Opportunities for Building Lifelong Resilience and Improving Mental Health for Adolescents Living with HIV

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Many children living with perinatally acquired HIV have now survived to adolescence/early adulthood. They are joined by those who acquired HIV as adolescents, with those aged 15?24 years representing the largest proportion of new HIV diagnoses globally. Adolescence sees rapid cognitive, psychosocial, emotional and sexual development that can be associated with the onset of mental health disorders. These challenges can impact the development of resilience, which represents the social and emotional skills, attributes and habits that facilitate the overcoming of difficulties. It is critically important to tailor service delivery that builds up positive mental health and resilience for adolescents living with HIV. However, mental healthcare provision has been hampered by restricted healthcare budgets, limited trained personnel and mental health and HIV stigma. This Viewpoint seeks to describe the intersection between adolescent development and mental health, and advocates for implementation of integrated mental healthcare delivery for adolescents living with HIV.

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