Australia – China Centre for Public Health Research Forum November 2015

Adolescent & Child Health Research Themes

Moderators:
Professor Geoff Cleghorn (QUT)
Professor Yajun Xu (PKU)
• Mental Health and Child development
  • Domestic violence
    • Against children - sexual abuse of children
    • Mental health impacts / causes
    • Substantial risk factor for eating disorders (especially sexual abuse)
    • Risk factor for suicide ideation, self-injury, depression
  • Sleep disorders
  • Dysfunctional eating leading to both eating disorders or obesity
  • Mental health protective factors
  • Suicide ideation, self-injury, depression

• Nutrition
  • Maternal nutrition
  • Obesity & exercise
  • Neural tube defects
• Existing research in the partner universities
• Cohort study - Prof Jia - Shandong Uni
  • 1200 students, mental health survey
  • Funding - Prof Jia, not govt
  • Might be able to consider adding a short questionnaire on school connectedness
  • ? Could add a section on physical activity and nutrition?
• Points for consideration:

• Potential difficulties for research
  • Potential unwillingness to recognise certain issues e.g. sexual abuse of children (changing over time)
  • Cultural differences in definitions - mild/ severe etc
  • Ethics approval processes - different in Aus and China - ? Impacts for publication

• Pitfalls of collaboration (mistakes made over time)
  • Making commitments without really understanding partners/ students and understanding capacity etc
  • Not enough relationship development prior to development of the research
  • Must be relevant and important to all parties - mutual benefit
Ideas discussed included

• Meta-emotions - beliefs about emotions leading to unhelpful thinking and behaviours e.g. suicide
  • Relatively new concept
  • Explanations for why people use certain coping strategies for negative emotions

• School-based study with cohort of young people looking at many aspects of mental health including
  • Suicidal thinking
  • Meta-emotions
  • Sense of belonging
  • School connectedness
Next Steps

• Use Shandong University suicide prevention study as starting point
• Translate brief school connectedness study into Chinese
• Sleep researchers linked in?
• Nutrition linked in? - food and physical activity logs
• Repeat study/ similar study in Australia in order to compare data
• Skills and resources sharing
  • QUT researchers have some educational apps & intervention techniques for mental health issues
• Invite PhD student to come to QUT - co-supervised by Shandong Uni and QUT