Suicidal Behavior Linked to Relational Distress

BY DAMIAN McNAMARA
FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SUICIDOLGY

ORLANDO – Adolescent suicide attempt history is associated with increased levels of intimate partner violence when a male becomes a young adult, according to a long-term, prospective study of 153 men.

The findings suggest that prevention or intervention efforts for adolescents who attempt suicide might improve subsequent relationship outcomes, said David C. R. Kerr, Ph.D.

A paucity of research exists on associations between teenage suicidal behavior and relational distress, partner aggression, or relationship instability in young adulthood, Dr. Kerr said at the meeting.

Suicidal behavior might reflect underlying traits, such as impulsivity or aggression, he said, and these traits could manifest as maladaptive behaviors during romantic relationships. "Intimate relationships can be a source of significant conflict and profound emotional distress."

Impulsive or reactive aggression during intense negative affect or when someone is highly negatively aroused seems to be important, said Dr. Kerr, research associate at Oregon Social Learning Center at Oregon State University, Eugene.

Dr. Kerr and his associate Deborah Capaldi, Ph.D., assessed regular surveys of males beginning when they were aged 10 years. Participants in the Oregon Youth Study were re-assessed annually up to age 32 years. Findings were not solely based on self-reports, because they are not always trustworthy, Dr. Kerr said.

"Batterers may report mental health symptoms as a way to deny responsibility," he said. In addition, he said, suicidal threats or behaviors might be considered a form of control over intimate partners.

Annual reports from 59 female partners starting when the men reached age 18 years also were assessed. Couples also were observed in interaction tasks meant to generate some conflict.

A total of 19 of the 153 males (12%) had a lifetime suicide attempt history.

In order to assess physical injury, only partners were asked during five interviews (from ages 20 to 32 years) if they had ever been injured by the man. "Close to 27% reported an injury of some form," Dr. Kerr said.

"An unmediated link between youth suicide attempt and adult partner aggression and violence supports the role of impulsive, undercontrolled aggression in intimate partner violence," Dr. Kerr said. "It suggests intimate partner violence is not solely a calculated, instrumental behavior."

Adolescent aggression also predicted negative relationship outcomes in young adulthood in the study.

The research revealed that 25 men, or 16%, had been arrested one or more times for domestic violence. However, "the numbers were too small regarding domestic violence arrests to make conclusions," Dr. Kerr said.

Depression Might Impair Compliance In Adolescents With Type 1 Diabetes

BY NEIL OSTERWEIL
FROM DIABETES RESEARCH AND CLINICAL PRACTICE

Depressive symptoms in adolescents with type 1 diabetes might be a marker for poor treatment compliance, a new report shows.

Adolescents with type 1 diabetes and clinically significant symptoms of depression were more likely than their nondepressed peers to have higher glycated hemoglobin A1c values, and to perform less frequent daily blood glucose monitoring than nondepressed adolescents with diabetes. (See Table 1 at tinyurl.com/X4KvstQ to view this table in this issue of Clinical Psychiatry News.)

The study, which the authors called the first to examine the responses on CDI subscales in adolescents with type 1, had several limitations. Depressive symptoms were self-reported, and it is difficult to generalize the results to other samples because of "the sociodemographic characteristics of the adolescents studied." Future studies should examine depressive symptoms over time, they said.

ADHD Less Prevalent After Adenotonsillotony

BY BRUCE JANCIN
FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATED PROFESSIONAL SLEEP SOCIETIES

SAN ANTONIO – Many children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder or oppositional defiant disorder no longer meet diagnostic criteria for these psychopathologies 6 months after they undergo adenotonsillectomy, according to a long-term, prospective study of 153 men.

Odd were high, in accord with earlier studies of children scheduled for adenotonsillotony: In all, 54 children (39%) met DSM-IV criteria for some form of ADHD, whereas 26 (19%) met criteria for ODD. At 6 months after adenotonsillotony, however, only 32 patients (23%) still met criteria for any form of ADHD. The rest no longer did. Particularly impressive was the reduction in ADHD of the combined type: Overall, 30 kids (21%) met the diagnostic criteria for this disorder at baseline, compared with 18 (13%) at follow-up, said Dr. Dillon, a child and adolescent psychiatrist at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Meanwhile, the prevalence of ODD dropped from 26 children at baseline to just 5 (3.6%) at 6 months post surgery, he said.

Participants were recruited from various otolaryngology practices in Michigan. Before being approached for the study, all of the children were already scheduled for adenotonsillotony.

The subjects’ mean age was 7.2 years, 55% were boys, and 78% of the children were white. Most of the participants were from various otolaryngology practices in Michigan. Before being approached for the study, all of the children were already scheduled for adenotonsillotony.

The study, which the authors called the first to examine the responses on CDI subscales in adolescents with type 1, had several limitations. Depressive symptoms were self-reported, and it is difficult to generalize the results to other samples because of "the sociodemographic characteristics of the adolescents studied." Future studies should examine depressive symptoms over time, they said.