



The mental health Risk Assessment and Management Process (RAMP) for schools: I. The model

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Abstract

Recent national surveys have indicated that there is a significant level of unidentified and untreated mental health problems in children and young people. This represents a chronic missed opportunity to ameliorate these problems by early identification and intervention. Schools are the obvious setting in which to improve mental health in this population, but there is a service gap between whole-school mental health promotion programs and individual service provision by mental health professionals. The Risk Assessment and Management Process (RAMP) has evolved after extensive piloting with schools as a response to this service gap. It is a systematic set of processes for schools that promotes early identification and intervention for children and adolescents at risk of mental health problems. It uses a three domain risk and protective factor framework, a team-based approach to pastoral care, structured team processes, protocols and solution focused strategies tailored to the school setting, and provides professional development in mental health to school staff. These interconnected components work together to provide an early identification and response process for at-risk students which encompasses within-school support and linkages between the school, the family and community organisations and agencies.

Keywords

risk assessment, schools, school mental health program, early intervention, early identification, risk and protective factors

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