

Depression Awareness Programs for Adolescents: A Scoping Review

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Purpose

The purpose of this DNP project is to determine if receiving school-based depression awareness education affects the depression scores of adolescents between 10 and 19 years of age.

Background

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among adolescents ages 10 years and older in the United States. The need to recognize and treat mental illness in adolescents is more critical than ever before
- Depressive disorders commonly begin during the adolescent years and young adulthood
- Distinguishing between typical behaviors and signs of mental illness can be challenging for adolescents who are learning self-identity and self-expression
- Less than half of adolescents correctly associate depression as a mental illness.
- There is a significant delay in adolescents seeking help for depressive symptoms by as much as 14 years
- There are unique opportunities to promote mental health literacy and health-seeking behaviors through school-based depression awareness programs. Little is known regarding the effectiveness of school-based depression awareness programs

Leading Cause of Death in the United States for Select Age Groups (2020)

Data Courtesy of CDC

Rank	5-9	10-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	All Ages
1	Unintentional Injury 685	Unintentional Injury 881	Unintentional Injury 15,117	Unintentional Injury 31,315	Unintentional Injury 31,057	Malignant Neoplasms 34,589	Malignant Neoplasms 110,243	Heart Disease 696,962
2	Malignant Neoplasms 382	Suicide 581	Homicide 6,466	Suicide 8,454	Heart Disease 12,177	Heart Disease 34,169	Heart Disease 88,551	Malignant Neoplasms 602,350
3	Congenital Anomalies 171	Malignant Neoplasms 410	Suicide 6,062	Homicide 7,125	Malignant Neoplasms 10,730	Unintentional Injury 27,819	COVID-19 42,090	COVID-19 350,831

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d)

Methods

Study Design

- Scoping Review

Study Setting

- School-based settings in the United States and internationally

Study Duration

- September 2020 to December 2021

Study Population

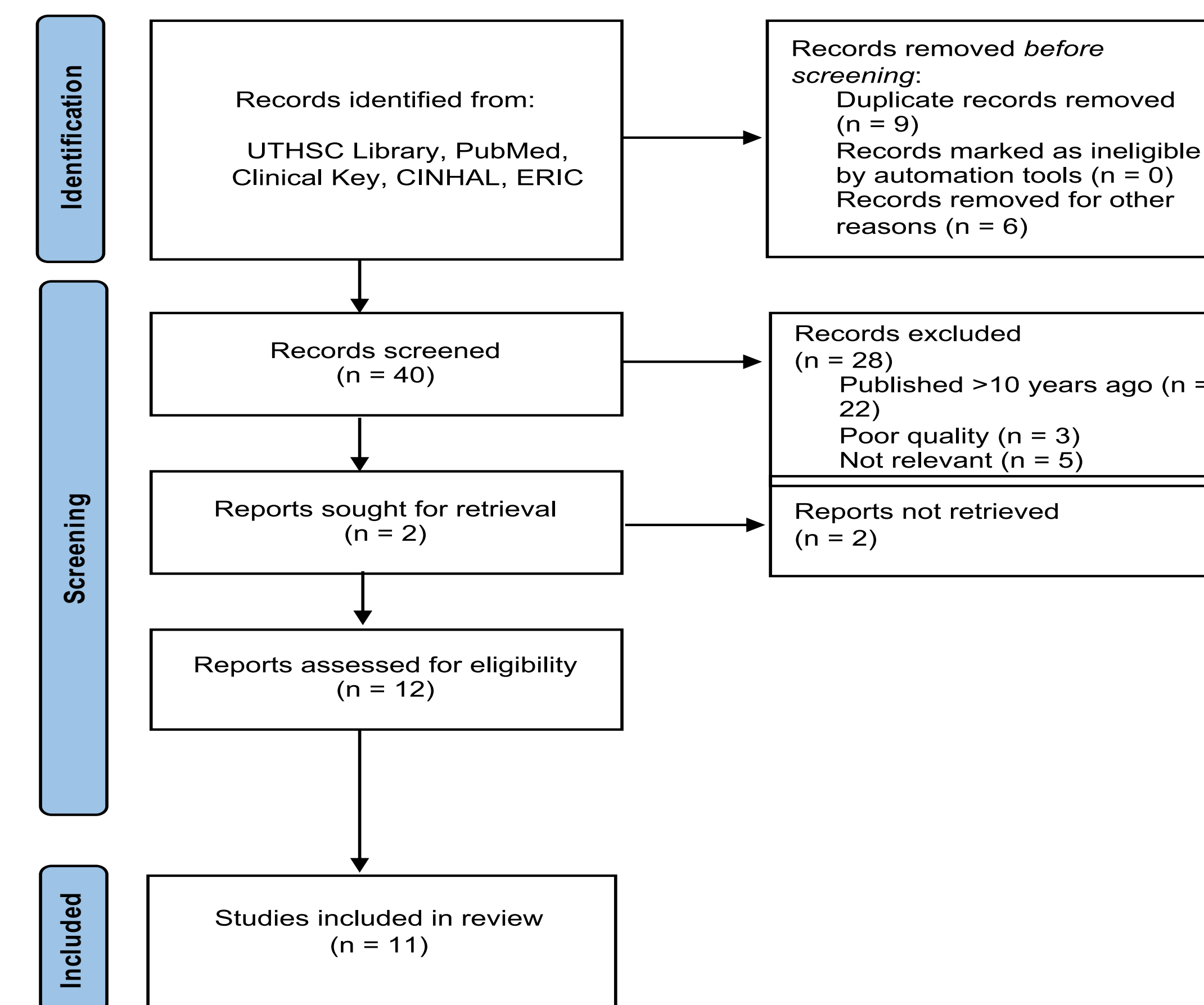
- Adolescents ages 10-19 years

Data Items

- Extraction of data variables from articles; and charted on a spreadsheet

Synthesis of Results

- Articles were sorted based on the level of evidence and synthesized using a table based on the key variables and outcomes of the PICOT question. The statistical significance was also denoted for the measured outcomes. The results for the scoping review were compiled in a narrative format.



Results

• Several outcomes were analyzed for the scoping review

- Depression awareness program, depressive or suicidal symptoms, post-education depression awareness, and likeliness to seek assistance post-education

• The results of the scoping review indicate that adolescents who participated in school-based depression awareness programs benefited from participation in such programs

- The pre- and post-test depression scores showed an improvement in depression literacy and awareness among participants when compared to nonparticipants

Implications for Practice

- **The positive outcomes associated with school-based depression awareness programs are not limited to improved depression awareness**
 - Social functioning
 - Interpersonal relationships
 - Help-seeking behaviors
- **However, further research is needed to determine the effectiveness of the programs on the improvement of actual depression scores in adolescents**
- **Further research should include larger and more diverse sample sizes, adequately trained program facilitators, and appropriate depression measurement tools**

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