

## Parental Insight Understanding the Awareness and Knowledge of Risky Behaviors in Children and Adolescents

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### Abstract

This study investigates parents' awareness and knowledge of risky behaviors exhibited by children and adolescents, including substance use, delinquency, and unsafe sexual practices. A mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, was employed to assess parental perceptions, knowledge gaps, and the impact of demographic factors on awareness levels. Findings indicate that while parents generally recognize the prevalence of risky behaviors, significant gaps exist in their understanding of the specific risks and protective factors associated with these behaviors. The results emphasize the need for enhanced parental education and resources to effectively guide and support children in navigating potential risks.

**Keywords:** Parental awareness; Risky behaviors; Children and adolescents; Substance use; Delinquency; Unsafe sexual practices; Parent education; Qualitative interviews

### Introduction

As primary caregivers, parents play a crucial role in shaping the behavior and decision-making processes of their children and adolescents. Understanding risky behaviors such as substance use, delinquency, and unsafe sexual practices has become increasingly important in today's society, where youth face various challenges and temptations. Despite the availability of information regarding these issues, parents often find themselves in a complex position, balancing their desire to protect their children with the need to foster independence [1]. Research indicates that parental awareness of risky behaviors is a significant factor influencing adolescent behavior. However, there is limited understanding of how informed parents are about the specific risks and protective factors associated with these behaviors. This lack of knowledge can hinder their ability to provide adequate guidance and support. This study aims to explore the awareness and knowledge of parents regarding risky behaviors in children and adolescents [2-5]. Specifically, it seeks to identify the factors that contribute to parents' understanding, the gaps in their knowledge, and how demographic variables such as age, education level, and socioeconomic status impact their awareness. By gaining insight into parental perceptions, the study aims to inform strategies for enhancing parental education and resources, ultimately promoting healthier outcomes for children and adolescents.

### Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods design to gain a comprehensive understanding of parental awareness and knowledge of risky behaviors. The methodology comprises two main components: quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews [6]. A structured questionnaire was developed and distributed to a sample of 300 parents of children aged 10 to 18 years. The survey included items on:

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential tests to identify correlations between demographic factors and levels of awareness. In-depth interviews were conducted with 30 parents from diverse backgrounds to explore their perspectives on risky behaviors in children and adolescents [7]. The interviews aimed to capture interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed thematically to identify common themes and insights related to parental awareness

and knowledge.

### Discussion

The findings of this study reveal a complex landscape of parental awareness and knowledge regarding risky behaviors in children and adolescents. Overall, while parents demonstrate a general awareness of the existence of risky behaviors such as substance use, delinquency, and unsafe sexual practices, significant gaps remain in their specific knowledge about the associated risks and protective factors. Many parents expressed awareness of broad categories of risky behaviors but struggled with detailed knowledge about the prevalence and consequences of these behaviors [8]. For instance, while parents recognized that substance use is a concern among adolescents, few understood the varying degrees of risk associated with different substances or the developmental factors that might contribute to substance use.

**Impact of Demographics:** The analysis revealed that demographic factors such as age, education level, and socioeconomic status significantly influenced parental awareness. Younger parents or those with higher education levels tended to have a better grasp of the nuances associated with risky behaviors [9]. This suggests that targeted educational initiatives could be beneficial in reaching those demographics that demonstrate lower levels of awareness.

**Sources of Information:** Parents primarily relied on informal sources, such as conversations with peers or media portrayals, rather than structured educational programs. This reliance on informal channels may contribute to knowledge gaps, highlighting the need for

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comprehensive educational resources that parents can trust.

**Perceived Barriers:** Many parents reported feeling overwhelmed by the information available and expressed concerns about their ability to engage in conversations with their children about risky behaviors [10]. This suggests a need for training programs aimed at improving parental communication skills and increasing their confidence in addressing these sensitive topics.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study underscores the critical role that parental awareness and knowledge play in shaping the behavior of children and adolescents concerning risky behaviors. While parents generally recognize the existence of these behaviors, their limited understanding of specific risks and protective factors highlights the need for enhanced education and resources. To promote healthier outcomes for youth, it is essential to develop targeted interventions that equip parents with the knowledge and tools they need to effectively guide their children. Educational programs should focus on fostering open communication between parents and children, addressing specific risky behaviors, and providing accessible resources for ongoing learning. Future research should continue to explore the dynamics of parental awareness, examining how different cultural, social, and economic contexts influence perceptions of risky behaviors. By enhancing our understanding of parental insight, we can better support families in navigating the complexities of adolescence, ultimately fostering resilience and well-being among youth.

## Acknowledgement

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## Conflict of Interest

None

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