Abstract

The role of social support in overcoming trauma has been well supported by the literature. Sexual assault is one of the most prevalent precursors to post-traumatic stress disorder in the United States, especially among women. The following review examines the role of informal social support, both positive and negative, in the development of PTSD and in post-assault recovery. While negative social reactions following a sexual assault disclosure is a significant predictive factor in the development of PTSD, positive social support can provide a buffering effect and promote faster recovery. The effects of social support are mediated by the survivor's perception of the support received.

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