

The youth mental health crisis in India

Vikram Patel

The Pershing Square Professor of Global Health
Wellcome Trust Principal Research Fellow



13th Professor PNM Bhat Memorial Lecture



Why young people matter

Young adults (“Millennials” and “Generation Z”), are the world’s demographic dividend, the engine of every society across history

They are the vanguard of social movements, from preserving our climate to combating extremist ideologies, essential for a progressive, sustainable planet

Their health and well-being is of critical importance to the present and the future

Four fem over alle 1 dead

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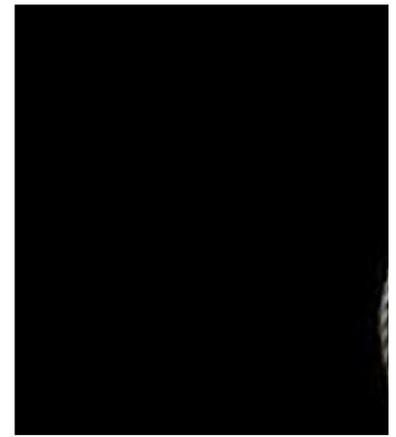
Home > India > India-Others > Kota rocked by 5 student suicides in 1 month

Kota rocked by 5 suicides in 1 month

Over the past one month, five suicides have taken place in Kota when an 18-year-old boy from Gopalganj in Bihar committed suicide.

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Written by Sweta Dutta | Jaipur | Updated: June 30, 2015 10:42 am



The last case, reported on Saturday, was that of an 18-year-old...

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OPINION » COMMENT

Updated: January 21, 2016 10:42 am

The claustrophobia of Kota

Ocean-facing IITs are not the answer

MANASH BHANDARI



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January 21, 2016

Home > India > India-News-India > Tamil Nadu: Three suicides in 10 days at a medical college

Tamil Nadu: Three suicides in 10 days at a medical college

Suicides: Villupuram range DIG Anisa Husain started a probe.



Home > Cities > Delhi > 16-yr-old state level swimmer found hanging

16-yr-old state level swimmer found hanging

Police said they did not find any suicide note at the spot.

Like 531 Share 214 Tweet 2

By: Express News Service | Ghaziabad | Updated: January 27, 2016 12:54 am



Saira Sirohi had won three gold medals at the CBSE National Championship last year. Gajendra Yadav

The common thread

Young, often highly educated and talented, Indians from all corners of the country who have lost hope

The scale of the crisis

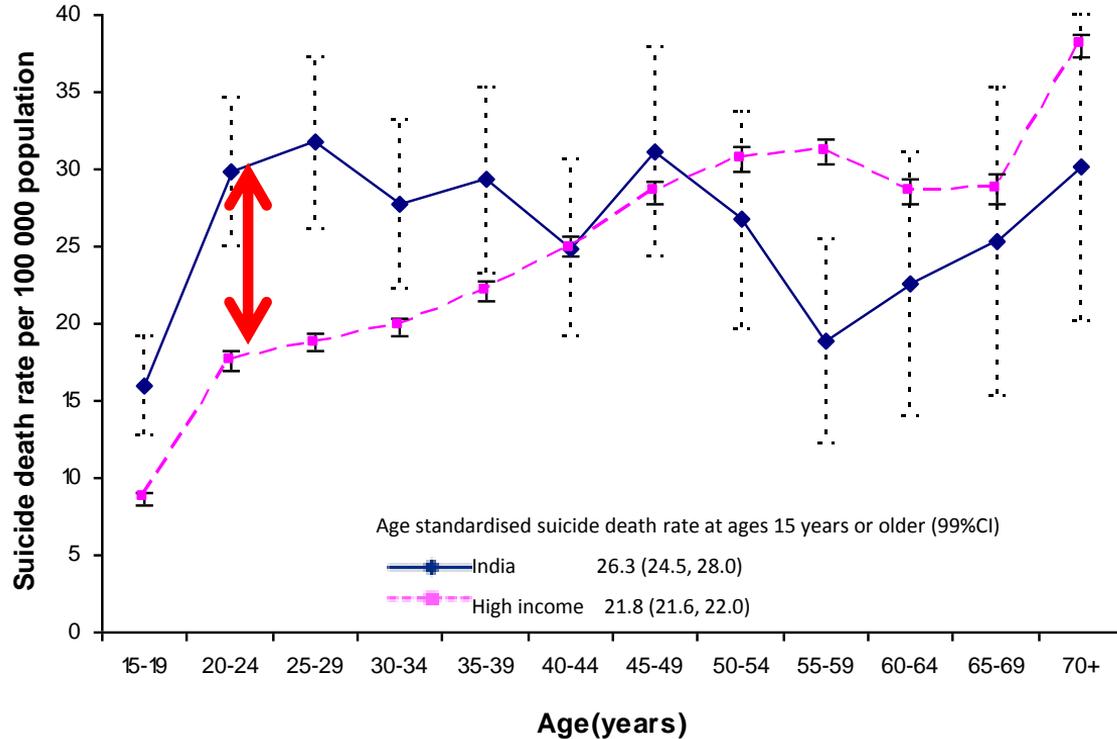
How many die each year?

Based on NCRB (2014) data, 60,000 youth deaths

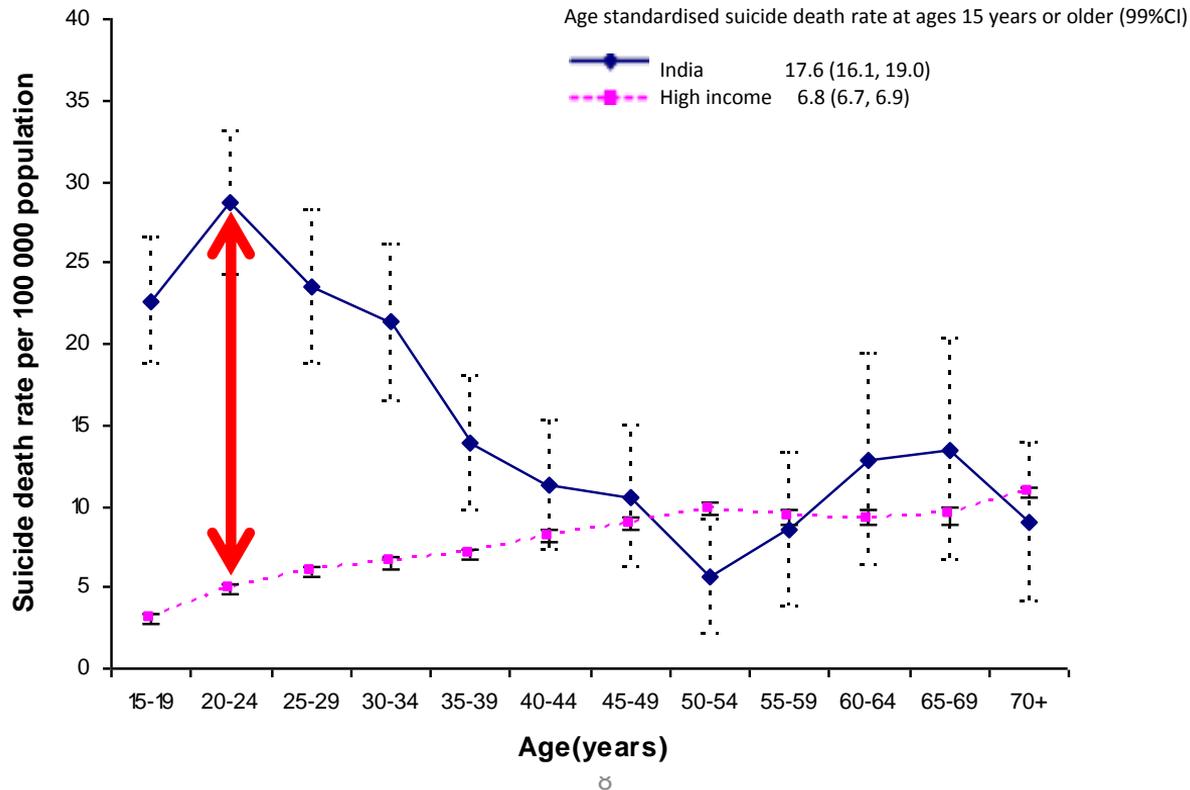
Million Death Study (2012) estimates this figure under-estimates true suicide numbers by up to a third: thus, actual numbers may even approach 1 lakh deaths a year

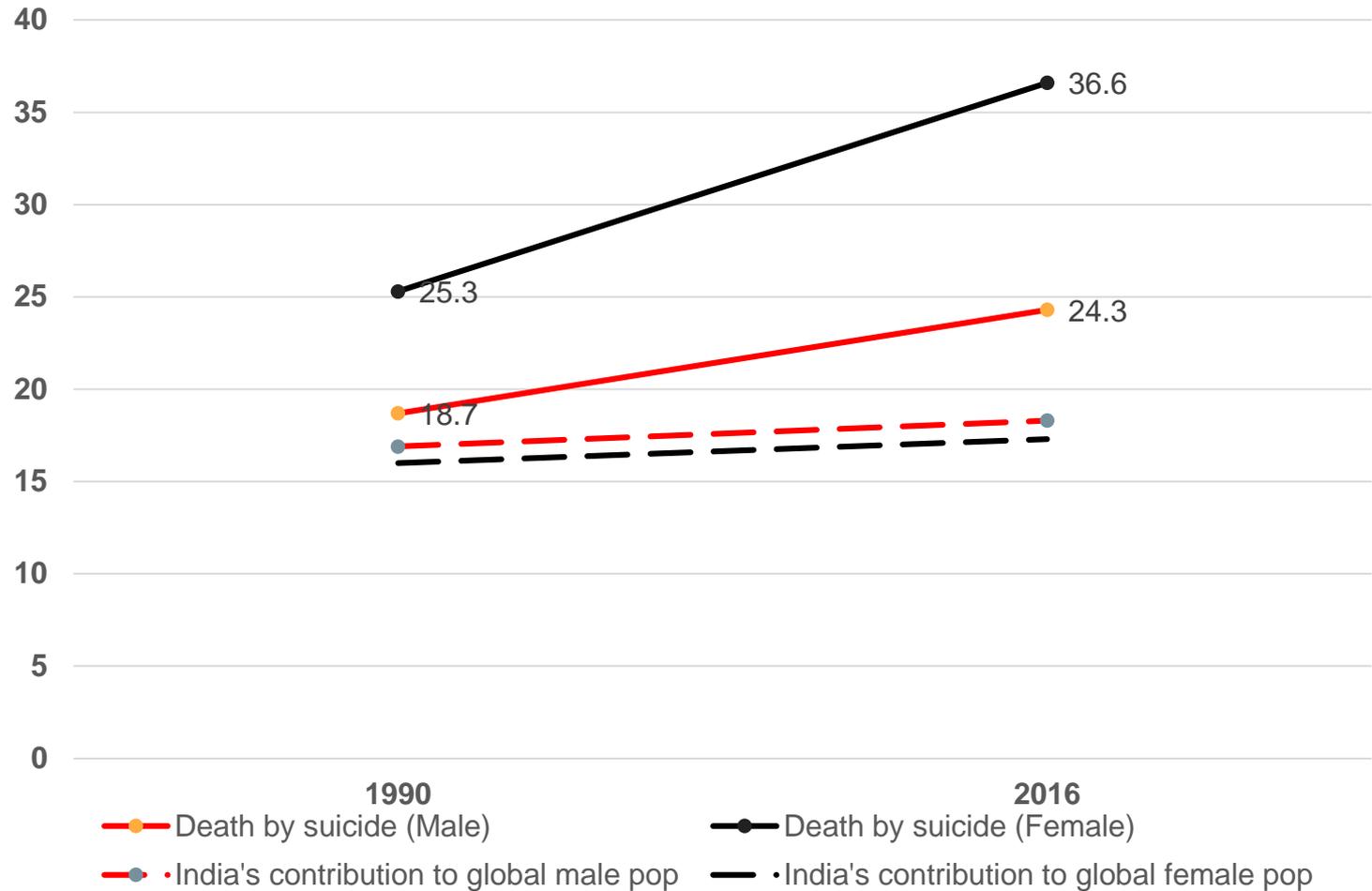
Patel et al, Lancet 2012

Age specific suicide death rates in India and in high-income countries - Men

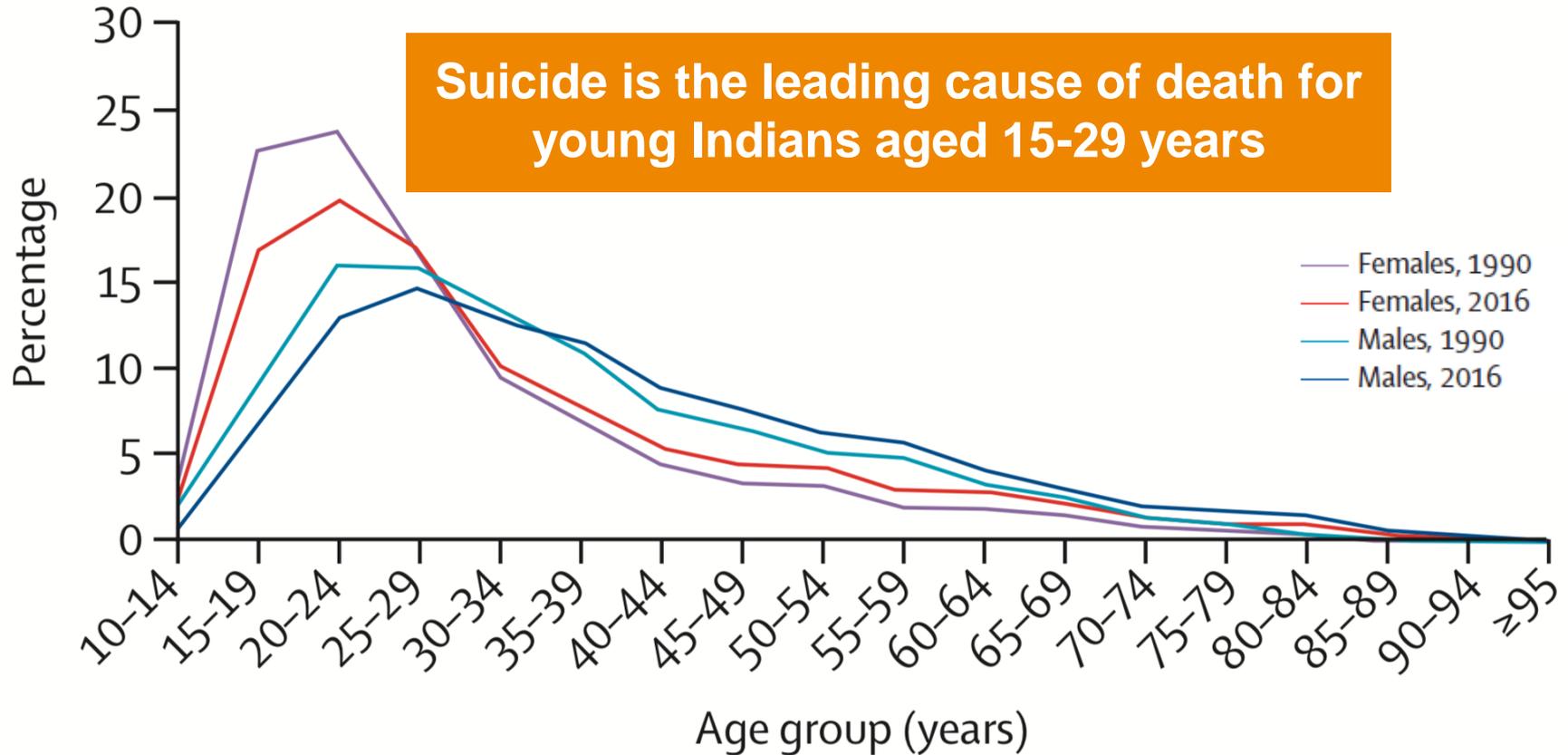


Age specific suicide death rates in India and in high-income countries - Women

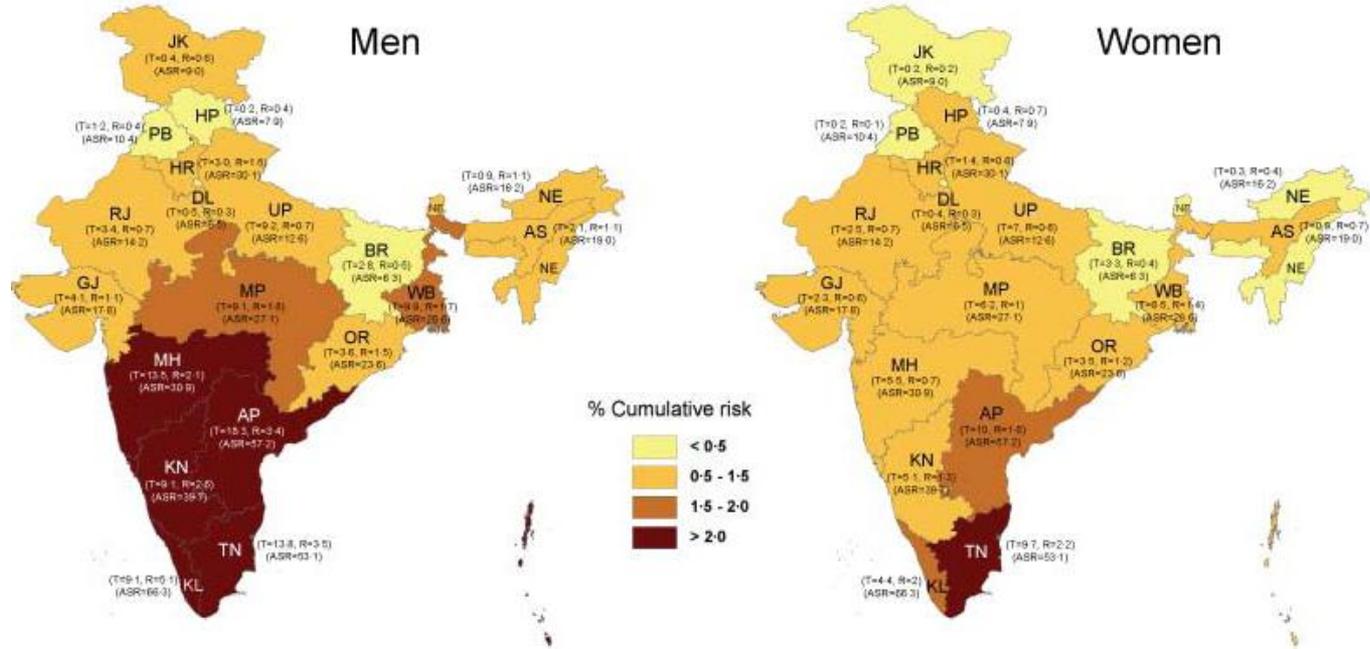




B Percentage of total suicide deaths



State variations



10 Leading Causes of Death by Age, United States 2018

		Age Groups						
		10-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Ranking	1	Unintentional injury (692)	Unintentional injury (12,044)	Unintentional injury (26,614)	Unintentional injury (22,667)	Malignant Neoplasms (37,301)	Malignant Neoplasms (113,947)	Heart Disease (526,509)
	2	➔ Suicide (596)	➔ Suicide (6,211)	➔ Suicide (8,020)	Malignant Neoplasms (10,640)	Heart Disease (32,220)	Heart Disease (81,042)	Malignant Neoplasms (431,102)
	3	Malignant Neoplasms (450)	Homicide (4,607)	Homicide (5,234)	Heart Disease (10,532)	Unintentional Injury (23,056)	Unintentional Injury (23,693)	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease (135,560)
	4	Congenital Anomalies (172)	Malignant Neoplasms (1,371)	Malignant Neoplasms (3,684)	➔ Suicide (7,521)	➔ Suicide (8,345)	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease (18,804)	Cerebrovascular (127,244)
	5	Homicide (168)	Heart Disease (905)	Heart Disease (3,561)	Homicide (3,304)	Liver Disease (8,157)	Diabetes Mellitus (14,941)	Alzheimer's Disease (120,658)
	6	Heart Disease (101)	Congenital Anomalies (354)	Liver Disease (1,008)	Liver Disease (3,108)	Diabetes Mellitus (6,414)	Liver Disease (13,945)	Diabetes Mellitus (60,182)
	7	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease (64)	Diabetes Mellitus (246)	Diabetes Mellitus (837)	Diabetes Mellitus (2,282)	Cerebrovascular (5,128)	Cerebrovascular (12,789)	Unintentional Injury (57,213)
	8	Cerebrovascular (54)	Influenza & Pneumonia (200)	Cerebrovascular (567)	Cerebrovascular (1,704)	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease (3,807)	➔ Suicide (8,540)	Influenza & Pneumonia (48,888)
	9	Influenza & Pneumonia (51)	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease (165)	HIV (482)	Influenza & Pneumonia (956)	Septicemia (2,390)	Septicemia (5,956)	Nephritis (42,232)
	10	Benign Neoplasms (30)	Complicated Pregnancy (151)	Influenza & Pneumonia (457)	Septicemia (829)	Influenza & Pneumonia (2,339)	Influenza & Pneumonia (5,858)	Parkinson's Disease (32,988)

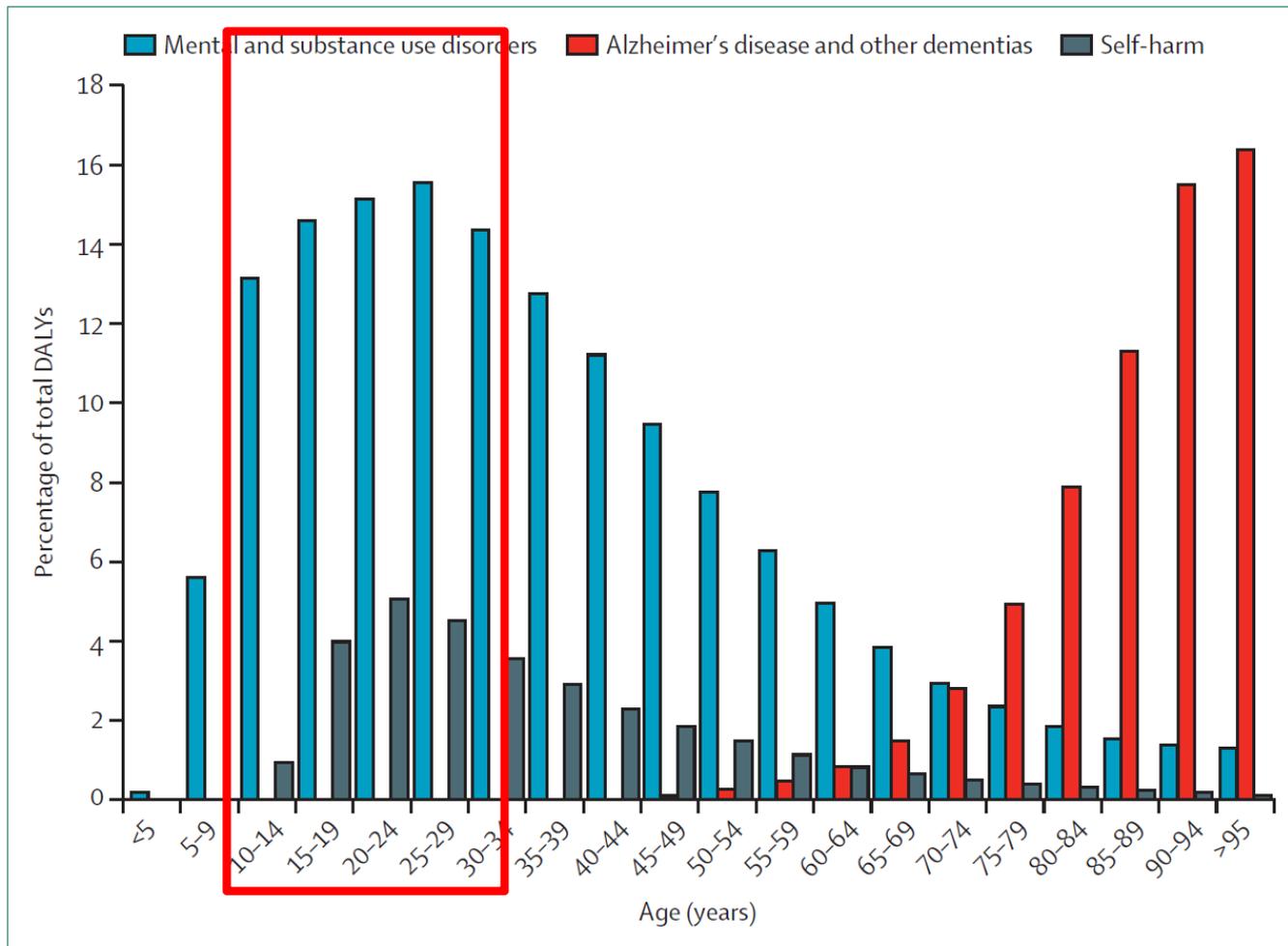
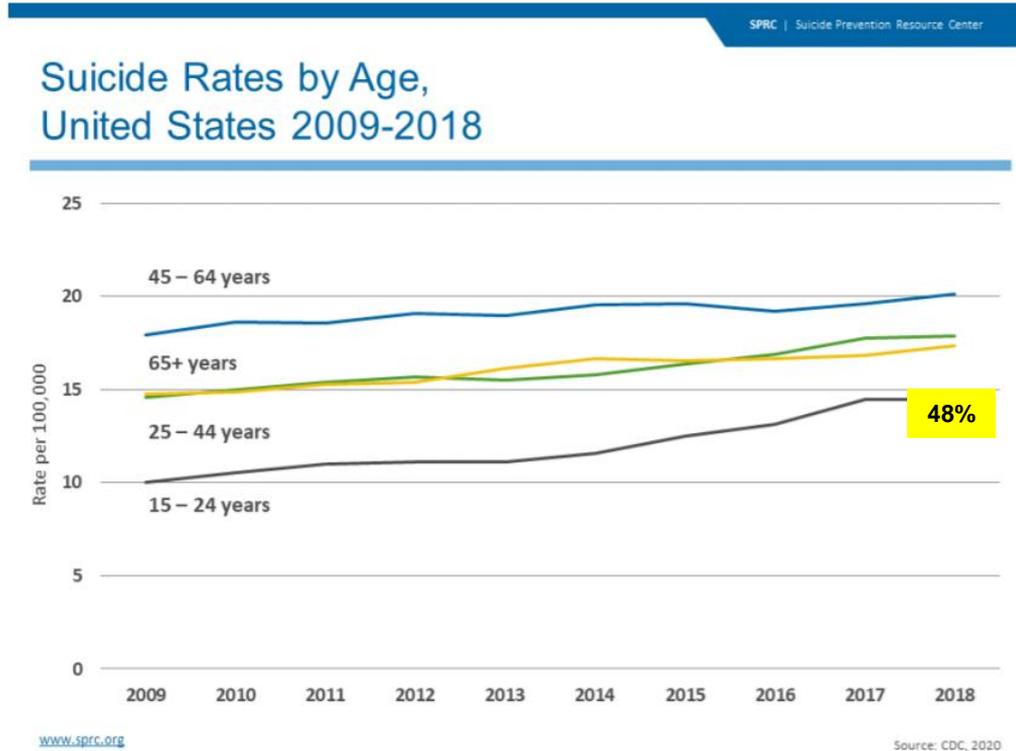


Figure 3: The global burden of mental and substance use disorders, Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, and suicide (self-harm) in DALYs across the life course

And it's getting worse in recent years



Suicide Prevention Resource
Center

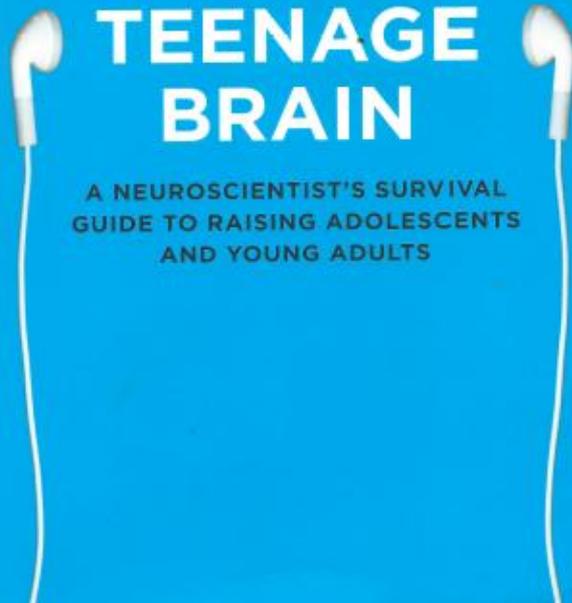
<https://www.sprc.org/scope/age>

Understanding the problem

DR FRANCES E. JENSEN
WITH AMY ELLIS NUTT

THE
**TEENAGE
BRAIN**

A NEUROSCIENTIST'S SURVIVAL
GUIDE TO RAISING ADOLESCENTS
AND YOUNG ADULTS

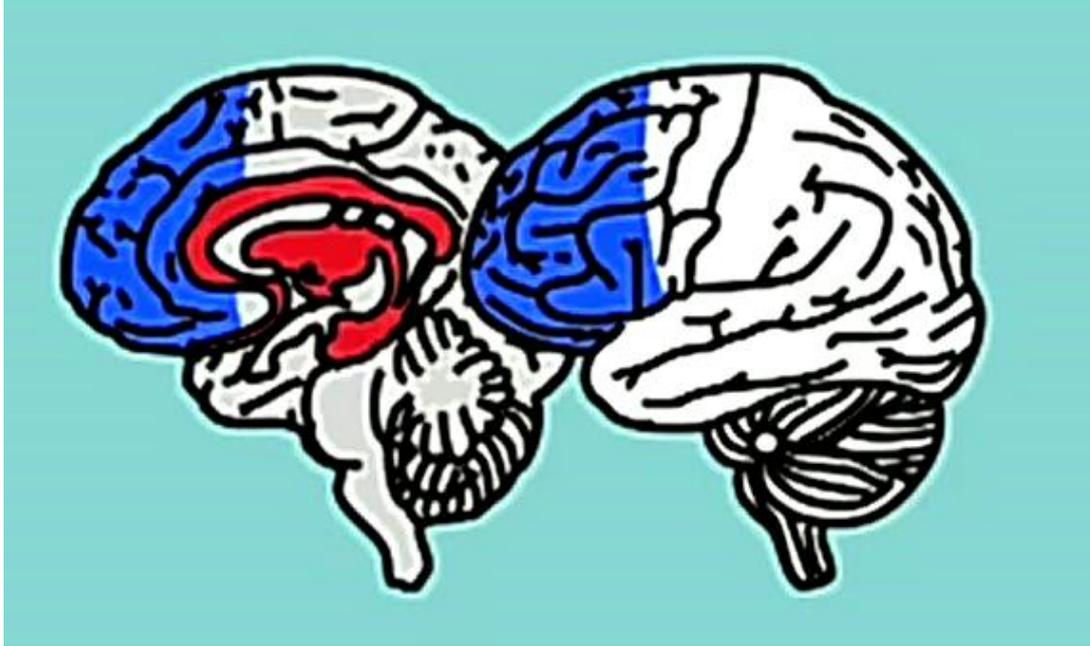


The limbic system=excitement/thrill



Hypersensitive to the thrill of risk and rewards

Prefrontal lobes =the brakes



Still developing and immature

Source: TED talks

What does this mean?

Youth are biologically and evolutionary 'primed' to take risks and behave impulsively

These offer major advantages (e.g. higher rates of learning and adaptability for later life) on the one hand, but presents unique vulnerabilities when they collide with social change and adversity

Social change and adversity

Adverse childhood experiences

Violence

Substance use

Discrimination

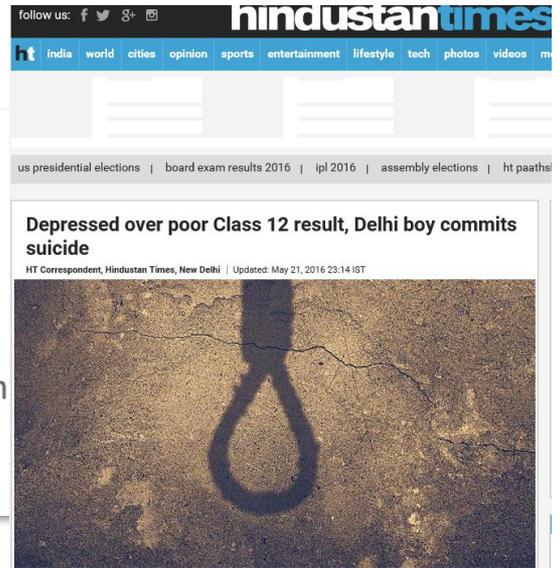
Peer influences and comparisons on social media

Growing gap between aspirations regarding sexuality and occupation, and social norms and expectations

CASTE

The Closed Doors of Caste in India

Payal Tadvi's suicide underlines Ambedkar's statement on the nature of the caste system closed the door: others found it closed against them."



CNN

Health » Food | Fitness | Wellness | Parenting | Live Longer

19 Indian students kill themselves over controversial examination results

By Swati Gupta, CNN

Updated 2118 GMT (0518 HKT) April 30, 2019



Home > India > India-News-India > Tamil Nadu: Three suicides over fees but no rooms, teachers in medical college

Tamil Nadu: Three suicides over fees but no rooms, teachers in medical college

Suicides: Villupuram range DIG Anisa Husain said a team headed by the district SP had started a probe.



How a Hindu-Muslim love story that started in Agra school ended in flames

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Written by Naveed Iqbal | Agra | Published: May 19, 2016 4:39 am



Sheelam Kumari's family in Agra, Wednesday. (Express Photo: Tashi Tobgyal)

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Got The Indian Ex

Hindu boy, Muslim girl hang to death in UP village

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE LUCKNOW, APRIL 2 2017

TWO MINORS, a 16-year-old Hindu boy and a 15-year-old Muslim girl, from the same village were found hanging from a tree in Sikrara police station area of UP's Jaunpur district on Sunday morning. Police suspect that the two were in a relationship and committed suicide thinking their families would not accept it.

The boy, a Class XI student, and the girl, a ninth grader, lived in the same locality of Dudauli village. They eloped about six months ago but were traced by the families

and brought back, said police.

Sikrara station officer Arvind Kumar Pandey said it appeared that the two left their homes late on Saturday night but the family members did not notice their absence till their bodies were found hanging from a tree in the village's burial ground.

"Prima facie it appears to be a case of suicide. The bodies have been sent for post-mortem," said Pandey. He said police did not find any suicide note.

"The families are not saying anything about the relationship but that (relationship) appears to be the reason behind the incident," said Pandey.

Faced with parents' opposition, lovers allegedly end life

Press Trust of India | Mumbai
Last Updated at June 6, 2018 21:10 IST

The COVID world: thrown under the bus?

Indicators of Anxiety or Depression Based on Reported Frequency of Symptoms During Last 7 Days

Select Indicator

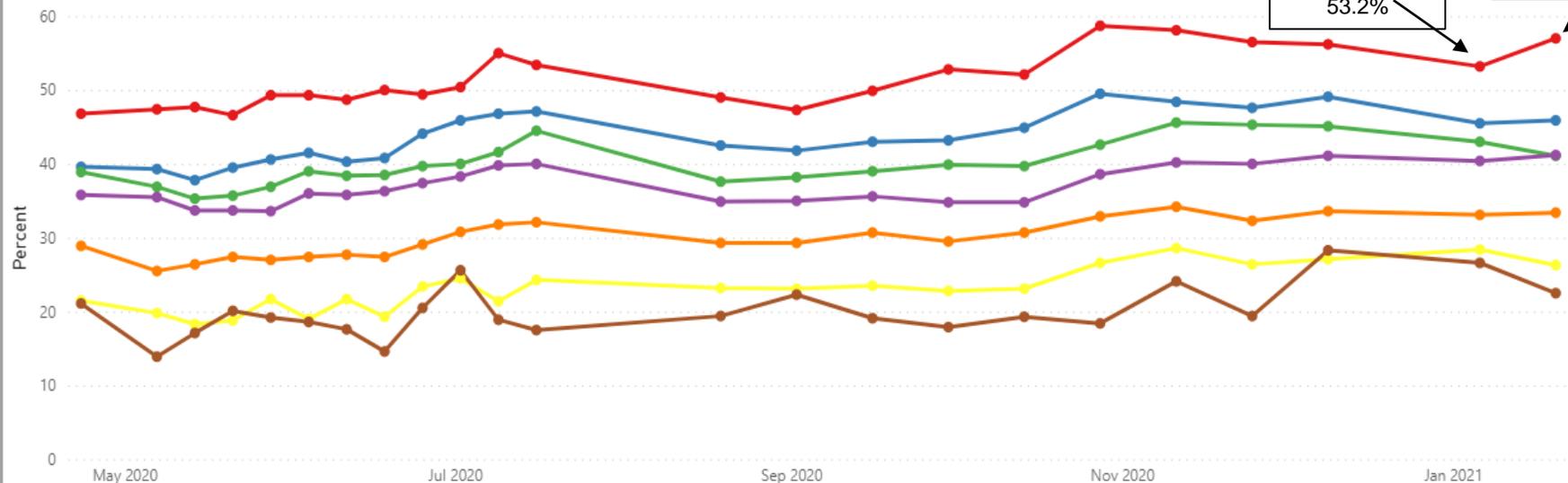
Symptoms of Anxiety Disorder or Depressive Disorder

Select Group

By Age

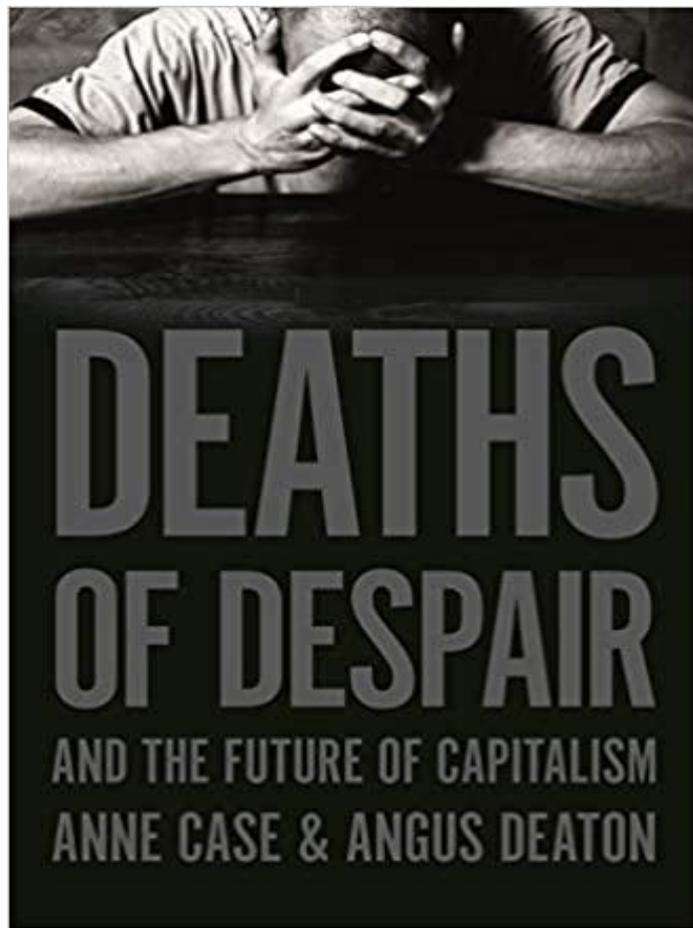
Symptoms of Anxiety Disorder or Depressive Disorder

Subgroup ● 18 - 29 years ● 30 - 39 years ● 40 - 49 years ● 50 - 59 years ● 60 - 69 years ● 70 - 79 years ● 80 years and above

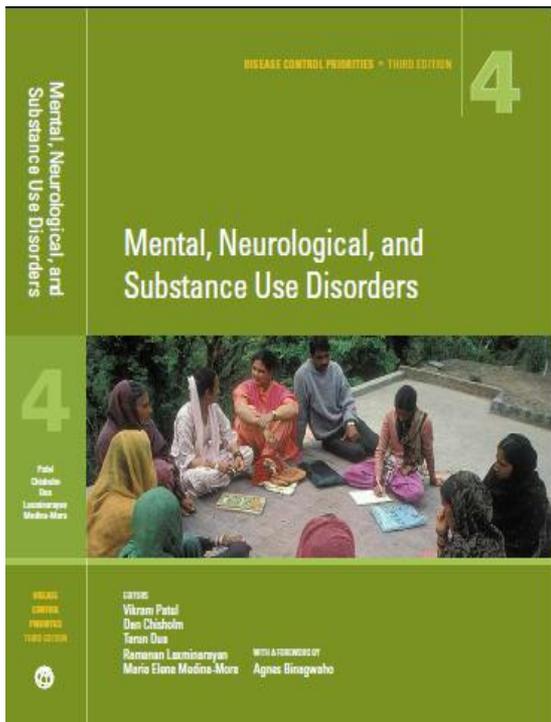


NOTE: All estimates shown meet the NCHS standards of reliability. See Technical Notes below for more information about the content and design of the survey.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey, 2020-2021



The way forwards



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THE LANCET

Our future: a Lancet commission on adolescent health and wellbeing

George C Patton, Susan M Sawyer, John S Santelli, David R Bass, Elena AFJ, Nicholas B Allen, Monika Arora, Peter Azorinoff, Wendy Boldrin, Christopher Bant, Brack K Edwards, Elissa Kennedy, Japaneeta Mahan, Tony McGovern, Allison Mokdad, Vikram Patel, Suzanne Peters, Nicola Poulton, Kikako Tawo, Jane Waldfogel, Dakshina Wolmermarino, Carmen Barros, Zulfiqar Bhutta, Adesogan O Adesun, Amesh M Mathis, Judith Diem, Jing Fang, Jane Ferguson, Frederik Svanemark, Russell M Viner

Executive summary

Unprecedented global forces are shaping the health and wellbeing of the largest generation of 10 to 24-year olds in human history. Population mobility, global communications, economic development, and the sustainability of ecosystems are setting the future course for this generation and, in turn, humankind.^{1,2} At the same time, we have come to new understandings of adolescence as a critical phase in life for achieving human potential. Adolescence is characterised by dynamic brain development in which the interaction with the social environment shapes the capabilities an individual takes forward into adult life.³ During adolescence, an individual acquires the physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and economic resources that are the foundation for later life health and wellbeing. These same resources define trajectories into the next generation. Investments in adolescents health and wellbeing bring benefits today, for decades to come, and for the next generation.

Better childhood health and nutrition, overtures to education, delay in family formation, and new technologies offer the possibility of this being the healthiest generation of adolescents ever. But these are also the ages when new and different health problems related to the onset of sexual activity, emotional control, and behaviour typically emerge. Global trends include those promoting unhealthy lifestyles and commodities, the crisis of youth unemployment, less family stability, environmental degradation, armed conflict, and mass migration, all of which pose major threats to adolescent health and wellbeing.

Adolescents and young adults have until recently been overlooked in global health and social policy, one reason why they have had fewer health gains with economic development than other age groups. The UN

Secretary-General's Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health initiated, in September, 2015, presents an outstanding opportunity for investments in adolescent health and wellbeing. However, because of limits to resources and technical capacities at both the national and the global level, effective response has many challenges. The question of where to make the most effective investments is now pressing for the international development community. This Commission outlines the opportunities and challenges for investments at both country and global levels (panel 1).

Adolescent health profiles differ greatly between countries and within nation states. These differences usually reflect a country's progress through an epidemiological transition in which reductions in mortality and fertility shift both population structures and predominant patterns of disease. Just over half of adolescents grow up in multi-burden countries, characterised by high levels of all types of adolescent health problems, including diseases of poverty (HIV and other infectious diseases, undernutrition, and poor sexual and reproductive health), injury and violence, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs). These countries continue to have high adolescent fertility and high unmet need for contraception, particularly in unmarried, sexually active adolescents. For these countries, addressing the diseases of poverty is a priority, at the same time as putting in place strategies to avert sharp rises in injury, mental disorders, and NCD risks. One in eight adolescents grow up in injury excess countries, characterised by high persisting levels of unintentional injury or violence and high adolescent birth rates, and have generally made little progress in reducing these problems in recent decades. For this group of countries there is a need to redouble efforts to reduce injury,

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Department of Paediatrics
(G C Patton MB, SM Surgeon MB),
Fletcher Medical School of
Population and Global Health
(S M Sawyer PhD, BA Family PhD),
Melbourne School of
Psychological Sciences
(J S Santelli PhD, Australia India
Centre of Mental Health PhD),
University of Melbourne
(Mokdad MB, USC Australia,
Centre for Adolescent Health,
Rig of Children's Hospital,
Public Health Melbourne, VIC,
Australia) (C Peters, MB
Surgeon (Paediatrics),
Marschall Children Research
Institute (J B Allen),
Melbourne School of Public
Health (J Bant MB, F
Masters PhD), School of Social
Work (A Bhutta PhD),
University of Oregon, Eugene,
OR, USA (D B Arora), World
Health Organization, Geneva,
Switzerland (D R Bass PhD),
London School of Hygiene &
Tropical Medicine, London, UK
(D Bass, F Paed PhD),
(J Diem PhD), Department
of Health Protection and
Community Health, American
University of Beirut, Beirut,
Lebanon (A E Kennedy), Public
Health Foundation of India,
New Delhi, India (R Viner PhD),
Yonsei Institute of Healthcare
(C Santelli PhD), Institute of
Child Health (J F Viner PhD),

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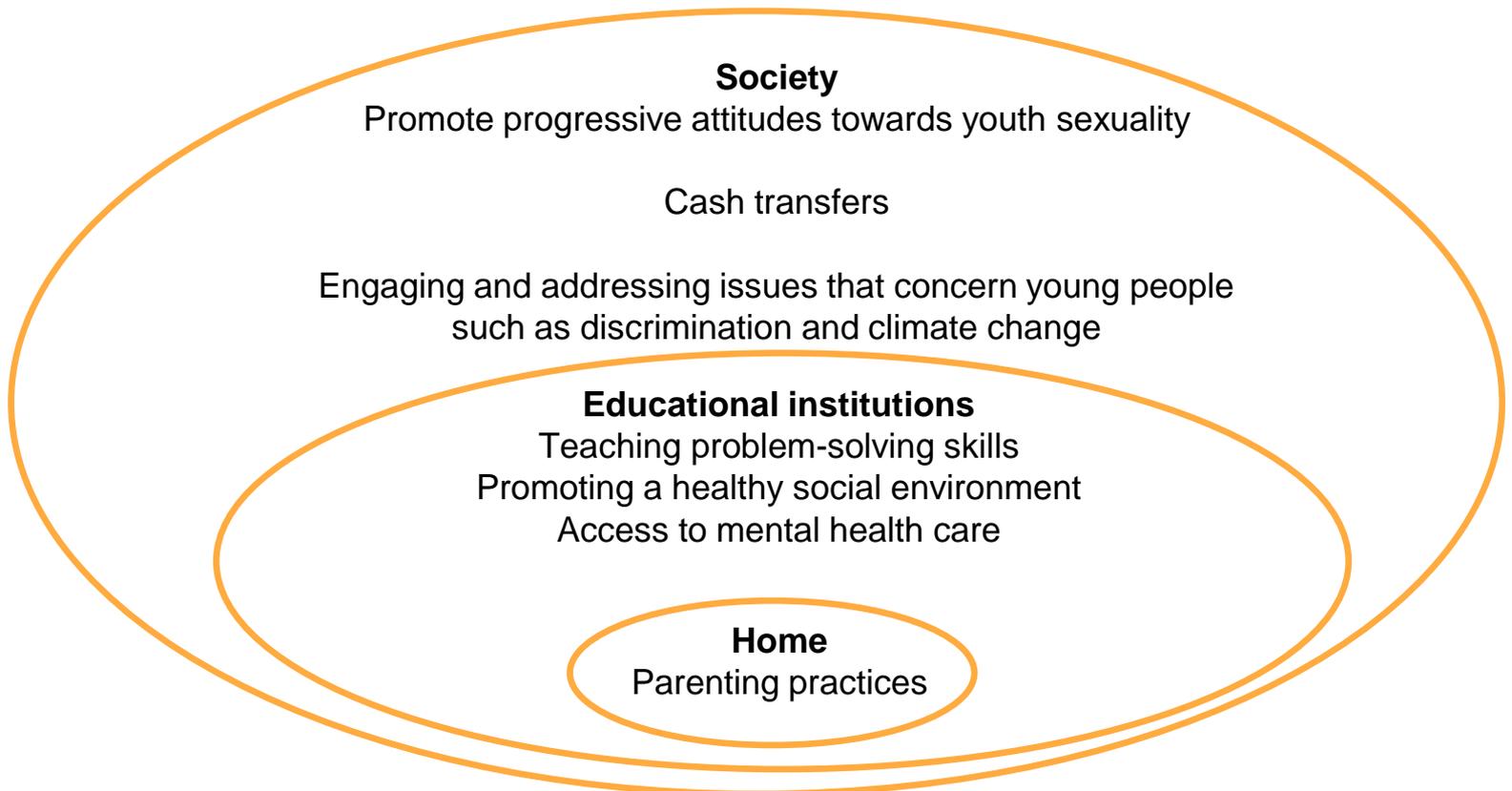
The Lancet Commission on global mental health and sustainable development



"We therefore call for a partnership to transform mental health globally, with engagement of key sectors concerned with mental health, both at the global and at country and subnational levels, and with the full involvement of people with the lived experience of mental disorders."

A Commission by The Lancet

Promoting youth mental health is everyone's business



Society

Promote progressive attitudes towards youth sexuality

Cash transfers

Engaging and addressing issues that concern young people
such as discrimination and climate change

Educational institutions

Teaching problem-solving skills

Promoting a healthy social environment

Access to mental health care

Home

Parenting practices

The challenges

Narrow, binary, biomedical framing of mental health

Lack of tailoring to the needs of disadvantaged youth

Lack of attention in mental health programs to social determinants

Lack of skilled providers

Reluctance to seek help from 'professionals'

Re-imagining youth mental health

- Look beyond narrowly defined and diagnosed mental illness embracing a diversity of approaches tailored to the needs of the individual
- Focus on the 'base of the pyramid' through task-sharing of psychosocial interventions
- Balance individual clinical interventions with structural and social determinants across the life course
- Digital tools for the workforce, health system and the affected person
- *Youth at the centre of all decisions, from what matters and to how it should be addressed*

SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Behaviour Research and Therapy

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/brat



Articles

Effectiveness of a brief lay counsellor-delivered, problem-solving intervention for adolescent mental health problems in urban, low-income schools in India: a randomised controlled trial

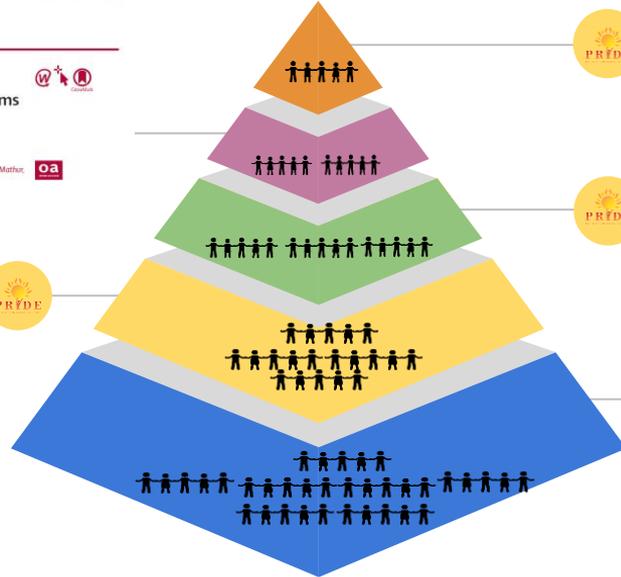


Daniel Michelson, Kanika Malik, Raschana Parikh, Helen A Weiss, Anayle M Doyle, Bhargav Bhat, Roopata Sahu, Bhagwant Chhatre, Sonal Mathur, Maabani Kishna, Rhea Sharma, Paulama Sudhe, Michael King, Pim Cuijpers, Bruce Chorpita, Christopher G Fairburn, Vikram Patel



Classroom sensitisation

Classroom wide awareness to generate demand for mental health care



Design process and protocol description for a multi-problem mental health intervention within a stepped care approach for adolescents in India



Bruce F. Chorpita^{1,4}, Eric L. Daleiden⁵, Kanika Malik⁶, Resham Gellatly³, Maya M. Boustani⁴, Daniel Michelson⁶, Kendra Knudsen⁶, Sonal Mathur⁵, Vikram H. Patel⁷

Digital mental health



OPEN ACCESS

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

App-based guided problem-solving intervention for adolescent mental health: a pilot cohort study in Indian schools

Pattie P Gonsalves^{1,2}, Eleanor Sara Hodgson³, Bhargav Bhat³, Rhea Sharma¹, Abhijeet Jambhale³, Daniel Michelson⁴, Vikram Patel^{3,5}

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S0140-6736(18)31615-5

Embargo: [add date when known]

Doctopic: Primary Research



Articles

KG

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Promoting school climate and health outcomes with the SEHER multi-component secondary school intervention in Bihar, India: a cluster-randomised controlled trial



Sachin Shinde, Helen A Weiss, Beema Varghese, Prachi Khandeparkar, Bernadette Pereira, Amit Sharma, Rajesh Gupta, David A Ross, George Patton, Vikram Patel



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SEHER



Enabling problem-solving skills



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The guiding principles of action

Give information

Restore hope

Enhance agency

Respect dignity and rights

Provide evidence based care

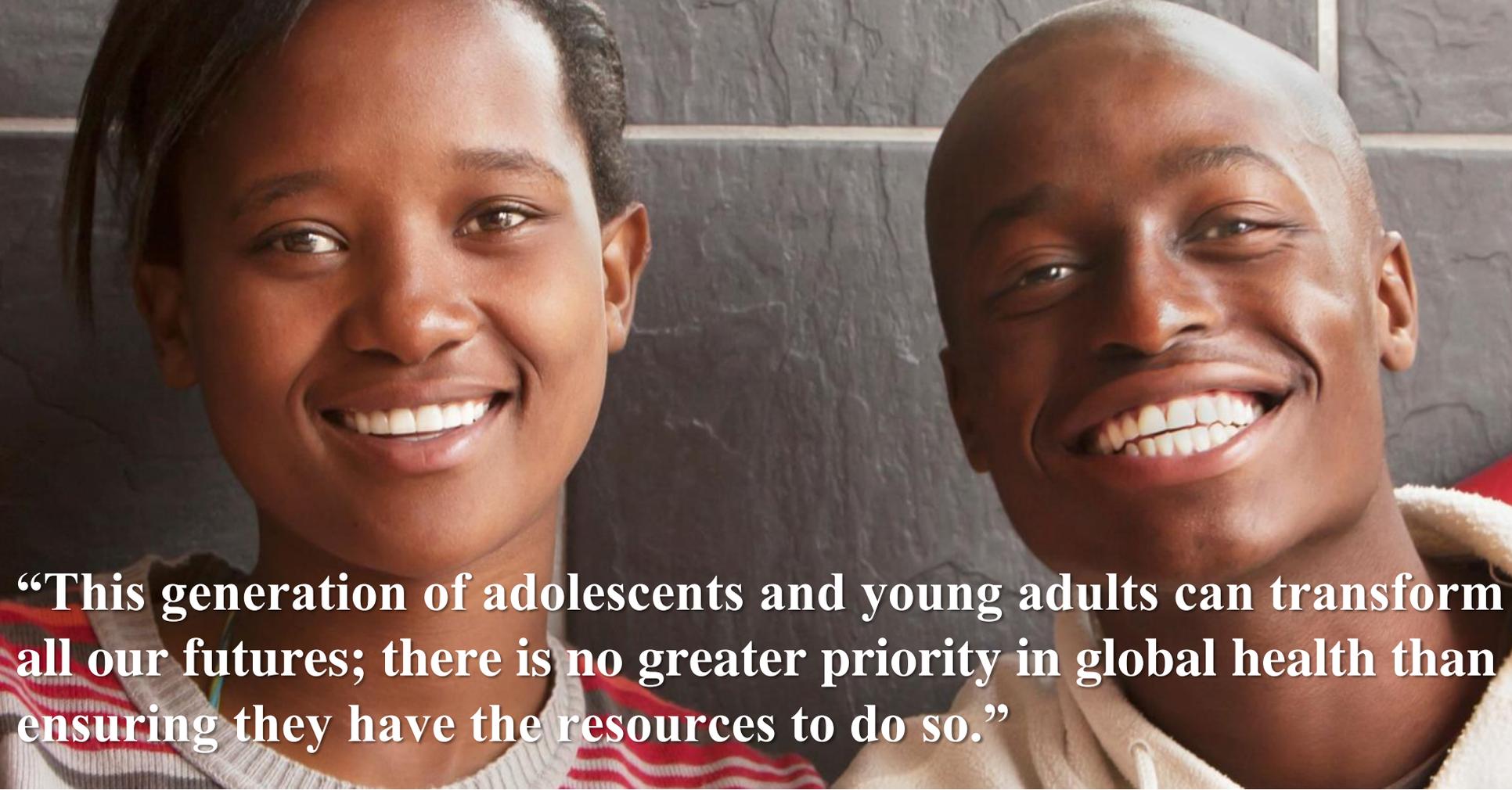
Reframe mental health as a public good

Universal human quality

Indivisible part of health

Especially important to young people

Never been so important



“This generation of adolescents and young adults can transform all our futures; there is no greater priority in global health than ensuring they have the resources to do so.”