

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

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## 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.

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## 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 %	<b>0.74*</b>
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.

