

Psychiatric disorders in teenage years associated with social exclusion in later life

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Adolescents who had received a mental health disorder diagnosis were often excluded from the labor market and education as young adults. This particularly applied to adolescents who had been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder or psychosis. The results were found out in a

birth cohort study of people born in Finland in 1987. The study was published on 5 October in *British Journal of Psychiatry*.

Almost eleven percent of adolescents who had received a psychiatric diagnosis were excluded from education and labor market for at least five years in their early adulthood. For other adolescents, this number was slightly under three percent.

The results highlight the importance of the treatment and rehabilitation of people with mental health disorders in the prevention of adolescents' [social exclusion](#).

"To help prevent the social exclusion of adolescents, their treatment and rehabilitation require more resources than are currently being used as well as development of evidence-based treatment and rehabilitation," says Adolescent Psychiatrist and Doctoral Candidate Ida Ringbom from the Research Centre for Child Psychiatry at the University of Turku.

The results are concerning because they highlight the link between mental health disorders and long-term exclusion from education and labor market. In the study, long-term exclusion was defined as a period spent outside education or paid employment lasting a minimum of five years. The link was particularly strong with those teenagers who had not completed their upper secondary education and who had been diagnosed with a mental health disorder. Almost half of these teenagers who had experienced psychosis and almost three quarters of teenagers who had been diagnosed with an [autism spectrum disorder](#) experienced long-term exclusion from education and labor market in their early adulthood.

"Vocational rehabilitation and tight collaboration between psychiatry and [social services](#) are important for enabling adolescents suffering from [mental health problems](#) to access the labor market," says Assistant Professor David Gyllenberg who led the study. "Adolescents who have

not completed their upper secondary education require more targeted support because their risk of becoming socially excluded is particularly high."

More information: Ida Ringbom et al, Psychiatric disorders diagnosed in adolescence and subsequent long-term exclusion from education, employment or training: longitudinal national birth cohort study, *The British Journal of Psychiatry* (2021). [DOI: 10.1192/bjp.2021.146](https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2021.146)

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