Are Family Conditions and Individual Factors an Obstacle for Aboriginal Students' Health?

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Background

➢ These patterns are important to understand for optimally timing interventions to reduce predisposing factors in adolescents' health

➢ The school nurses have the skills to profile their schools and target the health needs of school populations.

Aims

The purpose of this paper is threefold:

(1) to provide an overview of health problems across the junior high school,

(2) to describe the trends of health problems, and

(3) to examine the risk factors associated with campus health.

Methods

➢ A retrospective chart review was used. The data set was from the school-based health recording at the junior high school, which was highly relevant to the aboriginal students.

➢ The samples were 202 students from the school, who have completed three academic-years, among 7th - 9th grade.

Results
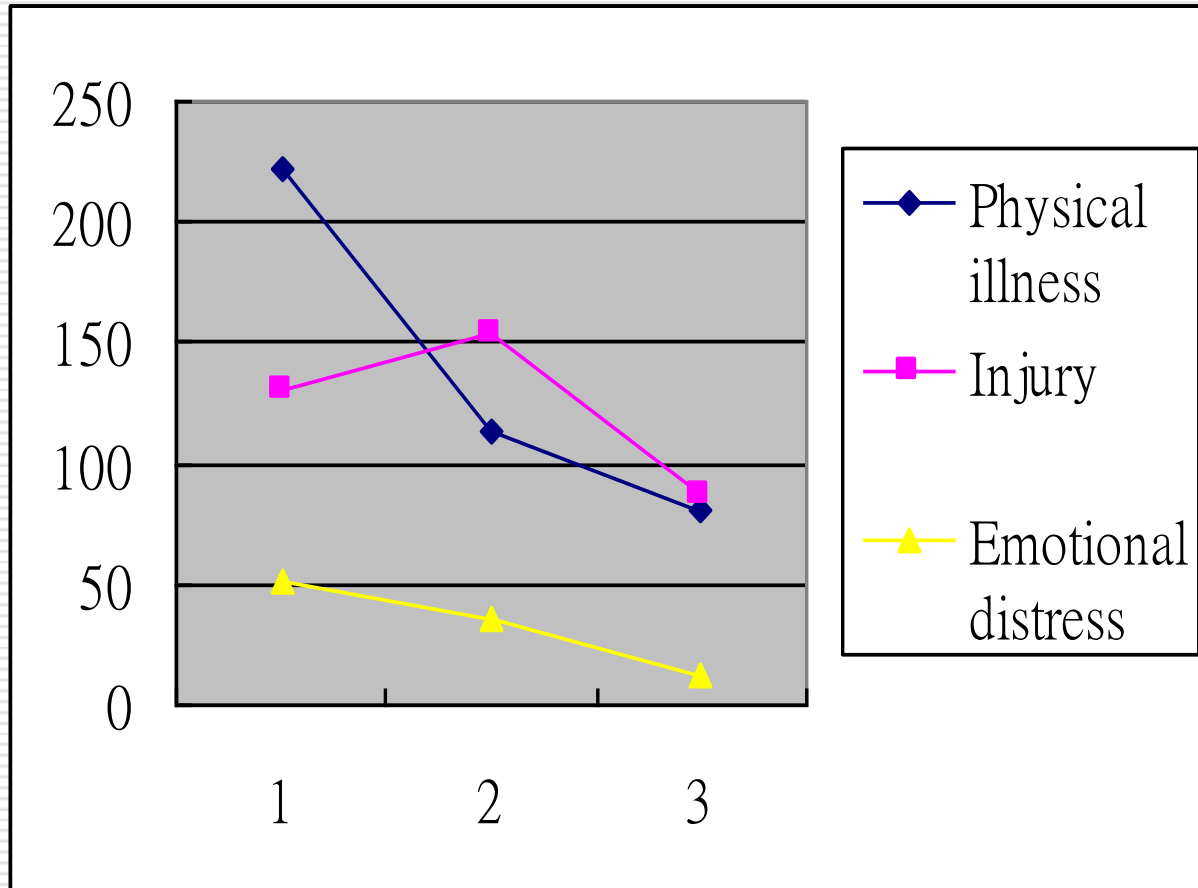
Students' Health issues in the grade span: by issue

Items	Single		Items	Combined	
	n	%		n	%
Physical illness	115	56.9	Not at all	45	22.3
Injury	127	62.9	Only physical illness (A)	22	10.9
Emotional distress	52	25.7	Only Injury (B)	28	13.9
			Only emotional distress (C)	4	2.0
			A+B	55	27.2
			A+C	4	2.0
			B+C	10	5.0
			A+B+C	34	16.8

Students' Health issues in the grade span: by grade

	Physical illness			Injury			Emotional distress	
	n	%		n	%		n	%
Not at all	87	43.1		75	37.1		150	74.3
Only in 7th grade (A)	34	16.8		26	12.9		19	9.4
Only in 8th grade (B)	19	9.4		28	13.9		17	8.4
Only in 9th grade (C)	17	8.4		14	6.9		7	3.5
A+B	12	5.9		17	8.4		6	3.0
A+C	9	4.5		10	5.0		1	0.5
B+C	11	5.4		13	6.4		2	1.0
A+B+C	13	6.4		19	9.4		0	0

Regression of Student Health Problems for 3 years (*N=202*)

Independent Variables	Total			Injury			Illness			Mental distress	
	B	SE		B	SE		B	SE		B	SE
Family financial difficulties (=1)	.88	1.00		1.24**	.41		-.30	.63		-.05	.18
Aboriginal (=1)	2.73**	.85		.96**	.34		1.64**	.54		.13	.15
Male (=1)	1.03	.80		.92**	.32		.06	.51		.04	.15
Living without parents (= 1)	1.91*	.92		85*	.37		.51	.58		.56**	.17
Number of disease diagnosed	-.03	.13		-.04	.05		-.01	.08		.02	.02
Constant	2.40**	.89		72	.36		1.54**	.56		.14	.16
R^2	.10			.17			.06			.08	
F value	3.82**			7.30***			2.19			2.98*	
d.f.	5, 196			5, 196			5, 196			5, 196	

***$p < .001$; **$p < .01$; *$p < .05$ (two-tailed tests). Unstandardized coefficients

Conclusion

➢ Aboriginal race is still the biggest significant factor for the illness and injury.

➢ Living without parents become the main factor for adolescents' injury and emotional distress.

➢ Once these factors are identified, researchers and prevention specialists can then assess which are the most amenable to intervention.