YOUNG & RESILIENT RESEARCH CENTRE

Y&R 2025 SEMINAR SERIES

9 July: Imogen Harper

Postdoctoral Research Associate, Sydney Centre for Healthy Societies and Charles Perkins Centre, University of Sydney.

Growing up, ill: young people's experiences of chronic illness



Chronic illness in young people is routinely underacknowledged and underreported. In general, pain and illness are represented as the exception rather than the rule for young people, however experiencing chronic illness when young is not rare. Rather, it is misunderstood, unrecognised, and hidden. This presentation draws on 33 in-depth interviews with young adults aged 19-29 years-old who live with a range of diagnosed and undiagnosed physical health conditions to explore how young people construct and negotiate chronic illness in their lives. A significant portion of most interviews involved participants reflecting on their experiences as a child or teenager, and I argue that the marginalisation and uncertainty experienced by my participants is often caused by persistent failures to listen to young people, along with some shortcomings of the current education and narratives about chronic illness and wellbeing. I further explore how chronic illness when young is impacted by, and impacts, the shifting meanings and expectations of youth.

Biography

Imogen Harper is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Sydney Centre for Healthy Societies and Charles Perkins Centre at the University of Sydney. Imogen's person-centred qualitative research explores experiences surrounding chronic illness, health inequality, disability, youth, and digital media.

9 July, 12:00 to 1:00 PM

Parramatta South EZ.1.57 & Online

Lunch will be provided