

Adolescent well-being during the pandemic, through the lens of a conceptual framework

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Background & Aim

Cycles of school closure and re-opening during the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the daily life and well-being of young people. In summer 2020, during the first global wave, the United Nations (UN) H6+ Technical Working Group on Adolescent Health and Well-Being published a conceptual framework, with 5 domains – 1 good health, 2 connectedness, 3 safety, 4 education and 5 agency.

The aim of this abstract, within a wider study of safe school re-opening, is to explore the framework's utility for exploring adolescent well-being during this period.

Methods

In 2021, online semi-structured interviews were conducted in six languages with education and health professionals. They explored the: (i) effect of the pandemic on schools, pupils and teachers; (ii) reorganisation of schools (iii) experience of implementing infection control measures in schools; (iv) intersectoral working; (v) important resources for keeping schools open.

Interviews were transcribed verbatim and translated into English where needed. Deductive qualitative analysis was undertaken for all 5 domains of the framework.

Results

Sixty-three interviews were included in the analysis (22 health and 40 education professionals from 28 countries). Participant perspectives related to all five well-being domains, but mainly Domain 1 (good health and nutrition), Domain 3 (safety and a supportive environment) and Domain 4 (learning, competence, education, skills and employability). Reflections of 2-connectedness and 5-agency were present, if not plentiful.

Discussion/Conclusion

The adolescent well-being framework provided a useful structure for deductive analysis, and data were identified within all domains. The emphasis on health, safety and learning reflects the context.