Addressing child sexual abuse in Latin America as a means to stop HIV/AIDS

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Background

• 2014 U.S. border crisis

• Worldwide inadequate representation of child sexual abuse (CSA) research\textsuperscript{1}

• Children have unique social and biological vulnerabilities\textsuperscript{1}

• A sentinel event of abuse can introduce lifelong health consequences\textsuperscript{2}


Defining the Problem

- 2.4 million people with HIV/AIDS in Latin America\(^1,2\)
  - 94,000 new infections in 2013
  - 1,800 in children (<15 years)
- Overall prevalence is decreasing; childhood rates are increasing
- Complex relationship between CSA and HIV transmission

Defining the Problem

• 15% of CSA cases cause STIs\(^1\)

• Children who experience CSA have lifelong increased risk for contracting HIV\(^2,3,4,5,6\)
  – Earlier onset of sexual activity
  – More lifetime/frequent partners
  – Increased rates of sex with strangers
  – 4x more likely to work in prostitution
  – Decreased lifetime condom use
  – More likely to be sexually coercive
  – Less knowledge of HIV and STIs

Defining the Problem

• Men who survive CSA are 2x more likely to have HIV\textsuperscript{1}
• Higher lifetime rate of all STIs\textsuperscript{2}
• Negative consequences are greater for males than females\textsuperscript{2}
• The literature demonstrates a link between CSA and HIV, but does not address children from Latin America

Elucidate the means by which children are identified as victims, present prevalence data, and identify themes contributing to CSA.
Methods and Results

- Integrative review
- 6 Databases searched
- 313 articles reviewed
- 14 articles met inclusion criteria
- Represent 9 out of 24 countries

Original Search Strategy
- PubMed: 200
- CINAHL: 13
- Embase: 11
- PsychINFO: 19
- Web of Science: 70

Reviewed
313

Excluded: 263
Did not focus on CSA incidence or prevalence in a Latin American country

Retained
50

Duplicates: 36

Included
14
Findings

• Statistical Reports of Prevalence
  – Ranges from 1 to 18.7% of children
  – Large variations within and between countries
  – Varied study methodologies, definitions of CSA, and outcome measures
  – Example: Brazil
Findings

• Machismo
  – Cultural ideal of masculinity supported by many families
  – Creates a roadblock for male victims to report abuse
  – Induces potential abuse of power by adult males
  – One study in Colombia showed a correlation between machismo and abuse


Findings

• HIV and CSA
  – Supports idea that sexual abuse increases risk factors for HIV\textsuperscript{1,2,3,4,5}
    • Increased number of partners
    • Condom avoidance
    • Less knowledge of safe sex practices
    • Higher rates of intravenous drug use
    • Increased chance of becoming a perpetrator
  – CSA correlates with increased HIV rates in adulthood

Findings

• Perpetrators
  – Most are males well known to the family
  – Not fathers and step-fathers\textsuperscript{1}
  – Most live in the same communities\textsuperscript{2,3,4}
  – Most frequent perpetrators against boys are women well known to the family\textsuperscript{2}
  – No study address age, SES, mental health, or other variables of perpetrators

Findings

• Role of gender
  – 18.7% incidence in 1,000 Mexican students, no difference between genders
  – No statistical difference between genders in Nicaragua victims (20% vs 26%)
  – Nearly 50% of college students in Mexico engaged in unwanted sex, no gender difference
  – Brazilian study found 21% of males and 15% of females have been victimized (statistically significant)

Findings

- Role of gender
  - Males more likely to experience physical violence in addition to intercourse\(^1,2,3\)
  - Females more likely to experience intercourse, touching, and exhibition\(^1,2,3\)
  - Male victims infrequently labeled non-physical sexual violation as sexual abuse\(^4\)
  - Rates in males decrease with age but increase with age in females\(^5\)

Findings

• Southwest Border Crisis
  – Unaccompanied children
    • 2012: 13,625¹
    • 2013: 24,668¹
    • 2014: >60,000 (47,000 by June)²
  – Leading cause for children to enter the US is to escape violence¹,³
  – Refugee minors are at increased risk for violence, child labor, and sex trafficking⁴

Discussion

• Analysis of the prevalence and incidence of CSA in Latin America is sparse and varies widely
• Nine of 24 Latin American countries were discussed in the literature; a complete representation of the region has not been achieved
• This review confirms that CSA is a huge risk factor for HIV for Latin American Children
Discussion

• The only identified culturally-specific issue related to CSA in Latin America is machismo ideals
• The most frequent perpetrator of CSA is a male well known to the family
• Perpetrators and their actions may be influenced by the gender of the child
• There is emerging evidence to suggest males may be affected as frequently as females
Moving Forward With Nursing

• Nurses sit in a unique position to stop the spread of HIV
• Nursing is best-suited to address this issue
• WHO’s revised HIV guidelines promote international task-shifting
• Call to action for interprofessional collaboration
• Future research
  – Identifying victims
  – Screening programs
  – Educating victims
## Search Strategy

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<th>Terms</th>
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<th>EMBase</th>
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