Recognising and Responding to Adolescent Neglect

Messages from Research

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Presentation Outline

- Why is teenage abuse and neglect important?
- What does research tell us? Two studies
 - Neglected adolescents
- Safeguarding young people: responding to young people aged 11-17 who are maltreated
- How can we intervene to assist neglected teenagers?
 - o Primary, secondary and tertiary interventions

Why is Teenage Abuse and Neglect Important?

- Child maltreatment, including neglect, is not just something that happens to young children
- Neglect is the most prevalent form of maltreatment within the family in the general population - 13% for all 11-17 year olds, (NSPCC 2011)
- New registrations of neglected teenagers are greater than registrations for other forms of abuse in younger age categories
- Neglect is most prevalent form of abuse found in Serious Case Reviews (60%; 2009-11, Brandon et al 2013)
- Teenagers can suffer greatly: quarter of Serious Case Reviews (10-17); 21% on 14+ (2007-11)
- Issues relating to teenagers include: severe neglect (18-24 females); suicide; being a victim of violent crime and sexual offences; online harm; child trafficking (NSPCC 2013)

What does Research tell us - First Neglect Study?

- Neglected adolescents partnership between the University of York, The Children's Society and the NSPCC
- An international research review
- Focus groups with young people: Neglect Matters a guide for young people about neglect, and;
- Meetings and interviews with multi-agency staff (recruited through 2 LSCB's): Neglect Matters a guide for multi-agency professionals working together on behalf of teenagers
- Explored the same questions: what is neglect?, what are the causes? what are the consequences? How can I intervene?

What is Neglect – Officially?

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect ... may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate careaivers): or
- · Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.'

(HM Government, Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2013)

What is Teenage Neglect?

Neglect is when parents ignore you ... or leave you and you get hurt ... if you're bullied at school and you have no one to turn to ... when you don't get fed properly ... I was underweight, my skin was dead pale.'
(Young people's views)

'All of my work with teenagers is about trying to rectify neglect of some sort.' (Professional view)

What is Teenage Neglect – Themes from the Research Review?

- More recognition of developmental issues for teenagers
- Defined by carers or experiences of young people teenagers under-estimate neglect?
- Patterns of neglect over time chronic or acute, impact of long history of neglect on teenager's lives
- Act of omission or commission context?
- Balance between culturally specific and healthy development
- Overlap between neglect and other forms of abuse

'Recognition of Developmental Issues'



What are the Causes of Teenage Neglect?

Assessment Framework
Family history and functioning

Child Abuse and Neglect Research – Risk Factors

Parenting - low warmth, low control

Domestic violence

Adult mental health problems – having suffered maltreatment

suffered maltreatment
Parental learning disability
Childhood disability
Substance misuse
Ethnic backgrounds

Lone, younger, unsupported parents Larger families, unplanned pregnancies

Wider family

Low support from own family

Employment, housing income Social integration Poverty, social deprivation, poor education

low income

Less cohesive, poor attachments

Community resources

Less integration and support

What are the Causes of Neglect – Specific Groups of Young People?

- Disabled young people
 - o Higher rates of neglect
- Communication difficulties
- o Being isolated, less regular services
- What is result of disability or neglect?
- Looked after young people
 - o Many have history of neglect
 - o May include physical heath, emotional wellbeing, education
 - Assessment, high quality care, compensatory attachments, stability, addressing education, health and well-being
 - Supporting care leavers into adulthood

'Providing High Quality of Care' OF CURE WE HANT YOU TO HAVE A PLOSEY - BUT IN IT THERE ANYTHERE ELSE, YOU AN SUBA DVE. APART FROM THE LARRIBEAN?

What are the Causes of Neglect – Specific Groups of Young People

- Young carers
 - May increase risk of neglect
- $_{\circ}$ $\,$ Drawn into caring than being cared for
- Lack of support at key developmental stages
- Lack of supervision and boundaries greater risks and problems
- Young people and parental problems
 - Parental mental health, domestic violence, substance and alcohol abuse
 - o Increase emotional unavailability low warmth, low control
 - Young people physically and psychologically alone

What are the Consequences of Teenage Neglect?

Evidence linking adolescent neglect with negative outcomes in relation to Every Child Matters

Every Child Matters

Poor mental and physical health, risky behaviours Being healthy

Staying Safe Running away from home substance abuse, bullying

Enjoy and achieve Poor education and school record

Positive contribution Getting into trouble

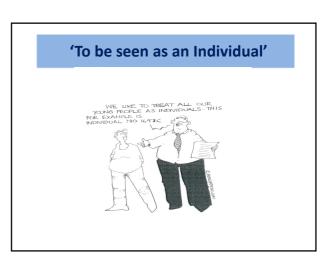
Economic well-being Cumulative effects into adulthood

Second Study: Responding to Young People Aged 11 to 17 who are Abused and Neglected

- Study of risk assessment and decision making (160) professionals; study of policy and practice in four agencies and interviews with young people, professionals and referrers (80)
- Child protection system not seen as most effective way to meet the needs of 'older' young people less likely to have a initial and core
- assessment, or be the subject of Section 47 enquiry
 More likely to follow 'Child in Need' pathway and 'Common
- Referring professionals viewed the consequences of maltreatment to be less serious when young people were older seen as more 'resilient', more 'adult', more able to seek help
- Referring professionals also influenced by likelihood of children's services taking action and by perceived negative consequences for young people

Second Study: Responding to Young People Aged 11 to 17 who are Abused and Neglected

- For young people effective interventions based on good quality relationships
- For young people barriers to seeking help
 - Lack of awareness of services and access to them
 - Consequences of disclosing abuse for self and family
 - o Trust and confidentiality of professionals
- · Seek help from peers and family
- Young people want
- o Be seen as an individual be listened to and have a choice
- o More clarity about the role of professionals
- Accessibility and continuity of relationships
- Confidentiality and trust



How Can We Intervene? Primary Prevention

Preventing neglect before it occurs through universal or targeted services

'I think that parents do not always have help, and could have had a difficult time themselves.'

- •Services promoting the well-being of families so young people not neglected
- •Promotion of 'authoritative parenting' good quality attachments
- •Parenting for teenagers courses?
- •Enhance the well-being of young people in schools, PSHE, citizenship, colleges and employment supportive culture
- •Youth services positive activities

How Can We Intervene? Secondary Prevention

Early interventions when problems first arise through informal or formal responses

'Most young people can't tell anyone they're neglected.'

- •Empowering young people friends, guides, information
- •Challenging professional perceptions of risk for teenagers
- •Informal responses
- •Common Assessment Framework, Assessment Framework, and integrated working
- 'The team around the child', 'family', or 'school'

How Can We Intervene? Tertiary Prevention

Prevent the recurrence or persistence of problems

- Little UK literature on evaluated interventions on teenage maltreatment
- The Assessment Framework review and plan
- Dedicated teenage support teams
- Projects working with young people in response to general or specific issues, for example, Kids Company, young runaways, young carers, sexual exploitation

How Can We Intervene? Tertiary Prevention

Key messages

- Research suggests ecological, multi-faceted approaches seeing adolescents within network of inter-connected systems
- Encompass individual, family, community peer group, school, neighbourhood
- Importance of a key worker quality relationships
- Resilience ecological perspective
- Serious case reviews never give up!

Research Sources

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