

Violent relationships and self-harm among adolescents in Denmark

MscPH, Sarah Grube Jensen, Centre for Suicide Research, Denmark (sgj@cfsmail.dk)
Administrative Assistant, Anne Dinesen Clausen, Centre for Suicide Research, Denmark

INTRODUCTION

This study is part of the on-going project called The CASE Study (Childhood and Adolescent Self-harm in Europe). The study examines the prevalence of vulnerability, self-harm and suicidal behaviour among adolescents aged 13-19 years in Denmark. Furthermore, factors that decrease or increase the risk of self-harm and suicidal behaviour are identified.

The project is financially supported by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Interior.

GOALS

The goal is to raise awareness of violent teenage relationships and how much it affects adolescents. With this information preventive actions can be taken.

METHOD

Data is collected through a questionnaire administered to schools in Denmark. The questionnaire is web-based and included 42 questions in 2015. Seven questions concerned violence (psychologically, physically or sexually). Data was cleansed from incorrect responses through assessment of text answers and response patterns. Results were calculated by multiple regression analysis to control for gender, age and household differences.

RESULTS

In total, 4,623 adolescents aged 13-19 years from 52 different schools completed the questionnaire. Adolescents exposed to at least one type of violence constitute 60% with psychological violence being the most prevalent. Of these adolescents, 132 (5%) had experienced violence from a partner during or after a relationship.

The results, displayed in Fig. 1, show that adolescents who experienced violence from other people than their partner had a 5 times higher risk of carrying out self-harm than those who had not experienced violence (OR 4.5 $p < 0.0001$). Meanwhile, adolescents who experienced violence from a partner had a 9 times higher risk of carrying out self-harm than those who had not experienced violence (OR 8.8 $p < 0.0001$). This result is supported by a study from Helweg-Larsen & Plauborg (2014).

CONCLUSIONS

Violence from a partner is far more damaging for adolescents than violence from other people like family, friends or strangers.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Fig. 1: Violence and behaviour.

