

Mental Health Problems in Sri Lankan Adolescents Exposed to the Tsunami and Other Traumatic Events

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Mental Health Problems in Sri Lankan Adolescents Exposed to the Tsunami and Other Traumatic Events

Thyagi Ponnampereuma, 18th April 2019

1. Because negative cognitive appraisal of traumatic experience is strongly associated with persistent symptoms, adolescents with posttraumatic stress symptoms can especially profit from cognitive interventions (this thesis, chapter 2).
2. In youth with low perceived social support, daily stressors are particularly likely to exacerbate posttraumatic stress symptoms as well as emotional and behavioral problems (this thesis, chapter 3).
3. The increased vulnerability of adolescent females to posttraumatic stress disorder can be explained in part by their higher levels of cortisol following trauma (this thesis, chapter 4).
4. Emotional and behavioral problems are prevalent among adolescents with PTSD and have a stronger impact on daily functioning (this thesis, chapter 5).
5. Adolescents exposed to interpersonal violence experience significantly more trauma types and have more severe psychological symptoms (this thesis, chapter 5).
6. In treating post-trauma mental health problems in adolescents, improving social support from friends and family is essential (this thesis, chapter 3).
7. School-based screening is feasible and effective in identifying trauma-exposed adolescents and detecting possible post-trauma mental health problems.
8. Studies investigating the mental health of traumatized adolescents should assess psychological comorbidities in addition to posttraumatic stress symptoms.
9. Longitudinal studies, ideally including multi-informant measures and clinical diagnosis, are necessary to clarify the pathways linking trauma exposure to post-trauma psychopathology in youth.
10. As trauma exposure is widespread in Sri Lanka, an effective screening program to identify adolescents with post-trauma mental health problems should be implemented.
11. Suffering is not caused by external events, but by qualities of mind, which shape our perceptions and responses to events (Lord Buddha).