

TP-TUE-204 HEALTHY CHILDREN, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES: NURSES' CONTRIBUTIONS

H. Li*¹

¹Department of Nursing Studies, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

Background: The mental health problems in children are aggravating in Hong Kong and have turned out to be a major public health concern.

Objectives: The aim of this paper was to shed light on the mental well-being of Hong Kong Chinese children living in public housing estate. Specifically, this paper discussed how nurses can contribute in enhancing the health and well-being of the children in our society.

Underlying values and principles: Children are our greatest treasures, the most precious resource. Besides, Children hold the key of our future. Therefore, for a better & healthy community, and for the better of our future, we must ensure healthy growth and development of our children.

Knowledge base/ Evidence base: There is some evidence that children who engaged in healthy lifestyle, such as having healthy eating and regular exercises, was found to have less depressive symptoms, better emotional and physical health than those who did not engage in healthy lifestyle.

Context of intervention/project/work: An exploratory study was conducted in the largest public housing estate in Hong Kong. Using convenience sampling, 162 Chinese children aged 7 to 15 years, attended a Health Carnival organized by a community centre in the housing estate were invited to participate the study.

Methods: Children were assessed for any presence of depressive symptoms by using the Centre for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale. Besides, children's self-esteem was measured by using the Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale.

Results and Conclusions: Results: Findings from this study reveal that more than 30% children were potentially at risk of depression or at least presented some depressive symptoms. The results also reveal that there was a medium negative correlation between self-esteem and depression scores.

Conclusions: There is an imperative need for nurses to advance their practice and take a more assertive role in enhancing the health and well-being of children in the community. In addition, nurses should take one step forward to extend beyond traditional practice by building partnerships with schools and community to create a harmonious social environment and set up a community supporting network for children so that they can be able to lead a healthy life.

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