



Letter to the editor

Joint Family Activities and Adolescent Health and Wellbeing: Further Considerations Following the War in Ukraine

**To the Editors:**

As the authors of the article, “Typologies of Joint Family Activities and Associations With Mental Health and Wellbeing Among Adolescents From Four Countries,” we would like to provide a statement in light of recent events taking place in Eastern Europe [1]. Following the tragic events surrounding the war in Ukraine which started on February 24, 2022, more than half the country’s 7.5 million children have now been displaced [2]. At the time of this paper’s acceptance, hundreds of thousands of refugees making up mostly women and children have travelled to Slovakia, Czechia, and even Russia [3]; countries of focus in the current study. Families have been separated, and the once familiar routines of school and leisure for many Ukrainian children have been replaced with ensuring survival coupled with trauma and unfamiliarity. Lack of housing, malnutrition/hunger, exposure to infectious disease but also deprivation of education, sport, and leisure, are just some of the devastating impacts from armed conflicts on young people’s health and wellbeing [4]. Families from Ukraine will add to the growing number of refugees in the world, a group of over 21 million people who can often struggle with sociocultural differences in the countries they take refuge, as well as accessing information due to language barriers [5]. Many of the most common family activities for the children in our study, such as eating a meal and talking together, will likely present differently or have very different meaning among the hundreds of children who have arrived and will continue to come to these countries. Similarly, the mental health and wellbeing of both those from Ukraine and those from countries geographically close to the conflict will almost certainly suffer following these terrible events. Júnior et al. [4] highlight the importance of addressing children’s psychosocial needs, recommending parents create a safe space that allows for listening to children. As demonstrated in our paper, spending time together with family is important for adolescent’s health wellbeing and may be particularly crucial for families affected by the crisis. We hope that future research surrounding leisure time use and adolescent health considers the needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups of young people in particular, such as those affected and displaced by war and conflict.

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