

IDENTIFYING THE INCIDENCE OF DEPRESSION IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS
BEING RAISED BY CUSTODIAL GRANDPARENTS

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- Purpose:** This study will explore the incidence of depression in children and adolescents being raised by custodial grandparents and compare this to the national estimates of depression in the pediatric population.
- Methods:** Approximately 50 grandchildren whose grandparents participate in the Healthy Grandparent Project that provides nursing, social work, and other support services to custodial grandparents are being screened for the incidence of depression using the Children's Depression Inventory (Kovacs, 1981) and the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale for Children (Weissman et al, 1980). The children range in age from 8 to 18 This study is using the format designed for the KySS Program, Keep Your Children/yourself Safe and Secure (Melynk & Moldenhauer, 2001), Descriptive statistics on the depression scales will be presented with comparisons made to national survey data.
- Findings:** The study will support the efforts of the KySS Campaign, a national effort to reduce psychosocial morbidities in children and adolescents. Children experiencing depression are at increased risk for suicide, risk-taking behavior, delinquency, and adult depression (Birmaher et al, 1996). The children in this study have experienced loss, abuse, and neglect because of parental death, drug use, incarceration, or absence of good parenting skills - variables that place them at greater risk for depression.
- Discussion:** The findings will enable advanced practice nurses and other health care providers to identify children and adolescents at risk for depression and encourage the use of depression screening during primary care encounters as well as in schools and health care settings.

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