Mental Health

Grayson Holmbeck, Chair
Kathryn Smith
Toyia Greene
Outcomes

• **Primary**: Achieve optimal developmentally-appropriate mental health throughout the lifespan (across psychological, social, and participation outcomes)

• **Secondary**: Maximize adaptation across all factors that are predictive of mental health outcomes (including neuropsychological, family, peer, academic, biological, and condition-related predictors). Access services and supports across appropriate domains to optimize developmentally-appropriate mental health throughout the lifespan.

• **Tertiary**: Maximize self-management, independence, quality of life, and “transition” outcomes by addressing mental health challenges.
Prenatal/Infancy (through age 1 year)

Clinical Questions

1. What is the psychosocial impact of having SB on mental health and adaptation across the lifespan?
2. Which domains of mental health are most adversely affected in individuals with SB and in what areas of mental health are individuals with SB most resilient?
3. What are some common maladaptive behaviors that can negatively impact persons with spina bifida across the lifespan?
Prenatal/Infancy (through age 1 year)

Guidelines
1. Assess family functioning, stressors, and supports.
2. Provide parents detailed information about spina bifida.
3. Connect families with local SBA chapters and community resources.
4. Address developmental concerns through information and support.
5. Refer to Early Intervention Services.
7. Promote effective parenting skills in stimulation, care giving, and enjoyment of infant to optimize typical child development.
Clinical Questions

1. What is the psychosocial impact of having SB on mental health and adaptation across the lifespan?

2. Which domains of mental health are most adversely affected in individuals with SB and in what areas of mental health are individuals with SB most resilient?

3. What are some common maladaptive behaviors that can negatively impact persons with spina bifida across the lifespan?
Toddler (1-3 years)

Guidelines

1. Address developmental concerns and optimize typical child development.
2. Encourage families to offer developmentally appropriate choices in daily life activities, including such things as picking up toys, cleaning up, and imitative housework.
3. Encourage developmentally appropriate play and social opportunities.
4. Assess parenting skills and provide education on parenting strategies and behavior management techniques as needed.
5. Provide additional age appropriate information about SB as the child grows.
Clinical Questions

1. What is the impact of having a child with SB on family functioning (including parental adjustment, marital functioning, siblings, extended family, and familial participation in social activities) and how does this impact change as children move through various stages of lifespan development?

2. What resilience and vulnerability factors are predictive of familial adaptation at each level of child development?

3. What parenting behaviors facilitate adaptive child outcomes (including independence-related outcomes, such as self-management and the transfer of health care responsibilities from parent to child) and how do these adaptive parenting behaviors vary developmentally?
Preschool (3-5 years)

Guidelines

1. Discuss with parents the importance of socialization/friendships with peers and potential opportunities for activities.
2. Encourage participation in preschool educational programs.
3. Discuss the importance of schedules/routines, modeling behavior, age appropriate choices and decision-making and chores.
4. Assess social and psychological development.
5. Refer for social skills training as indicated.
6. Include optimization of mental health when developing an Individualized Education Program (IEP) Provide additional age appropriate information about SB as the child grows.
Clinical Questions

1. What is the psychosocial impact of having SB on mental health and adaptation across the lifespan?

2. Which domains of mental health are most adversely affected in individuals with SB and in what areas of mental health are individuals with SB most resilient?

3. What are some common maladaptive behaviors that can negatively impact persons with spina bifida across the lifespan?
School Age

Guidelines

1. Encourage participation in community activities for recreation.
2. Promote friendship development by assisting families to identify friendship opportunities (i.e. participation in Camps, Adaptive sports programs/events, Walk-and-Rollathon for SB)
3. Assess for depression, anxiety, bullying, and social participation.
4. Promote transfer of age appropriate medical responsibility from parent to child in those who have the requisite abilities/cognitive capacity.
5. Discuss importance of increasing household responsibilities appropriately modified for mobility and cognitive limitations.
School Age

Guidelines

6. Refer children with emotional and/or behavioral difficulties for psychological support and counseling. Identify community resources for social and psychological development (camps, recreation centers, etc).

7. Assess family relationships with school. Encourage parents to be advocates for their children in the school setting.

8. Promote independence and choice in social activities. Promote self-care so that the child is able to be independent in social settings.

9. Promote appropriate after school sports and club activities.

10. Provide additional age appropriate information about SB as the child grows.

11. Promote and encourage participation in SBA related activities.
Clinical Questions

1. What is the psychosocial impact of having SB on mental health and adaptation across the lifespan?

2. Which domains of mental health are most adversely affected in individuals with SB and in what areas of mental health are individuals with SB most resilient?

3. What are some common maladaptive behaviors that can negatively impact persons with spina bifida across the lifespan?
Teenage

Guidelines

1. Assess peer relationships and friendships.
2. Assess for at risk behaviors (alcohol, drug, tobacco use; unsafe sex)
3. Screen for depression or anxiety and initiate individual and family interventions when appropriate.
4. Provide counseling and/or behavioral support as needed.
5. Promote transfer of medical responsibility from parent to child in those who have the requisite abilities/cognitive capacity
Teenage

Guidelines

6. Refer for social skills training as needed.
7. Provide counseling regarding sexuality, sexual functioning, fertility and contraception.
8. Discuss avoidance of drugs/alcohol.
9. Discuss importance of initiating and organizing opportunities for social activities.
10. Discuss the relationship between independence and mental health.
Teenage

Guidelines
11. Facilitate involvement with role model.
12. Provide opportunities for formal or informal mentoring.
13. Participate in IEP school transition team.
14. Plan for transition to independent living, post secondary education, vocational training, and career interests.
15. Plan for transition from pediatric to adult health care
Clinical Questions

1. What is the psychosocial impact of having SB on mental health and adaptation across the lifespan?

2. Which domains of mental health are most adversely affected in individuals with SB and in what areas of mental health are individuals with SB most resilient?

3. What are some common maladaptive behaviors that can negatively impact persons with spina bifida across the lifespan?
Adult

Guidelines

1. Screen for depression or anxiety and initiate interventions when appropriate.
2. Continue transfer of medical responsibility from parent to child in those who have the requisite abilities/cognitive capacity.
3. Encourage activities and hobbies that improve face-to-face social contact.
4. Encourage ongoing efforts to promote friendship and intimacy.
5. Facilitate vocational or occupational pursuits.
Adult

Guidelines

6. Maintain efforts for good general health promotion and exercise as well as specialized spina bifida care. Optimize health to reduce obesity risk and maximize social opportunities and mental health.

7. Recommend SBA resources

8. Continue transition from pediatric to adult health care
Research Gaps

1. What services and supports can be utilized to mitigate barriers to optimal mental health throughout the lifespan?

2. What are the links between mental health and the following outcomes: self-management, independence, quality of life, and the transition from pediatric to adult health care?

3. What interventions are available that enhance mental health across the lifespan in individuals with SB?

4. What methods have been implemented by SB providers to guide transition to adult health care in individuals with SB who have an identified mental health diagnosis?
References


References


References


References


