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Longitudinal Relations Among Depression, Stress, and Coping in High Risk Youth

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Abstract

The structural relationships among risk and protective factors were examined in a sample of 646 continuation high school students. Although depression predicted more perceived stress, it was not a unique predictor of anger coping, seeking social support, or substance use. Perceived stress increased seeking social support. Seeking social support decreased the utilization of anger coping, which suggests that it may be a means of prevention for adolescents. Anger coping behaviors were implicated as being significant in sustaining depression and perceived stress, and in increasing hard drug use over time. Moderation analysis indicated that although there was no difference in the stress–coping–depression relationship between Latinos and Caucasians, the relationship among perceived stress, anger coping, and depression was stronger for female than for male adolescents. Theoretical and practical implications of the findings are discussed.