

research snapshot

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What Are Some of the Difficulties of Becoming an Adult With Cerebral Palsy?

What is this research about?

Young adults with cerebral palsy (CP) often face social challenges from the health care system. This is most common when they transition from childhood to adolescence. This is because care is not as readily available once patients leave the pediatric care setting. Individuals with CP may also have an increased desire for independence.

What did the researchers do?

A literature review was performed using PubMed, Google Scholar, and PsychInfo. The search criteria looked for work that was:

- Written in English or French.
- Written after 1983.
- Connected to CP or developmental disability (DD).
- Related to the social and ethical concerns of managing treatment of people becoming teenagers.

The original search included only these concerns in connection to CP. Few results led the researchers to include DD within the search criteria. There was a gap on this topic in the literature.

What you need to know:

Children with cerebral palsy can have a hard time when they become teenagers. It is important that teenagers with CP have independence. Changing how you talk with children as they become teenagers will help to respect their independence.

What did the researchers find?

Transitioning to adolescence is challenging for children with CP as they may find it difficult to ask questions or voice their desires. Parents need to balance their involvement with the adolescent's need for independence. It is recommended that the adolescent is given more space in order to develop a trusting relationship with the doctor. Adolescents with chronic conditions and disabilities report being more concerned with the way their health care providers interact with them than the content of these interactions.

How can you use this research?

Policymakers will become aware of gaps in healthcare delivery and research that must be filled to ensure the best care for people with CP and DD as they become adults.

Practitioners will learn how to build positive relationships with clients who are becoming teenagers.

About the Researchers

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Cerebral palsy, Ethics, Independence, Individuality, Adolescence, Transition

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