

Social Sciences 社會科學

Local adolescents display alarming level of mood disorders

本地青少年的情緒病已達警戒水平



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Preliminary findings of a study on the family life and physical and emotional health of Secondary 1-6 students initiated by PolyU's School of Nursing and the Christian Family Service Centre show 15.7% of respondents to have experienced moderate limitations on their daily life activities owing to ill health and other constraints.

理大護理學院與基督教家庭服務中心正進行研究，了解中一至中六學生的家庭生活、身體及情緒健康狀況，有15.7%受訪者曾因為健康欠佳及其他原因，未能在日常活動中發揮自如。

In this four-year study slated for completion in 2014, 6,151 questionnaires have already been collected from 24 randomly selected schools. Dr Mak Yim-wah, Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing, said "Young people are at a critical period of growth, and their spiritual, psychological and physical changes have an impact on their future lives. State of mind and emotional disturbances can affect not only their academic performance, but also lead to family conflicts, substance abuse, violence, and even suicides or acts of self-destruction."

Some student respondents reported that they often found themselves accomplishing less than they would like because of issues related to their physical (11.5%) or emotional (15.2%) health. Some 16.1% reported feeling downhearted and suffering from "the blues" most of the time or almost every day during the previous four weeks, and 17.7% also reported feeling nervous, anxious or depressed with similar frequency. The situation appears to be worse for girls than boys, with the gap between them increasing with age.

With respect to family life, about 21.3% of the students said that they participated in recreational or other activities with their parents less than once a week. Boys appear to engage in such family activities less often than girls, although the gender gap narrows with age. Some 10% of students reported feeling that their parents want to control every detail of their lives, and such perceived parental psychological manipulation increased with age.

Regarding the significance of existence, approximately 6-8% of students reported a loss of direction in life. Girls were better than boys in this regard, and the overall situation appears to improve as students of both sexes grow older. More than half of the respondents (62.8%) indicated considerable homework pressure, and about 40% said they were dissatisfied with their level of academic achievement. These feelings worsen with age and are more severe amongst girls.

"Parents, apart from their children's physical health, should pay more attention to their mental health, for instance, bad moods, expressions of boredom, a lack of energy or reduction in social activities, and so on. Parents should communicate more with their children and use positive methods, such as active listening, more encouragement, less criticism and control, and afford them more personal space", Dr Mak remarked.

該研究為期四年，隨機抽出二十四所學校進行問卷調查，現階段已收回六千一百五十一份問卷，數據搜集預計於二零一四年完成。理大護理學院助理教授麥艷華博士指出：「青少年正處於成長的關鍵階段，其精神、心理及生理上的轉變將對他們的未來造成影響。精神狀態及情緒困擾不止會影響他們的學業表現，亦會導致家庭衝突、濫用藥物、暴力、甚至自殺及自毀行為。」

部分學生經常因為身體健康(11.5%)或情緒方面(15.2%)的原因，導致他們能夠完成的工作低於預期。部分學生(16.1%)在受訪前的四星期中，有超過一半或以上日子或幾乎每天都感到情緒低落和沮喪；部分學生(17.7%)則有超過一半或以上日子或幾乎每天感到緊張、焦慮或抑鬱。女生的情況比男生差，差距隨着學生的年齡增長而增加。

家庭生活方面，大約21.3%的學生平均每週少於一天和父母一起參與休閒或其他活動。男生的情況比女生的情況為差，但差距隨着學生的年紀增長而收窄。約有一成學生認為父母經常想控制他們生活中所有的事，這種感覺隨着學生的年齡增長而越來越強。

自我存在意義方面，大約6至8%的學生表示失去人生方向，女生的情況比男生好，而整體情況隨着學生的年齡增長而有所改善。超過一半受訪學生(62.8%)感到功課壓力很大，約四成人不滿意自己的學業成績。女生的情況比男生嚴重，情況更隨着學生年紀增長而變差。

麥博士表示：「家長除了注意子女的身體健康情況外，應多留意他們的情緒健康，例如有否心情不佳、悶悶不樂、精力不足或減少社交活動等。家長亦可多與子女以正面方式溝通，例如主動聆聽、多鼓勵、少批評、少操控，以及多給予他們私人空間。」