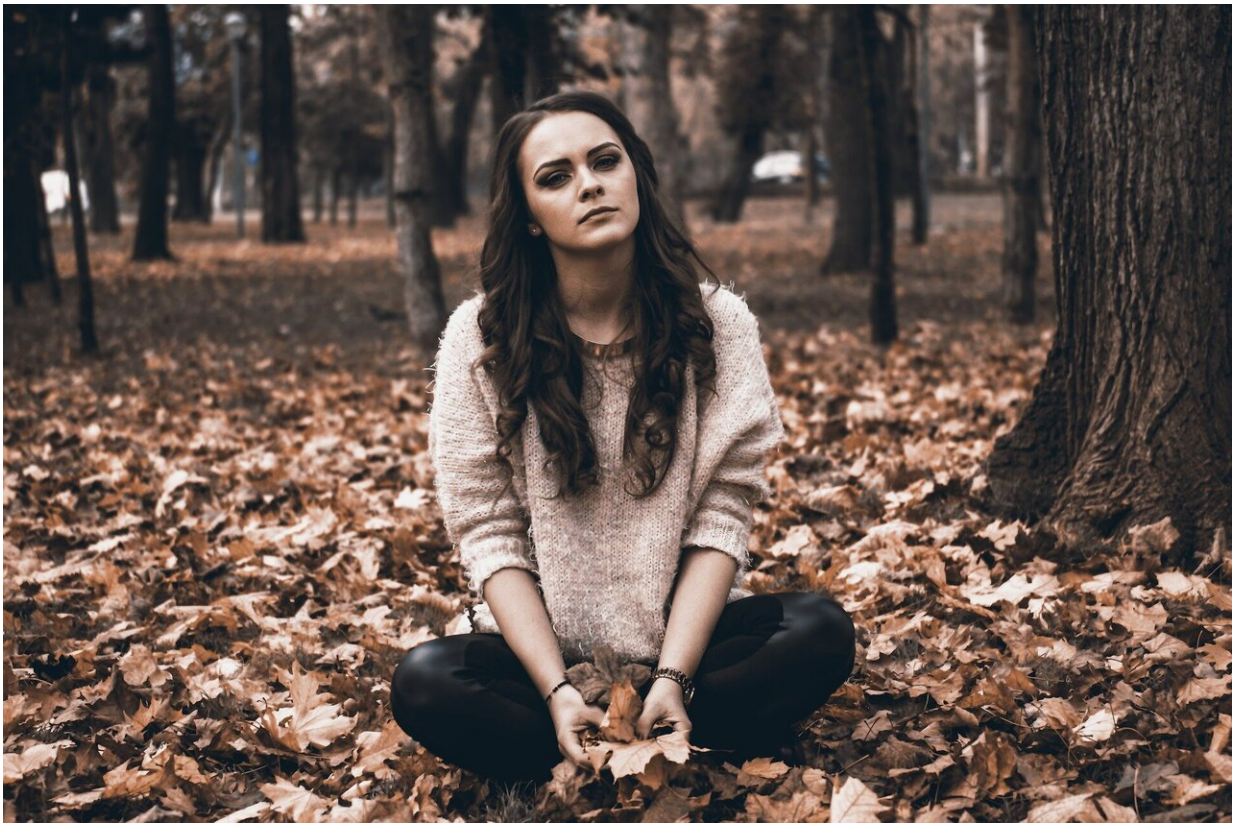


Increasing number of adolescents receive depression diagnosis

September 11 2019



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The proportion of young people in Finland diagnosed with depression in specialised services is increasing, showed a study based on an extensive set of national data. An increasing number of adolescents seek and get

help, but the increase in service use burdens specialised services. The study was conducted by the Research Centre for Child Psychiatry at the University of Turku in Finland.

The proportion of individuals who received a diagnosis by the age of 15 in specialised services increased 53% among boys and 65% among girls born between 1994 and 2000 compared to young people born between 1987 and 1993.

According to the lead author, Dr. Svetlana Filatova from the Research Centre for Child Psychiatry, the results do not imply an increase in depression among adolescents.

"The results can most probably be explained by an increase in service use. An increasing number of depressed adolescents get help at an early stage which is positive," says Filatova.

There has been an increase in the use of psychiatric services among adolescents in the past 20 years both in Finland and worldwide.

"The increase in service use can reflect better identification of depression and a more [positive attitude](#) to [mental health](#)," Filatova continues.

Examining Temporal Changes Identifies Challenges in Healthcare

Knowledge of time trends for depression is important for disease prevention and healthcare planning. However, few studies until now have examined these for the incidence and cumulative incidence of diagnosed depression from childhood to early adulthood.

According to Docent David Gyllenberg from the Research Centre for Child Psychiatry, it is important to monitor changes in the incidence of depression to timely address challenges faced by [mental health services](#).

"The rapid increase in the number of children and adolescents diagnosed with depression poses a burden for specialised mental health services that need to provide evidence-based treatment for a growing patient population," Gyllenberg stresses.

The data consisted of 1,240,062 persons including 37,682 individuals with a depression diagnosis who had visited specialised care at least once. 10% of females and 5% of males who had been followed up to the age of 25 had been diagnosed with [depression](#).

More information: Svetlana Filatova et al, Time trends in the incidence of diagnosed depression among people aged 5–25 years living in Finland 1995–2012, *Nordic Journal of Psychiatry* (2019). [DOI: 10.1080/08039488.2019.1652342](#)

Provided by University of Turku

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