

Pocket money in exchange for chores prevents self-harm among adolescents

MscPH, Sarah Grube Jakobsen, 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 '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 for Children and Social Affairs.

AIM

The purpose of this study is to examine if pocket money has a positive effect on self-harm among adolescents.

METHODS

Data were collected through a questionnaire distributed to schools in Denmark. The questionnaire was web-based and included 47 questions in 2017. Ten questions concerned economy and social relations. Calculations were done by multiple regression analysis to control for gender, age, household differences, after-school job, vulnerability, and serious thoughts about self-harm.

RESULTS

In total, 3,824 adolescents aged 13-19 years from 31 different schools participated in the survey.

More than half the adolescents received pocket money from their parents (54%). Of those who received pocket money, 61% had to do chores to earn them while 39% did not have to do chores to earn them.

The results, displayed in Table 1, show that adolescents who did chores in exchange for pocket money had 26% less risk of self-harm compared to those who did not receive pocket money at all (OR=0.74 $p<0.05$).

Table 1: Pocketmoney and self-harm.

	Percentage in survey	Self-harm	OR adj.
No pocket money	46 %	17.4 %	1
Pocket money & chores	33 %	14.7 %	0.74*
Pocket money & no chores	21 %	20.4 %	0.88

* $p<0.05$

CONCLUSION

Earning pocket money by doing chores has a protective effect on self-harm among adolescents. There is no significant difference on self-harm between adolescents who receive pocket money without having to do chores and those who do not receive pocket money at all.

