

CAMHS FORUM



PARTNERSHIPS IN CARE

14 SEPTEMBER 2005

Dr Ruth Vine, Director Mental Health



MONASH University



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Mental illness rife

AMANDA DUNN
 MORE than a third of young people admitted to the adolescent medical unit at the Royal Children's Hospital last year were there mainly for mental health reasons, with problems including suicide attempts, drug overdoses and eating disorders. Many also had serious physical ailments alongside their psychiatric disorders.

hospital is rebuilt. At present some patients with mental health
Forgotten-people series

Tough time for

CARERS as young as five who are struggling to look after sick parents
Susie O'Brien

Support for young mental health

THE plight of 14 mistakenly held at Centre for 10

Black kids

Suicide

DISTURBING FINDINGS
SUICIDE
 More than one in six young people aged 12 to 17 had seriously thought about ending their own life in the

Children suffer early in feuding families

By IAN MUNRO and LIZ GOOCH

THE ill-effects of family break-up on the mental health of children are already evident when feuding parents separate, Australian researchers have found. Lawrie Moloney, director of La Trobe University's department of counselling and psychological health, said it was recognised that children of divorced parents were more than three times more likely to develop mental health problems in childhood.

Young patients

plea for better juvenile justice

reform of Victoria's youth justice system overdue.

Judge Peter Gebhardt inquiry into what he calls the "decomposing juvenile justice system."

mental

subsidies could be more restricted." The PBAC has the power to restrict the use of pharmaceuticals. However, clinical adviser to national depression group beyondblue, Ian Hickie said antidepressants were not just being used to treat depression. "They are used to treat... of... who... issues... itua... com-... ian... ospi... was... sup... pres... for... using... it are... How... good... sup... ycho... pres... ra."... t was... all in... mem... ored... less... ological... e and... not... es for... agents... ent in... mber... rvices... lining... y to do... a life... ege of... n Wil... can't... ychia... tin

New adults finding life tough

By Kate Legge
 Social Affairs Writer

DEPRESSION, anxiety and alcohol use are afflicting a significant group of young Australians, darkening an otherwise positive report on today's emerging adults. New data from the Australian Temperament Project based on interviews with more than 1100 people aged 19 and 20 revealed up to half were encountering "serious adjustment problems". A quarter experience high levels of depression and anxiety, although the majority were managing well with their family relationships and strong friendship networks. The study's author, Diana Smart of the Australian Insti-

tute of Family Studies, told a conference in Melbourne yesterday that the overall picture was mixed. The rate of difficulties measured in the research was conservative, she said, because many teenagers with difficulties had failed to complete the questionnaire. "A sizeable minority are finding life tough and may need support to help them progress well into the future," Ms Smart said. The good news is that more than 90 per cent of young adults were working, studying or doing both, with 72 per cent still living with their parents and the same proportion reporting they were comfortably off or "doing all right" financially.

The most common take-home weekly income was between \$150 and \$300 a week with two-fifths of respondents earning in this range. Just over half the group were in a relationship, and the majority described the partnership as "steady". Parental reports of behaviour confirmed assessments by a majority of the young people who said they acted responsibly, and the study found high levels of satisfaction with the direction of their lives. Relations with parents were mostly warm, with common disagreements concerning household chores, money and staying out late. Participation in civic affairs also gives cause for cheer,

with 84 per cent making a personal effort to care for the environment and 38 per cent undertaking voluntary or charity work. "If we were simply to look at the positive side we would conclude they were doing very well," Ms Smart said. On the problem side of the ledger, 20 per cent of the group were found to have been moderately or severely depressed over the past month, while 19 per cent had been moderately or severely anxious. Alcohol use was reported to be frequent, with almost two-thirds drinking at a level of risk defined as high by the National Health and Medical Research Council, and binge drinking fairly common.

Up to half of all Australians suffer depression, exhibit anti-social behaviour or have substance abuse problems by the age of 20, a study has found. The development of 1157 young Victorians has been tracked since they were babies in 1983 by the Australian Institute of Family Studies and the University of Melbourne. A recent study of the group found that as they entered their 20s, many were finding life hard. Half of the group had experienced depression, anti-social behaviour, high alcohol consumption or a combination of the three. One fifth of the group had a long-term health problem or disability.

WHY HAVE A FORUM ?

- CAMHS play an important role in the care of young people with mental illness who may also need services from other areas

WHY HAVE A FORUM NOW ?

- Recognition of the importance of CAMHS both as a treatment provider and as part of early intervention responses
- Recent capacity to grow services and to develop new initiatives such as conduct disorder pilots
- Increased focus by Government on children

WHY BOTHER WITH PARTNERSHIPS ?

- MH often accused of having a 'silo' approach
- Better outcome and more efficient use of resources if lessen duplication, target intensive response to those with most severe and complex presentation
- Support other areas that also have responsibility to provide services to those with mental health problems

WHAT DO WE HOPE FOR ?

- Opportunity to learn about what is happening
- Strengthened relationships with your 'partners'
- Showcase some recent work
- This to be part of a series of forums to increase knowledge of MH services and improve understanding of the roles and responsibilities of those who work in this area.