

Parental Help-Seeking for Adolescent Mental Health Concerns

The question being asked in this project is "What Factors Predict Parents' Early Help-Seeking for Adolescents with Mental Health Problems?" Specific objectives include:

- To identify the evidence-base for parent help-seeking interventions.
- To develop a theory of parent help-seeking for adolescent mental health problems.
- To test the theory of parental help-seeking as a predictor of early help-seeking for adolescent mental health problems.
- To use the theory to identify potential targets for the development of a parent help-seeking intervention.

Parents are usually the gate-keepers and decision-makers when adolescents need professional help to support their psychosocial development. Unfortunately, there is evidence that parents are frequently slow to seek help (Wang et al., 2005). This is a concern because many adolescent mental health conditions have better outcomes when intervention begins soon after symptoms appear (Nordentoft et al., 2014). This has led to increasing recognition of the importance of developing interventions to promote appropriate help-seeking by parents.

The studies proposed within this project will: i) identify the features of high quality, effective parent interventions; ii) develop a theory of parent help-seeking for adolescent mental health problems; iii) test a model of the help-seeking process. Taken together these three studies include elements of the 'Development' phase of complex interventions as outlined by the Medical Research Council (2006).

References

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