

## Strategies to Promote Better Outcomes in Young People with Chronic Illnesses

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** This paper aims to provide an overview of chronic illness and disability in young people, focusing on the developmental needs of young people and the impact of chronic illness on adolescence. The emotional well-being of the young person with chronic illness is explored and strategies that promote better health outcomes for the young person through health, family and school settings are discussed. **Methods:** Literature was searched using Medline from 1980 to 2002 using the keywords chronic illness, chronic disease, disability, psychological, social, outcomes and transition. Articles were also hand searched from retrieved articles. **Conclusions:** Young people with chronic illness have the same developmental needs as other adolescents. Traditional health care is focused on disease outcomes; however, young people do not necessarily share the same focus. Improving health outcomes for young people involves health professionals having an understanding of adolescent development and broadening the medical perspective to incorporate the developmental perspective. Building competence in young people with chronic illness, strengthening connectedness within the family, school and peer group and building the capacity of the health care team in different settings will provide opportunities to enhance resilience in young people with chronic illness. In doing so, their health outcomes will hopefully also be improved.

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**Key words:** Chronic Illness, Disability, Outcomes, Young people

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