A Scoping Review of the Effectiveness of Comprehensive Sexual Education Programs for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Elizabeth K. Schmidt, Chris Brown, Amy Darragh
Speaker Name: Elizabeth K. Schmidt, Chris Brown, & Amy Darragh

1. Disclosure of Relevant Financial Relationships:
   • I have no financial relationships to disclose.

2. Disclosure of Off-Label and/or investigative uses:
   • I will not discuss off label use and/or investigational use in my presentation.
Background

• According to The World Health Organization, sexual health is defined as “a state of physical, emotional, mental and social wellbeing in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity,” (Sexual Health, n.d.).

• This indicates a right to safe sexual practices by all individuals, including those with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).
Sexual Health Education

• Sexual education is designed to help adolescents understand sexuality, sexual health, and how to make safe decisions currently and in the future (SIECUS, n.d.).
Methods

• A systematic literature search was conducted using PubMed and CINAHL.
• The following terms {Developmental OR Intellectual Disability AND sex} were searched.
• All levels of evidence, including qualitative reviews, were included.
• The six-stage methodological framework for scoping studies developed by Arksey and O’Malley was followed for the process of this paper\textsuperscript{9}. 
Identify the research question
• What sexual health education programs are available that are effective and comprehensive for individuals with I/DD?

Searching for relevant studies
• PubMed and CINAHL
• 1,667 citations were reviewed

Selecting Studies
• 1 reviewer
• 29 abstracts were reviewed
• 21 articles were ultimately included for full-text review

Charting the data, collating, summarizing
• 2 reviewers
• Data extraction compared programs to core components of the gold standard of comprehensive programs

Interpreting the results
• Quality of evidence
• Comparison to gold standard
Conclusions

- Overall the quality of the evidence available was limited by small sample sizes, threats to internal validity and convenience sample.
- The current limited evidence supports using:
  - Individualized education experiences
  - Verbal prompts
  - A reduction of abstract concepts.
Conclusions

• Of 18 programs assessed for effectiveness, only one includes all seven components of a comprehensive program.
  • The majority of programs focused on one component of comprehensive sexual health education.
    • Safety or abuse-prevention programs
    • Social skill or relationship-building programs
    • HIV/AIDS prevention
Results Cont.

- **Social Skill Curricula**:10-15:
  - All programs demonstrated positive improvements in social/sexual skills and social appropriateness.
  - Few demonstrated generalizability of these skills outside of the group.
  - Three of six of these programs focused solely on social skill and relationship building, whereas the other three included at least five of the seven components of comprehensive sexual health education.
Results Cont.

• HIV/AIDS Education\textsuperscript{16-18}:
  • Three quasi experimental studies demonstrated improvements in HIV/AIDS knowledge from pre- to posttest.
  • All three studies focused solely on STIs and HIV prevention and were not comprehensive in nature.
Results Cont.

- **Sexual Assault Prevention\(^27\):**
  - Improvements in sexual abuse prevention skills seen post-intervention, however effects were not maintained.
  - Not comprehensive.
Results Cont.

**Sexual Knowledge and Attitudes**$^{19-26}$:

- All studies demonstrated improvement in overall sexual knowledge and positive changes in attitudes.
- There were little improvements, however, in the areas of STI and HIV/AIDS.
- These programs demonstrated a range of four to seven components of comprehensive sexual health education.
Future Directions

- More emphasis on higher quality research studies
- Inclusion of individuals with moderate to severe intellectual disability.
- Further research to demonstrate improvements in knowledge of STI and HIV/AIDS
- Determine specific curricula that are superior
- Determine the dosage required
- Determine specific instruction methods that are most beneficial for individuals with I/DD
References

References Cont.


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