

Educating Adolescents about Assessing Mental Health During Well Care Visi

Abstract

The escalating prevalence of mental illness among pediatric populations has become a national crisis and a significant public health concern. This alarming trend of mental health issues in children has led to a notable increase in morbidity and mortality, with suicide ranking as the second leading cause of death among children aged 10-14. The persistent national shortage of pediatric mental health (MH) providers in the United States, compounded by barriers such as limited access to resources and MH stigma, has further exacerbated this crisis. As this vulnerable population grapples with the challenges of this ongoing crisis, pediatric primary care providers hold a unique advantage in being able to observe these children during serial wellcare visits. It is imperative that they seize this opportunity to address and mitigate this issue effectively.

The project aims to create an age-appropriate virtual educational program tailored for adolescents aged 12-18. The program will specifically educate adolescents about the PHQ-9 form, a commonly employed depression assessment tool used during regular well-child visits. Drawing upon Pender's Health Promotion Model, the program seeks to fill the gaps in MH care by empowering adolescents to comprehend their mental well-being and actively participate in their care management.

Each year, 1 in 5 children experiences a mental health disorder, yet shockingly, 80% do not receive treatment from a pediatric MH provider. Through integrating evidence-based practices and collaboration with key stakeholders, our program aims to foster meaningful and candid mental health discussions between adolescents and

healthcare providers. Upon completion of the program, participants will have the knowledge and resources necessary to effectively manage any mental health challenges. The program will offer guidance and education on accessing pediatric-specific resources, early intervention, and treatment options. By empowering adolescents to take charge of their mental health and well-being, the program will equip them with the tools and support needed to navigate and overcome obstacles they may encounter. By providing the knowledge and resources essential for success, we strive to nurture their growth and development, enabling them to flourish and achieve their full potential.

Keyword:

Adolescent: mental health; education; pediatric primary care; pediatric suicide rates; pediatric mental health resources

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