

Working with Complexity: Teen Risk and Resilience

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PLAN

- What risks?
- Are we equipped to reduce these risks?
- The challenges of additional complexities
- Serious case reviews
- What does and doesn't help?
- Adolescent neglect
- Resilience

Videos and quizzes!!

The Teenager is Born?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLuEY6jN6gY>

What Risks?

1. Risk to self
2. Risk from others
3. Risk to others

Risk to Self

- Early initiation, unprotected sex (STIs, unplanned pregnancies)
- Sexting/accessing disturbing pornography
- Drug/alcohol abuse
- Joy riding
- Self-neglect
- Going missing
- Homelessness
- Self-injury/harm
- Attempted suicide
- Eating disorders
- Playing 'chicken'
- Gambling
- Committing crime

Risk from Others

- Gang exploitation (drugs, crime)
- Sexual exploitation from groups/gangs
- Online grooming/sexual abuse
- Sharing explicit images
- Sexual abuse (Peer/intrafamilial etc)
- Physical assault (Peer/intrafamilial etc)
- Abusive intimate relationship
- Witness to domestic abuse
- Stalking
- Bullying (on and offline)
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect
- Homelessness
- Fabricated/Induced Illness
- Religious or racist extremism
- FGM
- Forced marriage,
- 'Honour' based killing
- Financial abuse
- Institutional abuse

Risk to Others

- Violence towards parents/carers/other adults
- Intimate partner violence
- Violence against peers, public and others
- Burglary, robbery, theft
- Vandalism
- Sexual abuse/assault
- Sharing explicit images of others
- Threats/bullying (on and off line)
- Fire setting
- Anti-social behaviour
- Animal cruelty

Teengers Think....

“You always worry too much. I know how to take care of myself. Nothing bad is going to happen to me!”

(Even if they are worried they don't tend to say)

Quick Quiz!

Question 1

What percentage of adolescents report they self-harm?

- a. 20%
- b. 10%
- c. 5%

Answer 1

A

Remember the boys!

- 24% intentionally hurt themselves as a way to cope
- 19% punch wall to cope with stress
- Men are 3 times more likely to complete suicide than females and suicide is the biggest killer of men under 45.
- Externalising behaviour are often symptoms of stress and distress

Question 2

Is it illegal for under 18s to:-

- a) Take an indecent pic of themselves?
- b) Share an indecent pic of themselves?
- c) Or both?

Answer 2

C

Both are against the law!

If someone is under 18, it's illegal to take or share an 'indecent' picture of themselves, or to look at or share someone else's.. *If it's naked, a topless girl, contains genitals or sex acts including masturbation it will be 'indecent'.*

Childline, NSPCC, Think You Know CEOP

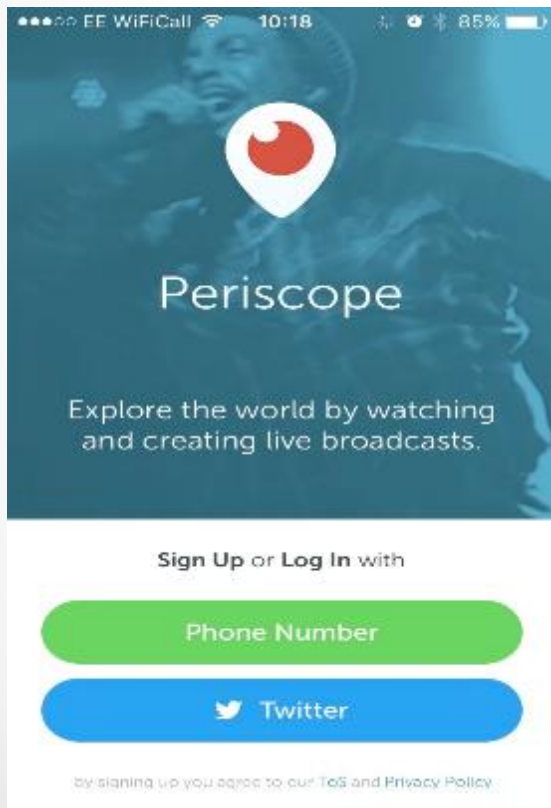


Question 3

- Is Periscope.....
 - a) A live streaming app?
 - b) An optical instrument?
 - c) Both?

Answer 3

C New live streaming app from Twitter



- NetAware
- CEOP, think you know
- ForMe (Childline)

Question 4

What percentage of 13-17 years olds report physical violence from their partners?

- a) 11-17 %
- b) 18-24 %
- c) 25-33 %

Answer 4

B

Disrespect Nobody
Brook
NSPCC

16-19 year olds are the most at risk group of domestic abuse

From March 2013 Home Office definition applies to 16/17 year olds and includes coercive control

From Dec 2015 coercive control is a criminal offence



Ask yourself....?

- Do you and staff in your agency have the appropriate level of knowledge and skills to identify teen risks?
- Do you and staff in your agency know how to respond to these risks?
- Do you and staff in your agency know where to go to get advice?
- Does your agency have the necessary documentation to record, analyse and plan each of the 3 risk areas?
- Does you and your agency have the knowledge and skills to work effectively with other organisations when there are teen risks?



Additional Complexities

- Impact of Early Neglect/Abuse
- Mental Health Issues
- Neuro Issues

Impact of Early Neglect/Abuse

- Brain wired to 'survival mode'
- Overdeveloped flight/fight system
- Underdeveloped cortex
- Increased impulsivity/risk taking, reduced ability to positive problems solving, reduced empathy
- Increased risk of criminality, emotional/mental health, attachment and substance misuse issues

Additional Neuro Issues

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Social Communication difficulties
- Speech and Language difficulties
- FASD
- ADD/ADHD
- Specific learning difficulties
- Intellectual disability
- Brain Injury
- Visual Processing difficulties
- Sensory sensitivities
- Motor skills issues
- Etc



YOS Health Assessment

- Time line
- Developmental history
- Mental Health
- Family/Important Relationships
- Attachment strategies
- Emotional and Mental Health
- Behavioural/Risk concerns
- Neurodevelopmental/Learning issues
- Strengths, personality and talents
- Baseline measures
- Cognitive Assessment/Screening tools
- Adaptive Living Skills



CASE 1

'Why is so s**t being 17?

- Homeless
- No income
- No ETE
- Minimal family support

Risks

- Suicide/police
- Radicalisation
- Theft, burglary, violence, carry knives
- Drug use/dealing
- Being exploited
- Fire setting
- Self-neglect

Complexities

- Low mood
- Social anxiety
- Sensory sensitivities
- Social Communication Issues
- Verbal comprehension low
- Fascination with weapons
- Suspected ASD
- Disorganised, poor planning

Strengths

- Willing to work with professionals
- Honesty about thoughts and plans

CASE 2

Early Intervention?

14 years old

Blended family

Exclusion from school

Risks

Violence to peers

CSE

Assessment

Low mood/stress

Mild ID, L diff

ASD

Social Anxiety/PTSD

Outcome

EHCP

Individual Timetable

Others understand her

Functioning well

Safe and Happy

Serious Case Reviews

In 2016, 40 SCRs published, 11 involved teenagers (2 multiple teens)

- Suicides/open verdict
- CSE
- Death from peer/ex-partner
- SHB

SCRs cont....

In 2014 NSPCC completed review of SCRs for teens 2010-13.

Risk:

- Problems in family – neglect, abuse, bereavement, rejection
- Emotional/mental health issues, developmental delay
- School bullying, low attendance and achievement
- Risk behaviour poorly understood
- History of care, multiple agencies, homelessness



Listen....

- Take disclosures, distress seriously
- A lead professional knows the child
- Advocate provided
- Self-harm/suicide attempts recognised as child protection issues
- Balance child's wishes against their best interests

Keep Focus....

- Remember 16 and 17 year olds need as much help as younger children
- Support young people to access services/don't close cases due to non-attendance
- Look at the causes of risky behaviour not just the behaviour
- Update chronologies and know the history



Early Age Appropriate Services

- Early intervention to prevent long term abuse/neglect
- Suitable placements and accommodation
- Provide good quality sexual health assessments

Finally...

From 2016 SCRs:-

- Consider lived experience and historical trauma/loss
- Whole family approach
- Improved understanding/assessment of risk, SHB, SH, DA and adolescent neglect
- CSE - Mapping to identify high risk victims, perpetrators and areas
- Sharing info agencies and transfers


What is it like working with risky teens?

- The more risky the more chaotic they are, and harder it is to work out what they want from life
- It can be hard to get support/placements organised as they go missing/get arrested
- Managing the multiple risks can consume workloads, whilst still trying to address the multiple causal factors
- Early indicators of risk/vulnerability are often misread/neglected (families say)

Cont....

- Professionals worry about risky young people when they go home
- Challenging but rewarding work, especially when get past tough exterior and they realise you actually really care
- It can feel like you are doing them a favour when you see them for an appointment!
- It's hard when other professionals don't do what they say they will....
- Young people say they are feeling out of control, everybody's talking about them, believe professionals think they are useless, feeling they are not helped enough, talked down to, scared of professionals, professionals can't relate, not heard, not listened to but talked at.....

Young People Wishes

- Need time, patience and the same person
 - Building trust so you can tell someone what you have been hiding for so long
 - Being accepted not judged
 - Explaining things simply and clearly
 - Professionals explaining about sharing information, so feel in control
 - Help for the family too
 - Support with education, work and accommodation
 - Don't give up!
- 

Young People Don't Like..

- Professionals to be pushy/bossed around
- Having to tell their stories to lots of different people
- Getting to know someone then having to change worker
- Too many professionals knowing their 'business'
- Professionals not knowing what other agencies are doing



Parents/Carers Help?

- Keep the lines of communication open
- Educate themselves e.g. social media
- Find positive ways to take risks
- Positive role-modelling
- Advise/manage peer pressure/relationships
- Clear, safe boundaries
- Seek support or professional help if needed
- Don't give up!

Neglect Definition

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015:-

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.'

Neglect Risks...

- Alcohol/substance misuse
- Learning difficulties/disabilities
- Mental health
- Domestic abuse

And other reasons....

e.g. issues from own experience of being parented, stress, poverty, lack of social supports etc

See PSCB neglect strategy



Adolescent Neglect

Children's Society (2016)

1 in 7 Year 10 mainstream – would this be higher in risky teens?

Generally higher the support the lower risk taking behaviour and better overall well-being, but over monitoring reduced life satisfaction.

This study revealed that neglected teenagers tend to report doubts about their competence, have little faith that anyone cares about them, feel pessimistic about the future and are dissatisfied with their lives overall



Questions!

1. Supervision
2. Alcohol/cannabis use
3. Unsupervised use of social media/internet
4. Providing meals

How gender, culture, additional needs change opinion?



What is Resilience?

- 'Is the capacity to rise above difficult circumstances, the trait that allows us to exist in this less-than-perfect world while moving forward with optimism and confidence'
- 'An ability to recover from setbacks, the quality of bouncing back'
- 'Resilient people see challenges as opportunities....Push limits and learn from mistakes....they adapt and thrive'
- (Building Resilience in Children and Teens, Ginsburg, 2015)

7 Cs

- **Competence:** When we notice what young people are doing right and give them opportunities to develop important skills, they feel competent. We undermine competence when we don't allow young people to recover themselves after a fall.
- **Confidence:** Young people need confidence to be able to navigate the world, think outside the box, and recover from challenges.
- **Connection:** Connections with other people, schools, and communities offer young people the security that allows them to stand on their own and develop creative solutions.
- **Character:** Young people need a clear sense of right and wrong and a commitment to integrity.
- **Contribution:** Young people who contribute to the well-being of others will receive gratitude rather than condemnation. They will learn that contributing feels good and may therefore more easily turn to others, and do so without shame.
- **Coping:** Young people who possess a variety of healthy coping strategies will be less likely to turn to dangerous quick fixes when stressed.
- **Control:** Young people who understand privileges and respect are earned through demonstrated responsibility will learn to make wise choices and feel a sense of control.

Video of 7 Cs

<http://www.fosteringresilience.com/videos.php>

Agency Questions....

e.g. Competence:-

- Do we see what a young person has done right? Or do we focus on their mistakes?
- Do we help them focus on those strengths and build upon them?
- Are we helping to build the authentic skills that make them competent in the real world?

Educational Skills

Social Skills

Anger Management Skills

Work Skills

Interview Skills

Stress Reduction Skills

- Do we communicate in a way that empowers them to make their own decisions, or do we undermine their sense of competence by lecturing them thereby giving them information in a style they cannot grasp? Rather than talking down to them, do we instead deliver information in a manner they understand?



Increasing Resilience

We can all contribute in our roles and act as role model:

- Noticing effort, improvements and opportunities
- Talk in a way that will improve listening and understanding
- De-escalate intense emotions
- Support consequential thinking/mentalisation
- Act as a stable, safe adult
- Try to understand what is behind the risky behaviour
- Work together to reduce the risky behaviour
- Encourage good sleep, eating, exercise and self-care
- Involve young people in shaping the support they receive and the services provided to young people
- Support young people to take taking positive control e.g. education training and employment, leisure activities, friendships and intimate relationships, safe use of internet etc

Take Home Messages

- Adolescence is a fantastic time to support, guide and empower
- Risky behaviour is usually a symptom of underlying distress/stress
- Externalising behaviours are equally a sign of emotional difficulties as internalising – boys!
- Individual and agencies have a responsibility to keep up to date with the lives of adolescents
- Individuals and agencies have a responsibility to understand, assess and manage risk, and work closely with other agencies
- Adolescent neglect is a major issue, especially for risky teens
- We can all do our bit to help build resilience
- Working with risky teens is stressful, worrying, time consuming, frustrating but also rewarding!
- Professionals need support, training, time, flexibility to work safely
- Risky young people appreciate the efforts of people who ‘care’ (listen, support, stick around and keep trying).

The End

References

To follow with resources

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