Children's Hospital of Philadelphia PolicyLab

Youth Depression Screening with Parent and Self-Reports: Assessing Current and Prospective Depression Risk

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Few studies have examined the incremental validity of multi-informant depression screening approaches. In response, we examined how recommendations for using a multi-informant approach may vary for identifying concurrent or prospective depressive episodes. Participants included 663 youth (AgeM = 11.83; AgeSD = 2.40) and their caregiver who independently completed youth depression questionnaires, and clinical diagnostic interviews, every 6 months for 3 years. Receiver operating characteristic (ROC) analyses showed that youth-report best predicted concurrent episodes, and that both youth and parent-report were necessary to adequately forecast prospective episodes. More specifically, youth-reported negative mood symptoms and parent-reported anhedonic symptoms incrementally predicted future depressive episodes. Findings were invariant to youth's sex and age, and results from person and variable-centered analyses suggested that discrepancies between informants were not clinically meaningful. Implications for future research and evidence-based decision making for depression screening initiatives are discussed.

Journal:

Child Psychiatry & Human Development
Authors: Jami Young

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