Child Maltreatment and Opioids

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THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA at CHAPEL HILL
NC Institute of Medicine

• Quasi-state agency chartered in 1983 by the NC General Assembly to:
  • Be concerned with the health of the people of North Carolina
  • Monitor and study health matters
  • Respond authoritatively when found advisable
  • Respond to requests from outside sources for analysis and advice when this will aid in forming a basis for health policy decisions

*NCGS §90-470*
Essentials for Childhood

- Funded by NC DHHS with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  - Evidence-based practice work group
  - Trauma informed practices work group
  - Work across stakeholder groups (pathways, especially data group, children’s cabinet, etc.)
Overdose Deaths Involving Opioids
United States, 2000-2015

Child maltreatment and opioids

- Child Maltreatment
- Opioid/Substance Use
- Child Maltreatment
Child maltreatment and opioids

Child Maltreatment → Opioid/Substance Use
Child maltreatment and substance use disorders

• Consistent association between maltreatment and later substance use
  • ACEs associated with alcohol abuse\(^1\) and illicit drug use\(^2\)
  • Child maltreatment associated with early initiation of substance use\(^2,3\)

Child maltreatment and opioid misuse

• Studies have shown association between child maltreatment and opioid use
  • Clinical samples have shown higher prevalence of child maltreatment among individuals who misuse opioids\textsuperscript{1,2}
  • Neglect and emotional abuse were associated with increased odds of prescription pain reliever misuse in a national sample (1.4 and 1.3, respectively)
  • Sexual abuse and witnessing violence were associated with increased odds of injection drug use in a national sample (4.8 and 2.8, respectively)

Childhood Abuse and Prescription Opioid Use

- National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Add Health)
  - Respondents age 24-32 years
  - Data collected regarding respondent use of prescription medications in last 4 weeks, including prescription opioids
  - Self-reported lifetime misuse of prescription opioids
  - Self-reported emotional, physical, and sexual abuse prior to age 18 years

Childhood Abuse and Prescription Opioid Use

Childhood Abuse and Prescription Opioid Use

Childhood abuse and neglect → Adolescent pain → Adolescent depressive symptoms → Early adulthood prescription opioid misuse

Austin AE, Shanahan ME. The association of childhood abuse and neglect with prescription opioid misuse: Examination of mediation by pain and depressive symptoms. Submitted to Child Abuse and Neglect; under review.
Current Strategies-Opioids

• Mostly focused on changing prescriber behavior, harm reduction, and addiction treatment
Changing the conversation

- Compelling need to start discussing substance/opioid misuse prevention as child maltreatment prevention.
- This may be the best way to get ahead of the waterfall.
- Investments in evidence-based home visiting, early care and education.
- Look at tax policies and low income families.
- Look at work place policies and families with young children.
For More Information

• Websites:  www.nciom.org
  www.ncmedicaljournal.com

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