

Support Program to Mothers of Sexually Abused Children in North West Province in South Africa: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT The purpose of the study was to conduct a comprehensive literature review on existing formal and informal support system for the mothers whose children were survivors of sexual abuse. Articles published from 1990-2010 in peer review journals and books were examined from PUBMED, CINAHL, hand search of bibliographies, and reports published by World Health Organization (WHO). The search focused on: program for mothers whose children were sexually assaulted, need for the support program, experiences of the mother regarding the child's sexual trauma, mother support to the child after disclosure, existing health care policies. Original articles only were included and these articles contained key words: Mothers/parents/caregivers, child sexual abuse, support program, rape and non-abusive mothers. The articles were to (1) describe program for the mothers, (2) acknowledge a need for the support system of a mother of a sexually abused child (SAC) (3) Experiences of the mother regarding the child's sexual trauma. (4) Mother supports to the child after disclosure and (5) any existing health care policies focusing on support for mothers of sexually abused children. Articles were labeled and categorized according to inclusion criteria. Data gathered was coded according to the themes from each article that qualified for inclusion. Notes on ideas were read and documented as a means of reference. Four (25%) articles reported that mothers: experienced distress of different types and that culture contributes to mothers' inadequate support to the child when the perpetrator is a family member. Five (31%) articles reported that mothers need support systems five (31%) articles also reported that support program was needed for mother post child sexual trauma and two 13% supported the idea that sexually abused children should be supported by their mothers. Out of the same articles two (13%) articles reported an existence of support program to mothers.