

Listening to the Experts: How Youth with Chronic Pain Want a Peer Support Intervention to be Designed (Preliminary Questionnaire Data)

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Introduction



Youth with chronic pain (YCP) experience loneliness as they are often isolated from and/or misunderstood by peers without chronic pain.



Peer support: People with similar conditions exchanging different kinds of support (e.g., emotional, informational).



Peer support interventions (PSI) have decreased isolation and improved psychological well-being in adults with chronic pain and youth with other chronic illnesses.

Study Objectives

To conduct a patient-oriented needs assessment to:



1. Explore the attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of YCP about peer support.

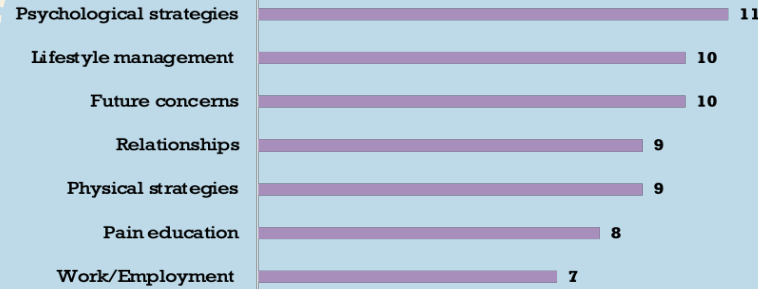


2. Understand what a beneficial group-based PSI for YCP would look like (i.e., content and format).

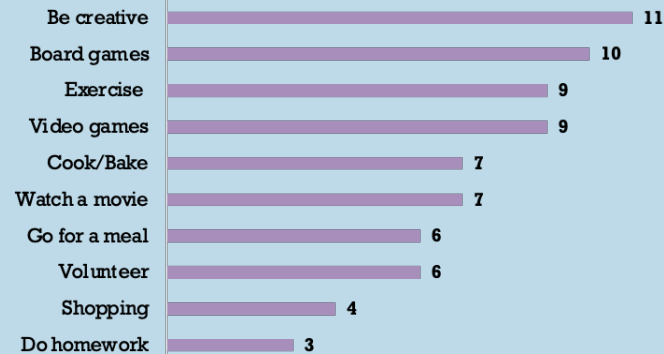
* Only objective 2 is reported here.

Results

What do youth (n=12) want to talk about?



What activities do youth (n=12) want to do?



All youth want a PSI that is **both** talking- and activity-based (n=12)



Majority of youth would prefer a **semi-structured** PSI (n=8)



Majority of youth want to meet during the **weekday** (n=7)



Majority of youth want a PSI to be **in-person** (n=10)



Majority of youth want a PSI to last **3+ months or be ongoing** (n=7)



Majority of youth want to meet in the **late afternoon or evening** (n=8)



Youth differed in their preferred group size, but want **5-20** youth in a PSI



Majority of youth want to meet every **1-2 weeks** (n=10)



Majority of youth want a PSI between **1.5-2 hours** (n=7)

Conclusions



Overall, participants varied in the content and format they desired in a PSI, identifying the need to have variation in PSI to be inclusive.



These results are a part of a larger study and will be integrated with rich qualitative data from the interviews. Youth's reasoning behind how they want a PSI to be designed depended on a multitude of factors (e.g., pain experiences, where youth live, other commitments, etc.).



These results will help inform the development, implementation, and evaluation of a PSI for YCP.

Methods

Participants: YCP (12-17 years) were recruited online and through 2 Canadian pediatric pain clinics. Youth (n=12) between 13-17 years ($M_{age} = 15$, $SD = 1.56$) participated and identified as girls (n=7), boys (n=3), questioning (n=1), and non-binary (n=1).

Procedure: The larger study included in-depth individual interviews followed by a researcher-developed questionnaire. Youth completed the interview and questionnaire over Zoom with the lead researcher.

Analysis: Questionnaire data was analyzed using descriptive and frequency statistics.



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