Impact of Protective and Risk Factors on Adolescent Responses to COVID-19

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During the COVID-19 pandemic, adolescents have played a major role in the spread and mitigation of the virus. While adolescents have much lower mortality rates, they are equally prone to contracting the disease and transmitting it to others. Given their developmental stage, they are more prone to impulsive decision making. Therefore, it is important to examine adolescent responses to this pandemic. Many studies have analyzed protective and risk factors that have contributed to adolescent responses to COVID-19. This survey research aimed to analyze the role of household adherence to CDC guidelines and community satisfaction (protective factors) and COVID-19 risk perception (risk factor) on individual adherence to CDC guidelines and depression (responses). The results were analyzed using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Household adherence to CDC guidelines had a strong, positive correlation with individual adherence to CDC guidelines (r= .830). Community satisfaction was found to have a weak, negative correlation with individual adherence to CDC guidelines (r= -.150) and a weak/moderate, negative correlation with depression (r = -.212). Lastly, risk perception was weakly associated with individual adherence to CDC guidelines (r= .131) and moderately associated with depression (r= .282). The results indicate that consistent science-based messaging, along with free and accessible mental health resources, are necessary to produce coherent behavior and minimize depression among adolescents during health crises, such as COVID-19.

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