

Understanding teacher connectedness: The need to listen to young people's voices.

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Background

Numerous studies have examined the relationships between teacher or school connectedness and adolescents' outcomes. This evidence suggests that teacher connectedness, i.e. meaningful student-teacher relationships, is a powerful asset for young people's wellbeing. However, this construct has been defined in a variety of ways with few studies examining young people's views on the meaning and predictors of connectedness.

This poster presents findings from a scoping review conducted as part of the EU funded Teacher Connectedness Project "Wellbeing among European youth: The contribution of student-teacher relationships in the secondary-school population". This review aimed to map and summarise existing studies about teacher or school connectedness in secondary school students, including research on the views and experiences of young people.

Methods

SCOPUS, Web of Science, ERIC, the Cochrane Library and the EPPI Centre Database of Education Research were searched for relevant peer-review articles published from 1990 to 2016. An initial set of 1,750 potentially relevant records was identified, from which 492 were retained for full-text retrieval.

Preliminary findings

Few studies have focused specifically on young people's views on the meaning and factors associated with their connectedness to school and teachers. However, by reviewing existing qualitative studies, we were able to identify some key elements in young people's words that can help clarify on the definition of teacher connectedness and its predictors.

Future studies should recognize young people as key actors in any initiative or intervention aimed at improving their relationships with teachers and school, and ultimately their health and wellbeing.

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