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Substance Abuse and the Functioning of Transition-Aged Youth with Psychiatric Disorders

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Substance Abuse and the Functioning of Transition-Aged Youth with Psychiatric Disorders

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Study funded through contract with the MA Department of Mental Health

Youth with SED Struggle as Adults

- Few Graduate from High School
  - 23-30% vs. 61% in community vs. 81-93% in general population
- Employment Rates are Low
  - 46-51% vs. 59% vs. 78-88%
- Greater Risk of Homelessness
  - 30% vs. 7% in general population
- Higher Pregnancy Rates in Women
  - 38-50% vs. 38% vs. 14-17%
- Higher Arrest Rates
  - 43-64% arrested, 24% trouble, 11-30% non SED/PD

Youth with SED Struggle as Adults

Tapping Different Populations

- Service-based sampling captures served population and follows functioning regardless of subsequent setting.
- Community-based samples capture unserved and some served children (with families in community) and follows functioning regardless of subsequent setting.
- Comparison suggests on most outcomes community-based sample functioning intermediate though impaired (Vander Stoep et al., 2000)

Comorbidity with Substance Abuse/Dependence

Nationally representative cross-sectional mental health survey conducted from 9/90 – 2/92

Household sample of non-institutionalized, civilian persons aged 15-54 in the 48 contiguous states, including a supplemental sample of student living in campus group housing

DSM III-R assigned using a modification of the Composite International Diagnostic Interview (UM-CIDI)

National Comorbidity Survey (NCS)

Methods

- Analyses used 15 – 25 year olds from the Part II subsample (n=1598)
- Used lifetime prevalence of substance use and psychiatric disorders.
- Used four diagnostic groups: No diagnosis, Substance abuse only, Psychiatric disorder only, and Comorbid.
- Independent variables included: gender, minority status, age, history of physical abuse, geographic region, urbanicity, parental education level, and having been raised by natural mother
Diagnostic Group Differences Among NCS Respondents Age 15-25 Years ($n=1598$)

- Male Gender**: 49% Psych Only, 40% SA only, 77% Comorbid, 56% None.
- Non White Race**: 35% Psych Only, 36% SA only, 9% Comorbid, 19% None.
- Mean Age (S.D.)*: 19.4 (3.2) Psych Only, 19.3 (3.2) SA only, 21.0 (2.5) Comorbid, 20.9 (2.9) None.
- Physical Abuse History**: 20% Psych Only, 31% SA only, 25% Comorbid, 41% None.

* $p<.001$, **Geographic Region also significantly different ($p=.011$).

Secondary School Incompletion

- Psychiatric Disorder**: 28% Psych Only, 26% SA only, 24% Comorbid, 22% None.
- Substance Use Disorder**: 24% Psych Only, 22% SA only, 20% Comorbid, 18% None.
- Gender**: 22% Females, 20% Males.

* $p=.02$, **$p<.001$.

Secondary School Incompletion by Diagnostic Group

- No Dx: 20%, SA only: 22%, PD only: 24%, Comorbid: 26%.

Currently Not Working

- Psychiatric Disorder**: 60% Psych Only, 58% SA only, 56% Comorbid, 54% None.
- Substance Abuse: 56% Psych Only, 54% SA only, 52% Comorbid, 50% None.
- Gender**: Females: 52%, Males: 48%.

* $p=.02$, **$p<.001$.

Not Working by Diagnostic Group

- No Dx: 40%, SA only: 42%, PD only: 44%, Comorbid: 46%.

Not Working

- Gender x Psychiatric Disorder
  - No PD Male: 40%, PD Male: 44%, No PD Female: 42%, PD Female: 46%.

PD x Gender, $p=.005$.

Presented at the 17th Annual RTC Conference, Tampa FL, 2/29 – 3/3 2004. For more information, contact Maryann Davis: maryann.davis@umassmed.edu
Not Positively Engaged

Not Positively Engaged by Diagnostic Group

Living with Family

Living with Family by Diagnostic Group

Trouble with Police/Law (last 12 months)

Trouble with Police/Law by Diagnostic Group

No Dx SA only PD only Comorbid

PD x SA, p<.001
Trouble with Police/Law

Gender x Substance Use Disorder

Pregnancy in Females

Pregnancy in Females by Diagnostic Group

Conclusions

Limitations

Findings generalizable to youth in transition functioning in “household” situations

Psychiatric/Substance Use condition is lifetime occurrence at any level that meets dx criteria (includes many with less severe than SED)

Conclusions cont’d

The presence of Substance Use Disorders is significant in understanding young adult outcomes among youth with Psychiatric Disorders; particularly for

High School Incompletion

Positive Engagement

Living with Family

Trouble with Police/Law

Less so for not working or pregnancy
Youth with comorbid SED and Substance Use Disorders are likely to fare much worse during the transition period than youth with either condition alone for most areas of functioning.