

2nd International Conference on

Adolescent Medicine and Child Psychology

October 06-07, 2016 London, UK



Delphine Collin-Vézina

McGill University, Canada

Biography:

Delphine Collin-Vézina is the Director of the McGill Centre for research on children and families. She is a licensed Clinical Psychologist, Canada Research Chair in Child Welfare and Associate Professor in the McGill School of Social Work. She has developed a strong interest in research and clinical topics related to child maltreatment, child sexual abuse and trauma. Overall, her research has contributed to an understanding of epidemiological trends in child sexual abuse, of child protection responses to reports of child sexual abuse cases, of trauma-related needs of children and adolescents from different health and social service settings (e.g. youths in out-of-home care) and of trauma-related service provision in child protection agencies and health. She has been the Principal Investigator of several substantial provincial and federal grants and has led and collaborated on significant projects on mental health, family violence and service provision with key organizations in Canada

The epidemiology of sexual abuse: Analysis of definitions used in prevalence studies and recommendations for adolescent medicine and child psychology

Despite the increasing awareness of the impact of sexual abuse on victims' health and well-being, this issue has yet to be fully acknowledged as a societal matter that requires extensive prevention and intervention. We hypothesize that this field does not receive full recognition, due in part to a lack of agreement on what should legally and socially be considered under the umbrella term of child and youth sexual abuse. As part of a program of research exploring this issue, we conducted a systematic review of prevalence studies published between 2000 and 2015. Two independent raters coded study variables, focusing on how the dimensions of 'child and youth', 'sexual' and 'abuse' were articulated in each of the definitions. The review yielded 187 studies. Findings confirmed the wide - and concerning - diversity of definitions used throughout studies. The concept of 'child and youth' was either implied and vague ('being a victim before puberty') or defined as an event that occurred before a specific age that ranged from age 12 to 18. Rarely was the legal age for sexual consent included in the definition. The 'sexual' nature of the acts differed tremendously across definitions from specific terms ('were you exposed to genitals'), to broad account ('were you sexually abused'). The 'abusive' nature of the experiences also varied widely across definitions, including factors such as relationship with perpetrator, age difference between victim and perpetrator, grooming behaviors and victims' lack of consent. The field of sexual abuse is clearly awaiting a well-agreed upon definition that recognizes the complexity of experiences, yet offers a common language to inform practice, policy and epidemiology research.

delphine.collin-vezina@mcgill.ca