Making Sense of the Research: Recent Findings and Implications for Practice

Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Grantee Meeting

February 2010

Panelists & Featured Studies

• David Drum, Ph.D.
  University of Texas at Austin
  Nature of College Student Suicidal Crises

• Daniel Eisenberg, Ph.D.
  University of Michigan
  Healthy Minds

• Ben Locke, Ph.D.
  Pennsylvania State University
  Center for the Study of Collegiate Mental Health

• Mort Silverman, M.D., SPRC
• Linda Langford, Sc.D., SPRC

Session Overview

• Being a thoughtful consumer of research (Langford)
• Highlights from the three studies (Drum, Eisenberg, Locke)
• Synthesis of key findings across studies (Silverman)
• Application to practice (Langford, audience, panelists)

Resources

• Table I: Study Characteristics – Three Featured Studies
• Table II: “Seriously Considered Suicide” – Lifetime and Past Year Prevalence
  • Three featured studies
  • ACHA-NCHA I
  • ACHA-NCHA II

Survey Data

• Findings are affected by numerous factors, e.g.
  • Who was included in the population of interest
  • Who was actually surveyed/responded
    • One institution vs. many
    • Representative sample vs. convenience
    • Response rate/ bias in response pool
  • How the survey is framed for respondents
    • e.g., health, mental health, suicide, experiences
  • Exact questions asked
  • Time period covered by questions
  • Other methodology issues, e.g., format, confidentiality measures, setting, trained interviewers, etc.
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<th>Examples of Questions to Ask Yourself</th>
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<td>• Do these results represent college students nationally, or some populations more than others?</td>
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<td>◦ How do they apply to the population on my campus?</td>
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<td>• What is this finding telling me (and not telling me)?</td>
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<td>◦ Keep in mind who responded and what they were asked</td>
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<td>• How does this finding apply to our project activities?</td>
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<td>• What follow-up questions do I have that this or other studies might answer?</td>
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