last 12 months (%)

- Never in 12 mth
- Afraid partner
Issue of abuse raised by GP?

Abuse ever raised (%)

Yes

No
Issue of abuse raised and abuse present

- Abused
  - Not raised (90%)
  - Issue raised (10%)
- Not abused (100%)
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Future direction

- To study associations between each abuse variable and risk-taking behaviour.
- To study any associations between abuse variables.
What my study will add...

- Fill some gaps in literature
- Evidence on youth health to improve awareness and emphasise the importance of incorporating youth health into GP training *(Sanci et al. 2007)*
- Evidence to support increasing youth health support networks and centres in the community


References

- Avalos et al. Stress, substance use and sexual risk behaviours among primary care patients in Cape Town, South Africa. AIDS Behav 2010; 14: 2.
Acknowledgements

- GPET for their ongoing support and the Registrars Research Fund to fund this project
- My supervisors A/Prof Lena Sanci and A/Prof Kelsey Hegarty
- Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne
Thank you