

RESEARCH BYTES

Health and Mental Health




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KENT SCHOOL MAKING A DIFFERENCE

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There is value in disclosing one's personal story to family regardless of whether one perceives supportive responses, and that social support can impact one's posttraumatic growth.

Many indicators of social capital (e.g. network size) demonstrated potentially protective benefits against depression, while trust revealed a more complex role related to chronic health conditions.

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR RESEARCH

At the Kent School of Social Work, faculty and staff are engaged in producing impactful research related to the health and mental health of a wide variety of groups. In this issue, we highlight suicide attempt survivors, older adults, parents experiencing loss of a child, and adults living with HIV.

SUICIDE-RELATED DISCLOSURE

Frey, L.M., Drapeau, C.W., Fulginiti, A., Oexle, N., Stage, D.L., Sheehan, L, Cerel, J., & Moore, M. (2019). Recipients of suicide-related disclosure: The link between disclosure and posttraumatic growth for suicide attempt survivors. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16203815>

This study examined the relationship between disclosure, posttraumatic growth (PTG), and posttraumatic depreciation among suicide attempt survivors. Increases in disclosure to family and friends but not healthcare providers predicted changes in PTG. Disclosure to health care providers demonstrated effects on PTG, yet in the opposite direction and only after controlling for quality of support. Time since attempt and quality of support were the only variables that predicted change in posttraumatic depreciation.

INCARCERATED ADULTS

Archuleta, A.J., Prost, S.G., & Golder, S. (2020). The light and dark sides of social capital: Depressive symptoms among incarcerated older adults. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry* <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764019876670>

This study of older adults in KY prisons explored the relationships among cognitive and structural facets of social capital, chronic health conditions and depressive symptoms, and identified the role of social capital alongside chronic health conditions as a determinant of depressive symptoms. Higher trust was related to depressive symptoms when included alongside additional measures of social capital, indicating that a darker side of this facet may exist within correctional settings.

Giving tangible forms of support by calling friends, family and clergy, along with allowing the family time with the child after death, giving emotional support, and follow-up gestures all help families cope.

Immigrant status may have complex effects on dementia risk. Selection factors affecting immigration—varied health and educational systems in diverse countries of origin, acculturative stress, and validity of dementia assessment across diverse groups—deserve attention.

We learned from our participants that long-term trauma and negative experiences within the health care arena permeated their current motivations around engagement.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE RESPONSE

Fallat, M.E., Barbee, A.P., Forest, R., McClure, M.E., Henry, K. & Cunningham, M.R. (2019) Perceptions by Families of Emergency Medical Service Interventions During Imminent Pediatric Out-of-Hospital Death, *Prehospital Emergency Care*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10903127.2018.1495283>

Interviews with parents grieving from the death of children examined views of the ways emergency medical services (EMS) interacted during the intervention. Family reactions to crisis and the first responder responses were critical to family coping. Critical competencies that help the family cope included first responder provide excellent and expeditious care with seamless coordination, allowing family to witness the resuscitation including the attempts to save the child's life, and providing ongoing communication.

DEMENTIA IN OLDER ADULTS

Moon, H., Badana, A.N.S., Hwang, S., Sears, J.S. & Haley, W.E. (2019). Dementia prevalence in older adults: Variation by race/ethnicity and immigrant status. *American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jagp.2018.11.003>

This study examined differences in prevalence and risk factors of dementia by race/ethnicity and immigrant status using a nationally representative sample of Medicare beneficiaries. U.S.-born non-Hispanic Blacks have a higher prevalence than U.S.-born Whites, Hispanics and others. Non-Hispanic Whites, Hispanics and other immigrants had a higher prevalence of dementia compared with their U.S.-born counterparts.

HIV CARE

Harris, L.M., Crawford, T.N., Kerr, J.C., Thomas, T.A. & Schmidt, V. (2020). African American Older Adults Living with HIV: Exploring Stress, Stigma and Engagement in HIV Care. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, <https://doi.org/10.1353/hpu.2020.0022>

This study examined the experiences of stress, HIV-related stigma, and engagement in care among African American older people living with HIV. Engagement in care was moderately correlated with overall stigma and perceived stress. Qualitative interviews revealed that stigma was not the most significant stressor in the elders' lives, but instead a present and underlying force that was overshadowed by everyday life stressors that affected care engagement.