

Adverse Childhood Experiences and the Sense of Effectiveness and Coping with Emotions among Adolescents Taking Drugs

Authors : Monika Szpringer, Aneta Pawlinska

Abstract : Adverse childhood experiences are linked to various types of health and adapt problems at different stages of life. They include various types of abuse, neglect, and dysfunctional environment. They have an unfavorable impact on the development of a child and his future functioning in society. Adolescents who were exposed to bad treatment may suffer from health problems during adulthood, like chronic diseases, psychological disorders, drug addiction, and suicide attempts. Objective: The aim of the project is to assess the relationship between adverse childhood experiences and the sense of efficacy and coping with emotions among teenagers aged 16-18 taking drugs. Material And Methods: The research was carried out in the period from March to December 2018 in Mazowieckie, Świętokrzyskie, Łódzkie, and Lubelskie Voivodship. The group consisted of 600 people aged 16-18 (M=16,58; SD=0,78), men (63,2%) aged 16-18 (M=16,60;SD= 0,78) and women (35,5%) aged 16-18 (M16,55;SD=0,79). Participants included residents from Youth Educational Centers and Youth Socioterapy Centers. Each participant filled in Author's Questionnaire, Adverse Childhood Questionnaire, then Courtland Emotional Control Scale-CECS and Generalized Self Efficacy Scale-GSES. Results and conclusions: The most common adverse experiences, according to teenagers, were family abuse, divorce/separation/parent's death, overuse of alcohol or drugs by an inmate, and emotional neglect. Adolescents who suffered from five to twelve adverse experiences had a higher level of depression's control. Adverse childhood experiences have an importance for the level of anger and depression's control among teenagers taking drugs. The greatest importance of the level of anger's control has emotional neglect. A higher level of emotional neglect is linked to a lower ability to control anger. The greatest importance of the level of depression's control has physical abuse and emotional neglect. The higher physical abuse during childhood, and the higher frequency of emotional neglect, the bigger the depression's control. The sense of efficacy in the group of people who suffered from one to four adverse experiences is close to the sense of efficacy that suffered people from five to twelve adverse experiences. The most important factor lowering the sense of one's efficacy was the intensification of sexual abuse. It was confirmed that the intensification and frequency of adverse childhood experiences were higher among women than men. Women also characterized lower anger control and greater depression's control. The authors' own analyses confirmed the relationship between adverse childhood experiences and the sense of efficacy and coping with emotions among teenagers aged 16-18 taking drugs.

Keywords : adolescences, adverse childhood experiences, coping with emotions, drugs

Conference Title : ICPHP 2019 : International Conference on Public Health Policies

Conference Location : Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Conference Dates : December 19-20, 2019