

# VULNERABILITY, THOUGHTS OF SELF-HARM AND SELF-HARMING BEHAVIOUR AMONG ADOLESCENTS 2011

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## 1. Background and objective

This ongoing study is a part of a major study called "The Youth Barometer for vulnerability, thoughts of self-harm and self-harming behaviour" which has collected data on vulnerability, thoughts of self-harm and self-harming behaviour among Danish adolescents since 2001. The present study contains data for 2011.

The objective of the study is to increase knowledge about adolescents at school (lower and upper secondary education) who are not admitted to a hospital and do not have a diagnosis of mental disorders.

## 2. Methods

25 schools have participated. In total, 1.480 adolescents of 13-19 years have completed the electronic questionnaire.

## 3. Results

### Vulnerability

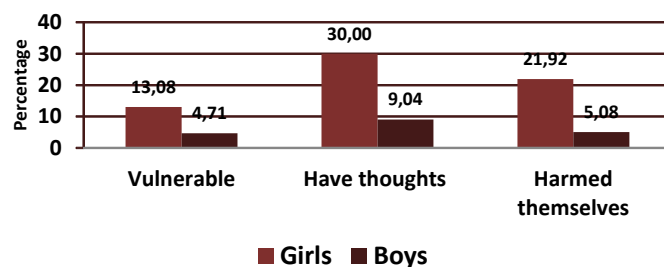
8.85% of adolescents in lower secondary education said they had serious, personal, emotional or mental problems, where they felt they needed professional help within the last year. Of these, 13.08% were girls and 4.71% boys (figure 1).

13.75% of adolescents in upper secondary education also felt that they needed professional help, because they had serious, personal, emotional or mental health problems within the past year. 19.69% were girls and 5.14% boys (figure 2).

### Thoughts of self-harm

19.41% of adolescents in lower secondary education and 14.69% of adolescents in upper secondary education said they had seriously considered self-harm without acting upon it. In the lower secondary education, it was 30% of the girls and 9.04% of the boys (figure 1). In secondary upper education, it was 19.29% of the girls and 8% of the boys (figure 2).

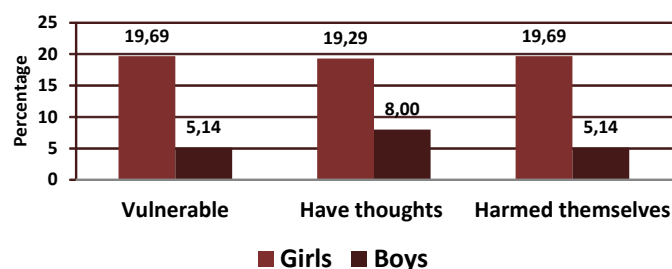
Figure 1. Vulnerability, thoughts of self-harm and self-harming behaviour among adolescents in lower secondary education



### Self-harming behaviour

Data from 2011 showed that 13.42% of adolescents in lower secondary education and 13.75% of adolescents in upper secondary education had harmed themselves once or several times. In lower secondary education it was 21.92% of girls and 5.08% of the boys. In upper secondary education, 19.69% of the girls and 5.14% of the boys harmed themselves.

Figure 2. Vulnerability, thoughts of self-harm and self-harming behaviour among adolescents in upper secondary education



## 4. Conclusion

Despite the focus on prevention in recent years, the percentage of adolescents that harmed themselves is still high, which indicate that more knowledge about adolescents' poor personal welfare must be collected in order to explain this complex phenomenon.

