Resilience and Mental Health

Susan M. Havercamp, PhD
The Ohio State University Nisonger Center
* High risk for poor mental and physical health

* DD Risk factors include
  * Lack of self determination
  * Social stigma
  * Decreased community access
  * Social isolation
* DD report worse overall health
* High rates of chronic conditions such as
  * arthritis, asthma, cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, high cholesterol, stroke
* Higher rates of other health conditions:
  * Constipation,
  * Epilepsy
  * Hyperlipidemia,
  * Osteoporosis

(Havercamp & Scott, 2015; Reichard, Stolzle, & Fox, 2011; Tyler, Schramm, Karafa, Tang, & Jain, 2010)
Mental Health

* DD Overrepresented (~22.4% of adults)
* Additional 22.5% have problem behavior
* Yet less likely to access mental health care

* Risks for mental illness
  * Recent life events
  * Tobacco use
  * Severe or profound intellectual disability
  * Recent GP visits

(Cooper, Smiley, Morrison, Williamson, & Allan, 2007; Howlett, Florio, Xu, & Trollor, 2015)
Chronic health conditions  
- isolation, inactivity
- mental health concerns

Poor mental health  
- decreased self-care
- chronic health conditions, poor overall health

Possible immune function mechanism

(Egede, 2007; Jones, & Thomsen, 2013; Stein, Cox, Afifi, Belik, & Sareen, 2006)
What impacts health?

* Stress
* Social support
* Physical activity
**Stress**

- Stress = *any event perceived by individual as challenging and taxing to their ability to cope*

- Chronic stress → Negative physical and mental health outcomes
  - Chronic health conditions (cardiovascular disease, stroke)
  - Worsens outcomes
  - Impacts course and recurrence of EVERY mental disorder

- Treatment that reduces stress, improves health

(Grossman, Niemann, Schmidt, & Walach, 2004; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Marin et al., 2011; Segerstrom, & Miller, 2004)
Stress in DD

* Same stress response, regardless of severity
* Levels of stress similar or higher
* But fewer resources to cope with stress!

(Bramston, Fogarty, & Cummins, 1999; Bramston & Mioche, 2001)
Stress in DD

* Linked to poor physical and mental health
* 20% increase in MI with each additional stressor
* Mental health treatment that reduces stress, improves mental health

### Top 5 Stressors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75.3%   death or illness of person they care about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71.1%   underestimated by people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68.9%   hears people arguing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62.9%   feels too slow/unable to do things correctly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58.4%   difficult situation, didn’t know what to do</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Scott, 2016)
What about resilience?

* Physical Activity
* Social Support
Stress → negative health outcomes
Stress

negative health outcomes
Physical Activity in DD

* Physical activity higher life satisfaction, lower depression in Down syndrome
* Unfortunately, DD is largely physically inactive

Moderate Physical Activity

*an activity that causes some increase in breathing or heart rate.* Examples include, but are not limited to brisk walking, swimming, bicycling, cleaning, and gardening.

National Core Indicators 2014-2015, n= 16948 adults with DD
Stress \rightarrow negative health outcomes
Stress

negative health outcomes
* In times of stress, social circle mobilizes to provide deliberate support (emotional, instrumental, informational)

(Thoits, 2011)
Social Support in DD

* Smaller social circles
* More paid staff, less friend and family support

(Amado, 1993; Havercamp & Scott, 2015; Lippold & Burns, 2009; Lunsky & Benson, 2001)
Social Support

Do you have a **best friend** or someone to talk to about personal things? Do you ever feel **lonely**?

![Chart showing percentages of adults with DD who have best friends and those who feel lonely.]

National Core Indicators 2009-2010, n= 6556 adults with DD
Social support

- Has best friend: 79%
- Lonely: 31%
- Not lonely: 21%
- Very lonely: 11%
Inadequate social support in DD

* 31.6% of adults in national DD sample had inadequate social support

(Havercamp & Scott, 2015)
Social Support in DD

* Lack of social support 2X increase of MI
* The impact of social support on mental illness was stronger than stress

(Scott & Havercamp, 2014)
How to foster resilience?
Social Clubs

* Next Chapter Book Club
* Aspirations
ASPIRATIONS

* Developing self awareness and insight
* Learning about positive social interactions and relationships
* Fostering insight into the importance of rewarding employment

* Fostering friendships
Next Chapter Book Club

Helping people with disabilities enjoy books, friends and their community.
Make healthy fun!

Buddy Up Tennis exists to serve individuals with Down syndrome the opportunity to learn the sport of tennis and engage in fitness activities in an enjoyable and supportive environment. Athletes, Buddies, and Coaches work together as a team to have FUN, foster friendships, build confidence, and develop life skills both on and off the courts.
Thank you!
References

References

References


