

Pediatric Mental Health Clinical Experiences in FNP Programs

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Background

- 69% of FNPs provide primary care across the life span ¹
- 5.2% of children and adolescent underwent an office-base visit with 35.8% of these being for a mental health disorder ²
- Mental health disorders among high-risk populations, including children continue to rise.

Objectives

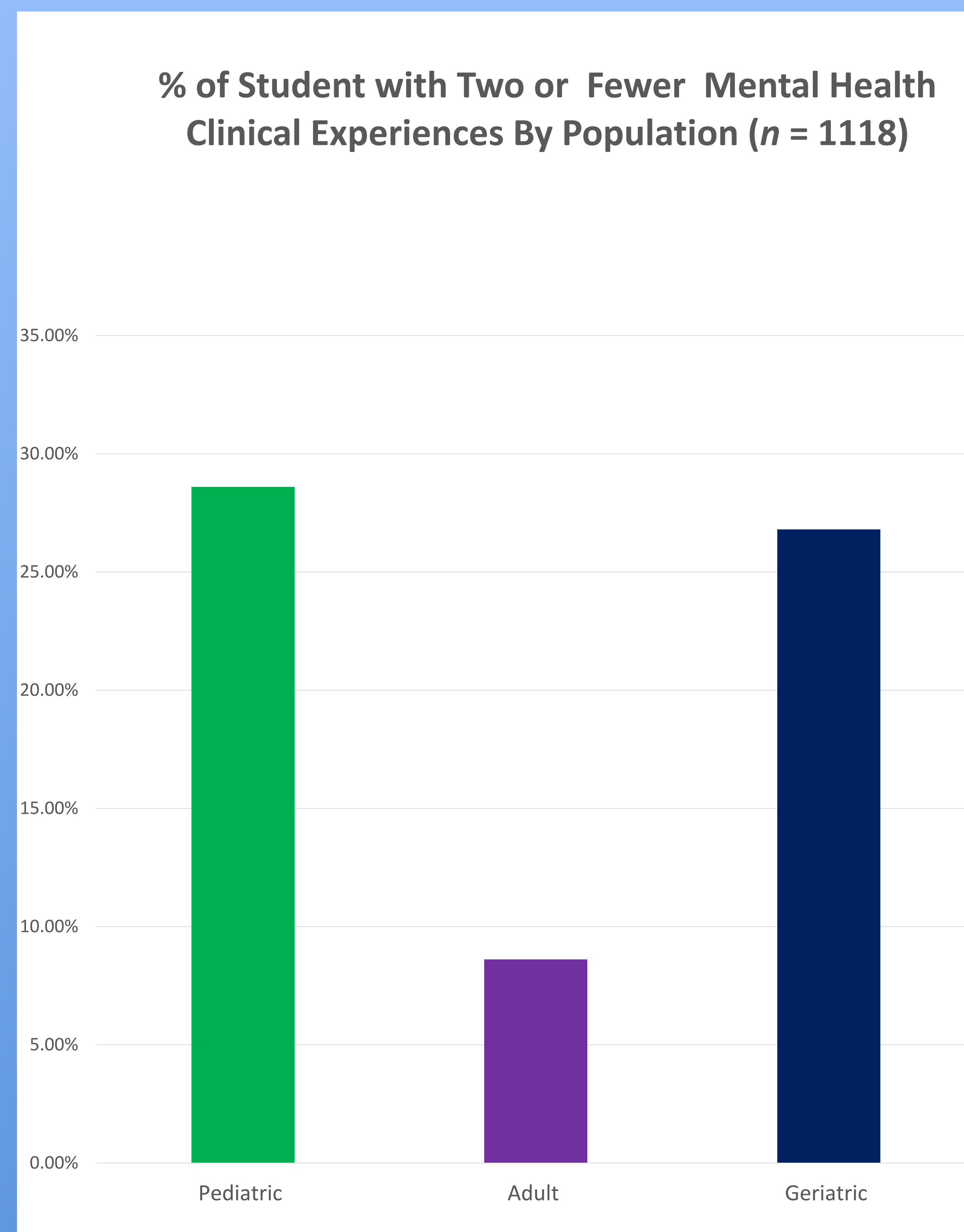
Describe pediatric mental health clinical experiences in a national sample of FNP students.

Methods

This study is a secondary analysis of data collected for the National Study of Clinical Education in Family Nurse Practitioners Program from 2016 to 2018 (N = 3940).³

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's chi-square tests for comparison of variables.

Main Findings



- 28.3% of students had two or fewer pediatric mental health experiences, compared to 8.6% of students had 2 or fewer adult mental health experiences
- 53% of students who reported two or fewer pediatric experiences set up their own clinical sites and preceptors

Conclusions

- Graduate nursing education includes both didactic coursework and experiential learning opportunities across the lifespan that are critical for a safe transition to practice.
- It is imperative for FNPs to have knowledge and training in mental health to address these conditions in all populations in practice.
- These alarming findings should guide graduate nursing programs and educators to strategize ways to ensure adequate simulated and clinical experiences for safe, independent practice.

References

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