

EDUCATION AND PROMOTION OF ADOLESCENTS MENTAL HEALTH

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Mental health literacy allows individuals to recognize, prevent and manage their health appropriately, being not only knowledge, but a knowledge facing action for the benefit of himself and others.

Aim: To assess the mental health literacy of adolescents and young people in relation to depression, schizophrenia and alcohol abuse in the areas of recognition, intention of professional help-seeking and obstacles/barriers.

Methods: It was used a random cluster sample of 4938 adolescents and young, having been used QuALiSMental (Loureiro *et al.*, 2012) during the year 2012. The average age is 16.75 years (SD = 1.62), being respectively 43.3% males and 56.7% females.

Results: The recognition of disorders is reduced (27.23% in depression, 26.16% in schizophrenia and 45.27% in alcohol abuse). There is intention of professional and specialized help-seeking, with focus on psychiatrists, nurses and psychologists. As the biggest barriers to help-seeking fear and personal shame, non-recovery of symptoms and breach of confidentiality are referred.

Conclusions: The low mental health literacy is an indicator of the need for developing programs to promote health and prevent mental illness. Despite being valued the intention of help-seeking, fear of stigma and discrimination associated with these diseases is high. Nurses, psychologists and psychiatrists can play a relevant role in this regarding the role they occupy in the context of school health. Increase mental health literacy could reduce the delay between the first signs and symptoms and the professional help.

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