

Conference Presentations

Devries, K. M., Free, C., Saewyc, E. (July 2007). Identifying indigenous youth at increased risk of adolescent fatherhood: Results from a large, representative cross-sectional study. Paper presented at the Society of Academic Primary Care 36th Annual Scientific Meeting, Kensington, U.K.

Devries, K., & Saewyc, E. (May 2, 2006). Protective and risk factors related to condom use among Aboriginal youth in BC, Canada: A cross-sectional study. Paper presented at Embracing our Traditions, Values and Teachings: Native People of North America HIV/AIDS Conference, Anchorage, USA.

Devries, K., & Saewyc, E. (April 28, 2006). Reducing sexual risk among Aboriginal youth in BC. Presentation at the Challenges of Transition: Moving into Adulthood, Vancouver, BC.

MacKay, L., Cox, D., & Saewyc, E. (April 28, 2006). The role of positive assets in healthy youth development. Presentation at The Challenges of Transition: Moving into Adulthood, Vancouver, BC.

Northcott, M., Van Blyderveen, S., & Saewyc, E. (April 28, 2006). The impact of physical and sexual abuse on adolescents' school functioning. Presentation at the Challenges of Transition: Moving into Adulthood, Vancouver, BC.

Parkes, S., Saewyc, E., & Cox, D. (April 28, 2006). The relationships between body image and substance abuse in adolescents. Presentation at the Challenges of Transition: Moving into Adulthood, Vancouver, BC.

Van Blyderveen, S. MacKay, L., Cox, D., Moretti, M., Sleen, K., & Saewyc, E. (April 28, 2006). Peer victimization and school structure: School transitions and middle school. Presentation at the Challenges of Transition: Moving into Adulthood, Vancouver, BC.

Kanani, N., Van Blyderveen, S., & Laye, A. (2004). School transition, body satisfaction and eating disordered behaviour. In E. Saewyc (Chair), Applications of the AHS III: An Interactive Look at Youth Health. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the B.C. Consortium for Youth Health, Vancouver, BC.

Abstract: Adolescents are the population at greatest risk for eating disordered behaviours. As previous literature has focused largely on adolescent girls and women, the present study considered body satisfaction, weight management goals, and eating disordered behaviour for both adolescent boys and girls, ages 12 through 18. Findings demonstrated that girls were less satisfied with their bodies than boys, and that older girls were less satisfied with their bodies than younger girls. In regards to weight management goals, boys were more likely to be trying to gain weight while girls were more likely to be trying to lose weight. Further, boys and girls were equally likely to report purging behaviours when 12 years old, yet older girls were more likely to engage in purging behaviours than older boys. The present study also considered the relationship between disordered eating behaviours and each of body satisfaction, body mass index, and school transitions. Body satisfaction was associated with binge eating, such that youth with lower body satisfaction were more likely to binge than youth with higher levels of body satisfaction, for both boys and girls. Body satisfaction and purging were also related in that lower body satisfaction was associated with increased purging behaviour. For both genders higher body mass index was related to bingeing behaviours, while the relationship between purging and body mass index was inconsistent. Finally, school transitions were not related to disordered eating behaviours. In sum, various gender differences and similarities were found.

Logan, J., & Van Blyderveen, S. (2004). Body satisfaction and sexual activity in adolescence. In E. Saewyc (Chair), Applications of the AHS III: An Interactive Look at Youth Health. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the B.C. Consortium for Youth Health, Vancouver, BC.

Abstract: The link between self-esteem and adolescent sexual behaviours has received a great deal of discussion but little empirical attention. Of the limited research that has been conducted, results have proven conflicting and inconclusive. Whereas some studies have found self-esteem to be related to sexual behaviour other studies have not found them to be related. The present study considered age as a factor which may shed light on this discrepancy. The relationship between body satisfaction, a component of self

esteem, and the occurrence of particular sexual behaviours ("making out" and sexual intercourse), was considered for youth at each of ages 12 through 18. The present study found that early adolescent girls with lower body satisfaction were more likely to report engaging in sexual behaviours, but this relationship did not hold for females in later adolescence. In contrast, males in later adolescence with higher body satisfaction were more likely to report engaging in sexual behaviours. Possible interpretations of these findings and directions for future research are discussed.

McDiarmid, T., & van der Woerd, K. (2004). Risk factors for aggression in aboriginal adolescent girls. In E. Saewyc (Chair), Applications of the AHS III: An Interactive Look at Youth Health. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the B.C. Consortium for Youth Health, Vancouver, BC.

Abstract: Research has suggested that the risk of aggressive behavior is more acute during the adolescent stage. More recently, there has been an increase in discussion among mental health professionals with regard to the escalating rate of aggression among adolescent girls. The primary focus of this paper will be on the risk factors for aggression in Aboriginal adolescent girls. When assessing Aboriginal adolescent girls for risk of aggression it is important to consider mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation, as factors which may contribute to aggression. Historical factors such as loss of culture, low socioeconomic status and having a parent who attended residential school may also put Aboriginal adolescent girls at greater risk. Substance abuse in particular has been found to consistently correlate with aggressive tendencies. In addition, due to the higher rates of suicide, abuse, incarceration, and substance use in the Canadian Aboriginal population in general, Aboriginal adolescent girls may be at a significantly greater risk than the general adolescent population for mental health issues. Thus, it is important to consider the risk of aggression in Aboriginal girls because identification of this important issue can lead to prevention and treatment.

Van Blyderveen, S., Cox, D., Kanani, N., Saewyc, E. & Laye, A. (2004). School Transitions, Peer Victimization and Aggression. In E. Saewyc (Chair), Applications of the AHS III: An Interactive Look at Youth Health. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the B.C. Consortium for Youth Health, Vancouver, BC.

Abstract: Previous research has found that peer victimization, aggression, and positive attitudes towards aggression peak in early adolescence. Within a developmental framework, increases in peer victimization and greater acceptance of aggression in early adolescence may reflect a naturally occurring developmental shift in which youth tend to challenge adult norms. Such increases in peer victimization and aggression during early adolescence may also be related to transitioning from elementary to secondary school. In fact, a longitudinal study which compared rates of bullying and aggression before and after a school transition found that bullying and aggression increased after the transition. The researchers used dominance theory to explain this finding. This theory argues that aggression is a way in which dominance in social hierarchies is established and maintained. School transitions are a period in which social networks are disrupted and youth must therefore establish new hierarchies. However, this study did not control for grade level, and thus it is unclear if the differences they found were due to school transition or developmental changes. The present study considers these two frameworks examining both peer victimization and aggression in relation to school transitions. Unlike past research, the present study considers the relationship between school transitions and both peer victimization and aggression while controlling for grade level. Levels of peer victimization and aggression are compared between youth who are and are not in a transition year, but are in the same grade. The present study makes use of the Adolescent Health Survey - III and considers youth in grades seven and eight. Results support a developmental model of peer victimization and aggression. Youth in the same grade level who were and were not in a transition year reported similar rates of peer victimization and aggression.

van der Woerd, K., & Cox, D. (2004). The link between education and health for Aboriginal youth. In E. Saewyc (Chair), Applications of the AHS III: An Interactive Look at Youth Health. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the B.C. Consortium for Youth Health, Vancouver, BC.

Abstract: Aboriginal students continue to leave school at significantly higher rates than Non-Aboriginal students, and at younger ages (Ministry of Education, 2001). This presentation will first discuss health factors for youth who identified themselves as Aboriginal in the 1998 Adolescent Health Survey II (this data generated the report, Raven's Children). Subsequently, results from the Aboriginal Youth Health Survey (AYHS) will be discussed. The AYHS was a 127-item survey administered to 131 Aboriginal youth in B.C. The

purpose of this study was to determine how school and family connectedness are associated with delinquent and health promoting behaviors, and whether school attendance was associated with delinquency and health status for First Nations youth. It is expected that this data and future data from the Adolescent Health Surveys will continue to be used in an effort to inform community leaders, Ministries and other people who deal with Aboriginal youth health and educational issues.

van der Woerd, K.A., & Iarocci, G. (2002, May). School and Family Connectedness Associated with Positive Attitudes about Health and Education among Aboriginal Students in British Columbia. Paper presented at the 63rd Annual Canadian Psychological Association Convention, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Abstract: Aboriginal students leave school at significantly higher rates than Non-Aboriginal students, and at younger ages (Ministry of Education, 2000). Research evidence indicates that varieties of factors are consistently associated with positive development and continued attendance in school for youth, including good physical and emotional health. This poster will explore data from the Adolescent Health Survey II (AHS) designed to measure variables associated with continued attendance in school such as physical and emotional health, school and family connectedness, health compromising behaviors, and help-seeking behaviors exhibited by Aboriginal youth. The McCreary Centre Society administered the AHS in 1998 to students in Grades 7-12 including 1700 students who identified themselves as Aboriginal. Those Aboriginal youth who reported higher levels of connection to family and school were more likely to engage in health promoting behaviors and have higher post-secondary school expectations. Lower levels of connection to school and family were associated with skipping classes, earlier sexual debut, substance abuse, and higher levels of psychological distress among Aboriginal youth. Further research comparing Aboriginal youth in school to Aboriginal youth who have dropped out of school is needed to determine which risk and protective factors are associated with continued attendance in school.

Franz, N. S., & Poon, C. S. (June, 2000). Trends in AIDS-related risk behaviour in B.C. youth: A multicultural perspective. In D. Cox (Chair), *Issues in adolescent health*. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Psychological Association, Ottawa, ON.

Abstract: Data from the 1998 Adolescent Health Survey was used to investigate sexual behaviour among four ethnic groups: British (n=1252), Chinese (n=1876), Aboriginal (n=775), and East Indian (n=739). These groups were selected based on their size and relative representativeness of the BC population. Ethnic differences were observed in terms of whether youth were sexually active, at what age sexual activity was initiated, types of birth control used, pregnancy rates, number of sexual partners, rates of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), and perceived effectiveness of various STD prevention methods. Groups were more similar with respect to rates of condom use. A comparison with the 1992 Adolescent Health Survey data revealed that overall rates of condom use, STDs, and pregnancy have remained stable. Results were discussed in terms of the need for a multicultural approach to adolescent health care and sex education programming in schools and communities.

Samra-Grewal, J., & Sidhu, A. (2000, June). Ethnic differences in prevalence rates and predictors of disordered eating behaviors. In D. Cox (Chair), *Issues in adolescent health*. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Psychological Association, Ottawa, ON.

Abstract: Disordered eating behaviors have traditionally been thought to be underrepresented in non-European ethnic minority groups. Despite the recognition of the increasing prevalence of disordered eating behaviors among ethnic minorities, there is little research examining such behaviors among non-Caucasian groups. Limitations with existing research include ethnicity being poorly described and/or assessed; further, as the bulk of the existing research is U.S.-based, the predominantly studied minority groups have been blacks and Hispanics. Given that the racial composition in Canada differs markedly from that of the U.S., the larger minority groups in Canada remain relatively understudied. The purpose of this study was to examine the prevalence rates and correlates of eating disordered behaviors among British (N = 1417), Chinese (N = 197), and East Indian (N = 188) females aged 13 to 18 years. Results demonstrated significant differences across the ethnic groups in the frequency and nature of binge/purge behaviors, as well as in the prevalence rates and predictors of disordered eating behaviors. Implications of these differences were discussed.

Sidhu, A. & Samra-Grewal, J. (2000, June). Violence and weapon carrying among adolescents in school: Ethnic differences. In D. Cox (Chair), *Issues in adolescent health*. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Psychological Association, Ottawa, ON.

Abstract: School is one of the most common locations for victimization by violence among youth ages 12 to 19 and violence on school campuses often involves weapons. Research generally supports two theories for weapon carrying: 1) as a means of self-protection, in association with previous victimization and fears of crime; 2) as associated with other problem behaviours such as drug use and family disruption (Simon, Dent & Sussman; 1997). As most of the research conducted on weapon carrying and violence on school grounds has been conducted in the United States, the extent of the problem in Canadian schools is relatively unreported. Furthermore, the existing body of research has been conducted with ethnic groups in the United States with differences being found, both in prevalence rates and correlates, between Hispanics, White, and Black Americans. The racial composition in Canada differs markedly from that of the United States. The current study will thus compare prevalence rates and correlates of weapon carrying, fighting and victimization across East Indian, Chinese, and British (includes Irish and Scottish) adolescents.

van der Woerd, K.A., Tonkin, R.S., & Cox, D.N. (2000, June). The health of Aboriginal youth attending school in British Columbia. In D. Cox (Chair), *Issues in adolescent health*. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Psychological Association, Ottawa, ON.

Abstract: Aboriginal youth continue to leave school at a younger age than other students. According to the BC Ministry of Education, approximately 64% of Aboriginal students in the province do not complete Grade 12 within 5 years of beginning Grade 8, compared with 25% of all students. Analysis of the 1998 Adolescent Health Survey (AHS) data, indicates that in relation to mainstream students, Aboriginal students have similar levels of connection with school and family and similar expectations for pursuing post-secondary education. However, Aboriginals do not appear to experience the same level of emotional health as their non-Aboriginal peers. According to the survey results, 17 percent of Aboriginal students experienced racial discrimination, and appear more likely to engage in some risk behaviours, including smoking. These results raise questions about both health promoting and risk factors in the lives of Aboriginal youth, the answers to which will shed light on factors that enable some Aboriginal youth to develop resilience and stay in school, while others engage in risky behaviours and leave school at an early age.

Poster Presentations

Van Blyderveen, S., Cox, D., Saewyc, E., Moretti, M., Slaney, K., Kanani, N. (March 2006). School transitions and peer victimization. Poster presented at the 2006 Biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence, San Francisco, USA.

Northcott, M., VanBlyderveen, S., Obsuth, I., and Saewyc, E. M. (March 2006). The impact of physical and sexual abuse on adolescents' school functioning. Poster presented at the 2006 Biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence, San Francisco, USA.

Van Blyderveen, S., Cox, D., and Maraun, M. (April 7, 2005). Ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and their relation to peer victimization. Poster presentation: 2005 Biennial Meeting, Society for Research in Child Development, Atlanta, Georgia.

Blackman, R., & Tonkin, R. (2004, April). The Adolescent Health Survey in British Columbia, Canada: Results from the third wave. Poster presented at the 18th World Conference on Health Promotion and Health Education, Melbourne, Australia.

Viljoen, J. L., O'Neill, M. L, & Sidhu, A. (2003, July). Bullying behaviours in male and female young offenders: Prevalence, types, and association with psychosocial adjustment. Poster presented at the American Psychology-Law Society/European Association of Psychology and Law "2003 Psychology and Law International, Interdisciplinary Conference," Edinburgh, Scotland.

Abstract: Despite the surge of research on bullying, few studies have examined bullying in young offenders, particularly female young offenders. This study investigated the prevalence, types, and correlates of bullying behaviors in 193 male and 50 female incarcerated adolescents from 9 young offender facilities. Overall, 37% of participants identified themselves as bully-victims, 32% as pure bullies, 23% as not involved, and 8% as pure victims. In comparison to males, females were more likely to report being involved with bullying to

some capacity, particularly as pure victims, and being bullied by sexual touching and comments. Pure victims reported higher rates of psychological distress and suicidal behaviors than those youth not involved in bullying, and pure bullies were more likely to have been previously incarcerated and affiliated with a gang. Bully-victims reported the highest rates of previous abuse, peer victimization in the community, drug use, and suicide attempts while in custody. All groups, including pure victims, reported high rates of bullying others in the community. Treatment providers should recognize that offenders who are victims are often bullies as well, and be alert to broad mental health needs among victims and bully-victims. Given the prevalence and potential serious consequences of bullying, the development of anti-bullying policies appears to be an important step in recognizing and reducing bullying.

Van Blyderveen, S., Cox, D., and Maraun, M. (2003). Considering outcomes of peer victimization. Poster presentation: 64th Annual Convention, Canadian Psychological Association, Hamilton, Ontario.

Van Blyderveen, S., Cox, D., and Maraun, M. (2003). Peer victimization and family connectedness. Poster presentation: 2003 Biennial Meeting, Society for Research in Child Development, Tampa, Florida.

Van Blyderveen, S., Cox, D., and Maraun, M. (2002). Risk factors for peer victimization in British Columbia youth. Poster presentation: 63rd Annual Convention, Canadian Psychological Association, Vancouver, British Columbia.

van der Woerd, K.A., & Cox, D.N. (2002, March). *Dropping Out: The Risks Associated with Leaving School Early for Native Canadian Youth in British Columbia*. Poster presented at the American Psychology and Law Society Conference, Austin, Texas.

Abstract: Native Canadian youth continue to face special challenges during the transition to adulthood, including geographic isolation and poor economic conditions. This presentation will attempt to disentangle risk and protective factors associated with dropping out of school. Participants will include Native Canadian youth both in and out of school from two rural communities in B.C. The 111-item survey will focus on predictors for dropping out of school, health promoting or health compromising behaviors, and connection to school and family. It is hypothesized that compared to dropouts, youth in school will have a higher levels of connection to school and family, and lower levels of health compromising and delinquent behaviors. Data analysis will include comparisons between Native Canadian youth in and out of school on items like delinquency, substance use, and experience abuse. Regression analyses will be conducted to determine which predictors are associated with dropping out of school for Native Canadian youth. Data from this project will be used in an effort to inform community leaders, Ministries and other people who deal with Native Canadian high school drop outs. It is anticipated that these results will inform policy and be foundational to the development of education interventions for Native Canadian youth.

van der Woerd, K.A., & Iarocci, G. (2001, June). *The relationship of family and school connectedness to maladaptive behaviors among Native Canadians in British Columbia*. Poster presented at the Conference of the European Association of Psychology and Law, Portugal.

Abstract: Many Native Canadian youth experience difficulties during their transition through adolescence. In British Columbia (BC), one-third of the youth in government care, and two-fifths of incarcerated youth are Native Canadians. Furthermore, 64% of Native Canadian youth in BC do not complete high school within six years of beginning grade eight. Research evidence indicates that youth who have a strong connection to family and continued attendance in school are less likely to engage in maladaptive or self-destructive behaviors. Family connectedness reflects the degree of emotional distance or closeness between family members, and the perception that family members can be a resource in times of difficulty. This poster will present data from the 1998 BC Adolescent Health Survey II (AHS). Compared to Non-Native students, Native Canadian students are more likely to be involved in behaviors such as substance use, suicide attempts, and fighting. Family connectedness may be a protective factor as those Native Canadian youth who reported high levels of family connectedness were less likely to be involved in a physical fight in the previous year, less likely to abuse drugs or alcohol, and more likely to have higher educational aspirations, as compared to those who reported low connectedness. Factors such as engagement in risky behaviors, substance use, and emotional distress have been determined to contribute to, and result from, early departure from school. Further research comparing Native Canadian youth in school to Native Canadian youth who have dropped out of school is needed to determine which risk and protective factors are associated with continued attendance in school.

van der Woerd, K.A., & Cox, D.N. (2001, June). *Assessing academic competence and the well-being of Aboriginal students in B.C.* Poster presented at the 8th Biennial Conference of the Society for Community Research and Action, American Psychological Association, Atlanta.

Abstract: Research evidence indicates that a variety of factors are consistently associated with positive development for youth, including good physical health, support from family and friends, and a sense of social and academic competence. Analysis of the 1998 British Columbia Adolescent Health Survey (AHS) data indicates that compared to Non-Aboriginal students, Aboriginal students have similar levels of self-rated physical health, connection with school and family, involvement in volunteer and extra-curricular activities, and similar expectations for pursuing post-secondary education. Furthermore, 80% of Aboriginal students consider themselves "average" or "above average" in school performance. These findings are paradoxical given that Aboriginal youth continue to leave school at a younger age than Non-Aboriginal students, and at significantly greater percentages. Although Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal students are similar over many variables, their involvement in behaviors such as substance use, suicidal tendencies, and fighting, are consistently higher than Non-Aboriginal students. Factors such as engagement in risky behaviors, substance use, and emotional distress have been determined to contribute to, and result from, early departure from school. Further research comparing Aboriginal youth in school to Aboriginal youth who have dropped out of school is needed to determine which risk and protective factors are associated with continued attendance in school.

van der Woerd, K.A., & Iarocci, G. (2001, November). *Education and Well-being of Native Canadian Students in British Columbia: The Role of School and Family Connectedness, and Help-seeking Behavior.* Poster presented at the Third Conference on Minority Issues in Prevention, Tempe, Arizona.

Abstract: Aboriginal students leave school at significantly higher rates than Non-Aboriginal students, and at younger ages (Ministry of Education, 2000). Research evidence indicates that varieties of factors are consistently associated with positive development and continued attendance in school for youth, including good physical and emotional health. This poster will explore data from the Adolescent Health Survey II (AHS) designed to measure variables associated with continued attendance in school such as physical and emotional health, school and family connectedness, health compromising behaviors, and help-seeking behaviors exhibited by Aboriginal youth. The McCreary Centre Society administered the AHS in 1998 to students in Grades 7-12 including 1700 students who identified themselves as Aboriginal. Those Aboriginal youth who reported higher levels of connection to family and school were more likely to engage in health promoting behaviors and have higher post-secondary school expectations. Lower levels of connection to school and family were associated with skipping classes, earlier sexual debut, substance abuse, and higher levels of psychological distress among Aboriginal youth. Further research comparing Aboriginal youth in school to Aboriginal youth who have dropped out of school is needed to determine which risk and protective factors are associated with continued attendance in school.

Samra-Grewal, J., & Sidhu, A. (2000, August). *Trends in disordered eating patterns across ethnically diverse female adolescents.* Poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.

Abstract: Despite the importance of examining the impact of ethnicity upon the presentation of disordered eating behaviours, relatively little research exists on this topic. In particular, there is a dearth of literature on disordered eating symptomatology among Chinese and East Indian ethnic groups. There are limitations with the research that does exist (e.g., undefined ethnic categories). This study constitutes a preliminary investigation of disordered eating behaviours among East Indian and Chinese female adolescents. To address limitations in the existing research, a comparison group of British females is included.

Samra-Grewal, J., & Sidhu, A. (2000, March). *Sexual harassment experiences among adolescent males and females: Prevalence rates and correlates.* Poster presented at the American Psychology-Law Society Biennial Conference, New Orleans, LA.

Samra-Grewal, J., & Sidhu, A. (2000, March). *Physical and sexual victimization experiences among adolescent males and females: Ethnic differences.* Poster presented at the American Psychology-Law Society Biennial Conference, New Orleans, LA.

Sidhu, A., & Samra-Grewal, J. (2000, March). *Youth in school: The extent and nature of violence, weapon*

carrying, and victimization by peers. Poster presented at the American Psychology-Law Society Biennial Conference, New Orleans, LA.

Turner, R.A., Roesch, R. Krane, W.R., Cox, D.N., & Tonkin, R. S. (1999, March). *Risk and protective factors for propensity for suicide among Canadian First Nations adolescents.* Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Adolescent Medicine in Los Angeles.

Franz, N., Poon, C., Cox, D., Tonkin, R. (1998, August). *Predictors of adolescent sexual activity: A multicultural perspective.* Poster presented at the 106th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association in San Francisco, California.

Poon, C., Franz, N., Cox, D., & Tonkin, R. (1997, August). *AIDS-Related risk behaviour in Youth: Is Ethnicity a Factor?* Poster presented at the 105th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association at Chicago, Illinois.