

The Paths of Social Work in Youth Health Education

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Abstract: In the context of the continuous development of society and the popularization of the Internet, social work should help young people to expand access to sex education with professional knowledge combined with their specific conditions. The intervention of youth health through social work helps to cultivate young people's personal ability and establish correct youth health values and sexual morality. Under the existing social environment and objective conditions, it mainly relies on the professional knowledge of social work to provide professional and targeted help from the perspective of family, school and community, peer education. Furthermore, group work and new media resources can be employed to improve adolescents' cognition of youth health knowledge and realize the self-teaching and self-discipline of youth health knowledge education. The paper seeks to promote the social importance of college students' health education, to better understand the necessity of home and school adolescent physical and psychological health education, and to explore to provide some effective implementation of the path so that to carry out related projects smoothly later.

Keywords: social work, youth health, sex education

1. Introduction

According to the Beijing Zhongyi Foundation, the number of child abuse cases in China continued to increase from 2015 to 2019, tripled the previous year. The latest report shows more than 800 victims of child abuse in 301 cases in 2019 [1]. In addition, in September 2022, it was reported that students of the directing department of Beijing Film Academy and their tutors sexually assaulted female college students on the grounds of shooting and choosing roles. In recent years, with the news of examinees committing suicide from time to time making headlines during the college entrance examination season, these shocking data have aroused the attention of the society on adolescent sex education and mental health education, and also aroused the attention of the public on adolescent health education.

However, the reality is not optimistic. Many parents and even school teachers are difficult to talk about sex education or even avoid it. This makes the ignorant and curious teenagers in the face of a series of physical and psychological changes in adolescence more at a loss, and gives those with evil intentions more opportunities, thus entering an endless toxic circle.

Wang Sibin, dean of the Chinese Society of Social Work and professor of sociology at Peking University, believes that by providing professional and humanized services, social workers can help solve the basic living problems of disadvantaged groups and other needy groups, solve social

contradictions, bridge social cracks, promote social integration and social order to build a good social order [2]. Professional value of social work purpose is helping self.

The CPC Central Committee and the State Council promulgated the Outline for the Development of Chinese Children (2021-2030) and pointed out that children are the future of the country and the hope of the nation [3]. Promoting the healthy growth of children can provide valuable resources and inexhaustible power for the sustainable development of the country, which is the inevitable requirement of building a modern socialist. The author seeks to provide constructive suggestions for social work intervention in youth health education through the exploration of this paper.

1.1. Theoretical Significance

Adolescence, also known as puberty, is one of the most important stages of human development, during which it reaches its second peak of growth and development. Teenagers will gradually produce some new feelings and experiences with the process of physical changes and sexual maturity. They will be curious about their real situation and changes and try to find the answer. At this time, parents and professional teachers should provide them with scientific and correct youth health knowledge and seize the golden period for the popularization of relevant education and mental health education for teenagers. On the one hand, it not only provides reliable theoretical guidance for adolescents to face the confusion of adolescence, but also has a very important significance for adolescents to establish a healthy and correct outlook on life and values. On the other hand, trained social workers can put their professional knowledge and skills into practice after understanding the problems of teenagers and provide them with personalized help. At the same time, the example of this teenager can enrich and expand the relevant theories of social work, which is of great value for the development and progress of the field of social work for teenagers.

1.2. Practical Significance

Adolescent body hormone secretion is vigorous, and with the emergence of secondary sexual characteristics and the gradual development of reproductive organs, male and female characteristics are more distinct and attention to the opposite sex also increases. Teenagers in the new era have received compulsory education since childhood and grow up in the era of big data, where any information can be easily obtained from the Internet. They have avant-garde ideas and are curious about new things, but due to the influence of age, experience and other factors, their self-control and recognition ability are not high. Access to content related to sex and reproduction through various channels on the Internet is easily confused with unhealthy and incorrect sexual knowledge such as pornography and obscenity. If they put wrong information into practice in real life, it may lead to the imbalance of value concept, the error of value evaluation, the deviation of behavior and even sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual violence and other illegal behaviors in real life, with unimaginable consequences. The intervention of social work can provide young people with timely professional knowledge, relying on group work, case work and other professional methods; Advantage-perspective theory, value construction theory and other professional theories [4].

2. Concept Definitions

Wang Sibin, dean of the Chinese Society of Social Work and professor of sociology at Peking University, believes that social work is a helping service activity guided by altruism, based on scientific knowledge and conducted with scientific methods. This definition points out that the essence of social work is a kind of helping activity, namely, the activity of helping others dominated by the values of altruism, which is characterized by providing targeted and personalized services for the groups in need. To be more precise, social work is a kind of scientific helping service activity,

which is different from general charitable activities; This definition also states that social work is centered on the needs of the recipient and is aided by scientific helping techniques to achieve effectiveness in helping. In October 2006, the Sixth Plenary Session of the 16th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued the Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Several Major Issues concerning the Construction of a Harmonious Socialist Society (hereinafter referred to as the Decision) [5]. The Decision pointed out that it is necessary to build a large contingent of social work talents, train a contingent of social work talents with reasonable structure and excellent quality. It is the urgent need of constructing socialist harmonious society. At present, with the support and promotion of national policies, social work is gradually coming into public view. I believe that with the improvement of people's material living standards, the development prospect of social work will be brighter.

Adolescents are the transitional period when children change into adult roles, and also refers to the human living group in the transitional period from children to adults. According to the literature on CNKI, teenagers can be divided into two stages: 14-17 years old and 18-25 years old. 14-17 years old is middle school, and 18-25 years old is university. Their life stage is adolescence, also known as puberty, which is one of the most important growth stages of human life, during which they will reach the second peak of growth and development. Teenagers will gradually have some new feelings and experiences with the changes of body hormones and the process of sexual maturity. At this time, proper youth health knowledge should be involved as soon as possible to help them through this period smoothly.

Youth health education refers to the implementation of adolescent health education for adolescents between 10 to 24 years old. However, the author believes that youth health education should not only be limited to adolescent sex education. We should expand the scope and take a long-term view to include solutions to a series of problems and troubles faced by teenagers in adolescence, including physical and psychological problems. Referring to the Way of Growth developed and published by the China Family Planning Association in 2002, it should also include relevant guidance education on love, marriage, friendship, interpersonal communication, etc., so as to provide teenagers with more comprehensive and professional youth health education, enrich their reproductive health knowledge, improve their self-protection awareness and ability to help them better live through adolescence [6].

3. Necessities for Youth Health Education

3.1. The Number of Sexual Assault Cases Against Teenagers Remains High

Procuratorial organs across China prosecuted more than 60,000 crimes against minors last year, according to a white paper on juvenile procuratorial work (2021) released by the Supreme People's Procuratorate on June 1 [7]. According to the data available, the crime against minors has been on the rise in recent years. From 2017 to 2021, procuratorial organs approved the arrest of 33,790, 40,005, 47,563, 38,854 and 45,827 people for crimes against minors, and prosecuted 47,466, 50,705, 62,948, 57,295 and 60,553 people in the same period. In 2021, they will increase by 35.62% and 27.57% compared with 2017. According to the white paper, in 2021, procuratorates prosecuted 17,917 people for raping minors, up 16.61 percent year on year, 7,767 people for molesting children, up 32.09 percent year on year, and 2,167 people for forcibly molesting or insulting minors. According to the above statistics, there has been no significant improvement in the cases of juveniles aged 14 to 17, and perpetrators take advantage of their innocence, kindness and ability to protect themselves to commit crimes. The danger of society for young people is still lurking in our invisible corner, which highlights the urgency and necessity of social work to intervene in youth health education.

3.2. Objective Conditions for Physical and Mental Development of Adolescents

Sexual development is one of the most important characteristics of puberty, including the morphological changes of internal and external reproductive organs, the development and maturity of reproductive functions and the development of secondary sexual characteristics. Secondary sex characteristics refer to the external physical characteristics that can distinguish male and female sex characteristics except reproductive organs. In males, secondary sex characteristics are mainly manifested as prominent Adam's apple, low tone, muscle development, facial hair on the lips, and numerous and dense hair on the whole body. In women, secondary sexual characteristics include a soft voice, raised breasts, a wider pelvis, larger hips, and a fuller body.

Erikson, a famous American psychologist, put forward the concept of adolescent self-identity and explained the importance of forming self-identity. In Erickson's theory of stage of psycho-social development, self-identity vs. role confusion is the stage of adolescent children's personality development, and the important task of this stage is to develop self-identity and establish new self-identity. Teenagers will be curious about their own changes and try to explore them. The sudden physical and mental changes will easily make them lose themselves. At the same time, they will be more sensitive to external comments and opinions. As a result, in hot summer, some girls choose to wear thick winter uniforms to cover their growing breasts in physical education class, and high school boys who grow mustaches early use tweezers to remove stubble, which is unhealthy and potentially unsafe. If these phenomena are not dealt with in a timely manner, teenagers may have psychological problems such as inferiority, anxiety, impaired self-worth and even depression. At this time, the intervention of social work is particularly important.

3.3. Status Quo of Youth Health Education

According to Article 13 of the Population and Family Planning Law (amended in 2021) promulgated by the Standing Committee of the 13th National People's Congress, schools shall carry out physiological and health education, puberty education, or sexual health education among students in an appropriate way that conforms to the characteristics of those educated [8]. This shows that the state and society are very encouraging and supportive of youth health education and pay great attention to it, but the reality is often unsatisfactory [9]. The state requires local community health stations to provide health education for students, but it is difficult to carry out this project on a large scale due to the objective factors such as the scattered distribution of students' course time and the long distance between health stations and schools. As far as the author is concerned, school teachers and counselors find it difficult to talk about the core contents of youth health education such as sex education and reproductive health education, and even the contents related to love concept are limited, which is completely inadequate for teenagers in the flourishing period of hormones.

In the traditional Chinese education, most parents turn pale when sex is mentioned, as if sex is something that cannot be seen, instead of telling their children how they were born, they will make up some lies. At present, the most common situation is that most teenagers will search the Internet to find the answer by themselves, but the network world is complicated and changeable, and there are a lot of information that is not conducive to or even harmful to the physical and mental development of teenagers. In addition, teenagers' poor self-control and non-recognition ability are likely to affect the formation and construction of their values and outlook on life, and even induce criminal behavior, with unimaginable consequences.

3.4. The Compatibility Between Social Work and Youth Health Education

The core value of social work helps others and themselves. Social workers provide professional knowledge and targeted help to clients to make them self-awakening. This approach is most

appropriate for adolescents who are experiencing the awakening of their self-consciousness in adolescence. They are full of curiosity and passion for the society, the opposite sex and themselves, and constantly want to try new things and obtain new experiences. At this time, the intervention of social work can to a large extent prevent adolescents from going astray due to exposure to unhealthy and incorrect information.

Moreover, the professional model of peer education and social work in youth health education is also highly compatible. Social workers can help schools improve learning environment, solve relevant problems in the education process, assist schools to improve educational functions and promote students' normal growth by organizing mutually beneficial education groups or combining with school social work and providing targeted professional services. Alternatively, current college students majoring in social work can rely on professional instructors and main courses to carry out activities such as youth health peer education on campus and integrate professional knowledge such as case work and group work. This will not only provide a large number of workers with professional knowledge for youth health education but also greatly enrich the experience of social work in the field of youth affairs. It lays a favorable foundation for the promotion of youth health education and the development of youth social work in the later stage, which reflects a strong compatibility between them [10].

4. Social Work Intervention Path

4.1. Intrusive Perspective

4.1.1. Family

Family is the most important place for children to learn in addition to school. The influence brought by the original family will accompany the formation and establishment of their values and outlook on life, especially in the education of adolescence, family is of great significance. In the face of sensitive youth groups, social work can take the family as the entry point, and combine professional methods such as family social work, constructionism theory and advantaged perspective theory to carry out targeted case work or parent-child group for parents and teenagers respectively. In the face of parents, social workers can mainly focus on the popularization of physical and psychological changes of adolescents, how to better communicate with teenagers and help them go through puberty smoothly, and help family sex education desensitization, so that sex is no longer a taboo topic in the family environment [11].

For young people, social workers can carry out case-by-case services according to specific conditions, empathize with their troubles, and then actively guide them with professional skills and knowledge to solve their troubles. Of course, carrying out parent-child groups in a relaxed and harmonious atmosphere in the family environment is also a good way to realize youth health education. Placing sex education and reproductive health education in a professional, safe, free and open environment will greatly improve the acceptability of both parents and children. In addition, it will promote the harmonious relationship between parents and children, deepen the mutual understanding between parents and children and other benefits.

4.1.2. School

School is the main place for teenagers to receive education, and school education is the main way for most teenagers to obtain knowledge. According to the survey, most school teachers think it is very important to offer youth health education courses, but the proportion of those who think they are competent for the course teaching is very small and almost all teachers think that it should be conducted by professionals. The development of youth health education courses in schools can be

traced back to early 21st century. So far, most colleges and universities have set up a series of basic facilities and courses for youth health education, such as student psychological consultation rooms, mental health centers, and reproductive health education.

However, according to the author's observation, the number of students actively making an appointment for psychological counseling and going to mental health centers is not optimistic. In addition, the youth health education courses mainly focus on elective courses or playing related audio and video materials in class meetings, which cannot achieve the purpose of individualized solution to specific problems and puzzles of teenagers. The author joined Jinan Youth Network in 2020, participated in and hosted nearly ten youth health education lectures and other education and publicity activities, and fully realized the importance of combining social work students with campus youth health education. Students majoring in social work can rely on the professional knowledge of school social work and youth social work and combine with the abundant teaching staff and professional sites to organize the youth health education in various forms, vivid contents and targets.

4.1.3. Community

Community is actually a diverse environment, and the complexity and tolerance of its personnel are quite different from that of families and schools, and the resistance will increase accordingly. Social workers can start from local community service stations and community grid workers to grasp the basic situation of the community, and formulate targeted service plans according to the population type distribution of the community. Social workers should rely on their professional knowledge to provide efficient and dynamic youth health education for the community, such as community education, which is a professional working method summarized and formed in school social work practice. It takes class as a unit, through classroom activities, social worker design sex education as the theme to design a series of courses [12]. Social workers can gradually promote their use after constant contact with the community and deepening mutual understanding, which is conducive to social workers' summarizing experience in practice and flexible combination with professional knowledge so as to facilitate the further development of youth health education in the community.

4.2. Intervention Methods

Youth health education focuses on the physiological and psychological problems of young people in the process of growing up. Most of the service objects are shy to talk about such problems or have biased emotions. Therefore, we should try to carry out the education in a way that is infectious and convenient to collect feedback from the service objects in time. By participating in various activities of Jinan Youth Network, the author summarizes the following three ways that are more suitable for promotion.

4.2.1. Peer Education

According to Hartup's research on the growth of peer relationship and social ability, in a good peer relationship, children can learn from each other, control each other and assist each other to identify gender socialization [13]. In order to allow peers to communicate and learn, the trained leader not only delivers positive and correct youth health knowledge to other partners in a relaxed and free environment, but also greatly improves the fun of the activity. Considering that the activity is in line with the active and lively character of peers, more people will be interested in participating in it. Only in the end can the purpose of education be achieved. In addition, peer education organized by peers can avoid the preaching of vague truth and overly complex or abstract problems to a greater extent, so that participants can understand and digest, and finally can truly realize the significance of youth health education.

4.2.2. Group Work

The interactive mode of group work emphasizes the focus of group work on the common needs of group members. This mode can also be used for youth health education in families and schools. Each family or dormitory can form a group in its own unit, in which members have a common and mutually beneficial goal. For example, in the family, the parents help the children with sex education, and the children help the parents understand the behavior characteristics of the children [14].

4.2.3. New Media Resources

Especially during the epidemic period in the past few years, online teaching has become the norm, but it also provides us with new ideas to carry out youth health education. Social workers can build their own youth and health brand, such as 525 Mental Health Festival, Green vine Youth Education Training and other online series of activities. Through regular and regular implementation and continuous expansion of publicity on new media, the utilization rate of resources can be improved and the benefit group can be expanded.

However, when using new media to carry out online activities, it should mainly prevent the online lectures from becoming boring and the participants from feeling bored or even offline due to the large amount of one-way output of knowledge. Social workers should give full play to their professional skills to increase the interaction between the host and the participants by means of icebreaking games, interlocuting questions and answers, and video and audio clip excerpts [15]. The places of online education are no longer limited to regions. Social workers should make full use of the characteristics of mobile and virtualization of the network to carry out youth health education in various channels, forms and all directions, reflecting the sense of The Times and attraction of the youth [16]. Youth health education should be targeted, planned, organized and accurate implementation of educational activities, the content of the activities should be appropriate to students' life, close to the needs of students, both in form and content [17].

5. Conclusion

The continuous development of society and the popularization of the Internet increases not only the access to sex education for teenagers but also the possibility for them to accept unhealthy pornographic information. The intervention of social work in youth health education is an inevitable requirement of youth's physical and psychological development. It is also an important way to respond to the shortage of youth health education in families and schools, and an inevitable move to respond to the national youth development policy. The paper seeks to promote the social importance of college students' health education, to better understand the necessity of home and school adolescent physical and psychological health education, and to explore to provide some effective implementation of the path so that to carry out related projects smoothly later.

The intervention of youth health through social work helps to cultivate young people's personal ability and establish correct youth health values and sexual morality. Under the existing social environment and objective conditions, it mainly relies on the professional knowledge of social work to provide professional and targeted help from the perspective of family, school and community, peer education. Furthermore, group work and new media resources can be employed to improve adolescents' cognition of youth health knowledge and realize the self-teaching and self-discipline of youth health knowledge education. Social workers, as well as the entire society, can intervene in youth health education and make a difference, which is crucial for youth development.

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