Adolescence: Contemporary Issues and Resources

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**Introduction:**

Adolescence is the stage of development changes between childhood and adulthood. It brings variations in personality through both physical and psychological changes. During this stage of development, teens often face various problems and decisions like self-esteem, peer pressure, depression, alcoholism, sexual problem, and suicide. Among these and many other issues, depression is the problem which brings other physical and psychological issues. Depression is a real part of the lives of teens (beyondblue, n.d.). This is the stage when parents and guardians should not criticize and judge the teens. If parents or guardian notice their child facing the problem of depression, they should arrange an appointment for a proper examination by the physician. Proper assessment should be made to inquire about the changes in physical and psychological behavior. The purpose of the study is to highlight the symptoms, external stressor of the depression in order to develop assessment strategies and intervention to encounter the external factors causing depression in adolescence.

There are various symptoms of depression including; changes in eating habit and sleeping pattern, a decrease in the interest for studies and physical activities, and they try to be isolated as much as possible. Various external factors cause depression-like loss of loved ones during this stage of life, family adversity, chronic medical conditions, and most importantly study difficulties. Due to these external factors, a sudden and negative change in behavior and thinking happens because of which teens lose their motivation.

**Assessment Strategies:**

The symptoms can be noticed by the teen as well as his/her parents. Whenever, symptoms of depression are identified a proper assessment is required to control the issue because depression is the problem which can lead to many other problems like self-esteem, alcoholism and sometimes suicide. Therefore, it is necessary to screen teens for depression. There are various tools which can be used for the assessment of the patient like Patient Health Questionnaire for Adolescents (PHQ-A). The basic strategies to make the assessment are to understand the situation of the teens and the role of parents. For instance, if the patient has a background from family adversity and loss of loved one then proper guideline should be provided to both patient and parents that how the patient can feel better or avoid loneliness with the help of different activities and sharing of thoughts. Questions like do you feel sad or lonely? Had you faced difficulty with sleeping and eating habits? Do you lose interest in things which pleased you before? If the patient appears severely depressed then it is necessary to share the result of assessment with the patient and his parents. In addition, they should be reassured that the issue is not a fault it is a biological-based problem (Melinda, 2018).

**Support options to encounter external stressors:**

Depression is not a problem which is difficult to handle however, if no significant steps are taken on time it may lead to other severe disorders like alcoholism and suicidal ideation. The first option to encounter external stressor of the depression is the medication. Through proper assessment and examination of the physical and psychological health of the patient, a proper medication should be taken according to the instructions given by the physicians. The most effective medication for depression is antidepressant medication. Antidepressant may create some issue or side effect like drowsiness and headaches however, after two weeks patient starts to feel better (“Five tips to help manage stress,” n.d.). Regular checkup is important for the patient to avoid any serious issue faced due to medication. Another best option to reduce depression is therapy. Various types of psychological therapy are present that can be effective to encounter the external stressors like loss of loved ones, family adversity, and chronic medical conditions, social and study pressure. The most effective therapy for the patient of depression is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). It is the technique to reduce depression by changing thought patterns. CBT helps patients to reduce the stress of study and society, cope with the complicated relationships, and increasing the interest in different physical activities. There is various kind of CBT include; interpersonal therapy (IPT), Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT), and behavior therapy. Then there is E-therapy. It is online therapy most suitable for the patient who cannot visit the doctor often or when there is no physician nearby. This is like a self-guide in which patient is the therapist for himself. He works according to the program with the help of the therapist. The patient can take help from people around him that are family and friends. The best guidance that a doctor can give to the patient is to take a break from the stressor. It can be done by involving different activities to step away from the stressor and keeping the mind busy. The best options to cope with the stressor are the exercise and getting social support (“Promoting Healthy Mental Development: A Bright Futures Online Curriculum,” n.d.).

**Conclusion:**

 Adolescence is the stage when an individual moves from childhood to adulthood. At this stage teens often face both physical and psychological changes. These changes bring lots of issue like aggression, self-esteem, peer pressure, depression, alcoholism, sexual problem, and suicide. Depression is an issue which leads to other problems like self-esteem, alcoholism, and suicidal ideation. External stressors like loss of loved one, family adversity, chronic medical conditions, and most importantly study difficulties increase the chances of depression in teens. Various symptoms can detect depression which includes; changes in eating habit and sleeping pattern, a decrease in the interest in studies and physical activities, and they try to be isolated as much as possible. To diagnose the problem, patient should consult with the physician and physician should use assessment strategies and options like medication, therapy, and proper guidance to reduce the depression.

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