Adolescent Health Risk and Behavior Survey-A School-based Survey in Central Nepal

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Introduction

• A comprehensive study of adolescent behavioral health in Central Nepal has never been performed; specific risk factors and health needs of this population is unknown
• Dhulikhel Hospital’s catchment area includes central Nepal; this data can guide the allocation of resources for prevention programming

Specific Aims

• Determine if health trends exist based on age, gender, caste, and location of adolescents

Study Methods

• A 40 question survey was adopted from the Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, 2015) to assess nutritional status, hygiene, mental health, violence, and substance use patterns
• Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained by both Kathmandu University and the Medical College of Wisconsin
• From June - July 2016, the anonymous survey was administered to students between 12-16 years old in 8 schools in Dhulikhel Hospital’s catchment areas of Kavre, Sindhupalchowk, and Dhading

Results

Collected a total of 1200 surveys in a collaborative effort with the Department of Community Programs at Dhulikhel Hospital

Discussion

• These areas should be targeted for improvement: nutrition, mental health, school water infrastructure
  – 8% never went hungry indicating the majority lack adequate nutrition
  – 49% don’t have a place to wash their hands at school indicating an opportunity to spread disease
  – 28% are only happy with themselves some of the time indicating that mental wellness can be improved

Conclusion

• The data reflects resources and aspects of living in rural central Nepal
• The mental health data suggests that more psychological services could be offered in school
• This data provides the groundwork to further explore the identified adolescent health risks

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