

How Much is Enough ? Social Support, Mental Health, and Suicidal Ideation in Adolescence



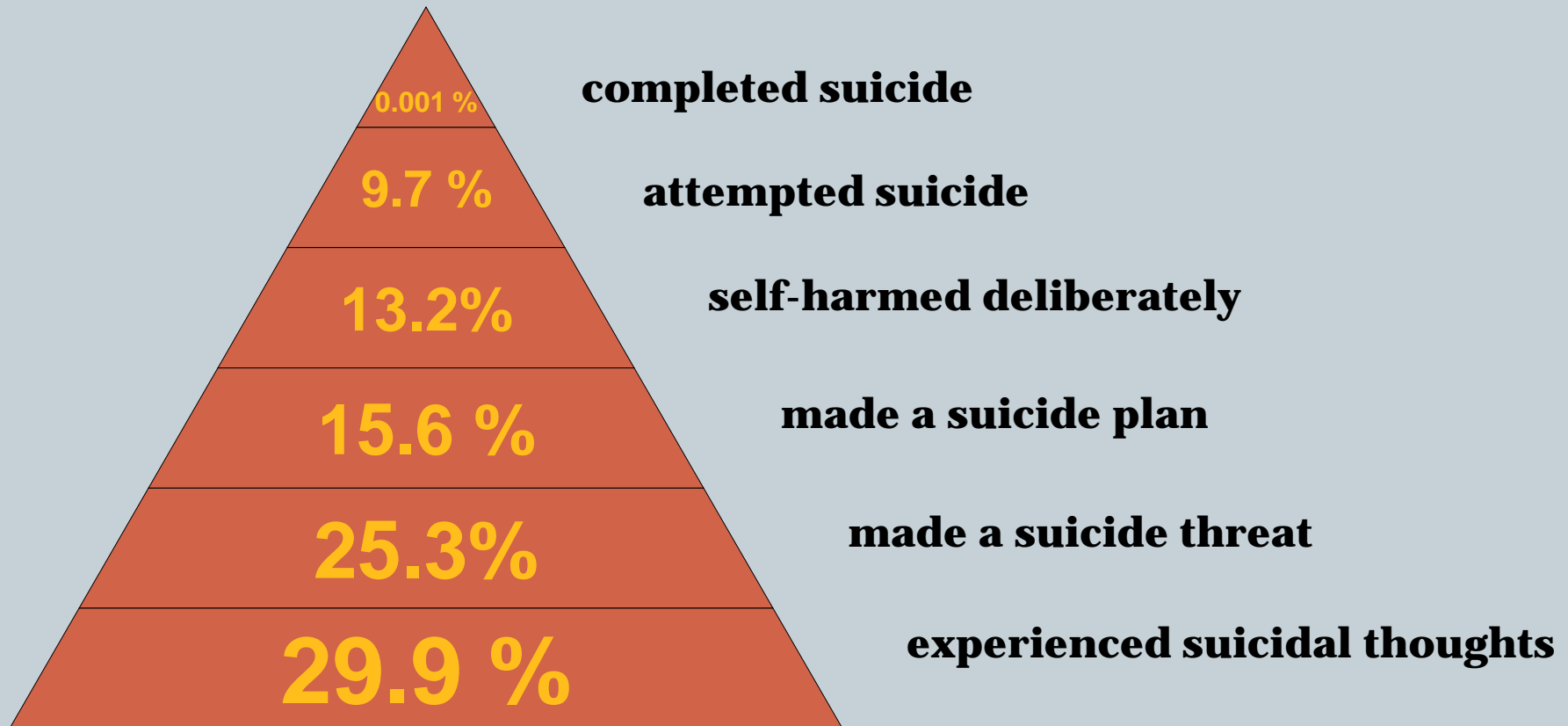
FINDINGS FROM A COMMUNITY SAMPLE OF ADOLESCENTS IN OTTAWA

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Prevalence of Suicidal Phenomena in Youth

Evans et al, 2005 ($N = 513,188$ adolescents)



Background and Objectives

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- Adolescents with mental health issues and environmental stressors are at greater risk of suicidal ideation
- Understanding the extent to which other factors, such as **social and family support, can offset the risk for suicidal ideation** has important implications for prevention
- **Objectives:** **Examine (a) the independent, and (b) aggregate effect of different types of social support on suicidal ideation in adolescents from the community**

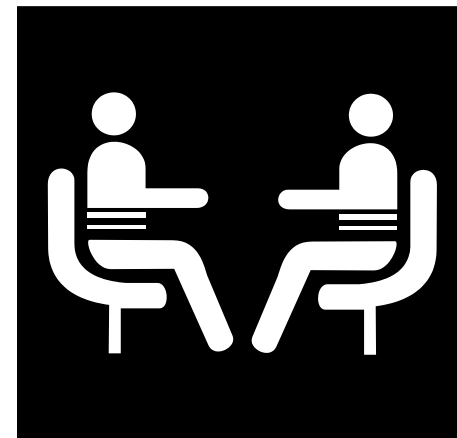
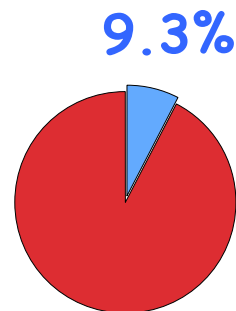
REAL – Research on Eating and Adolescent Lifestyles

N=2119 grade 7 – 12 students
from Ottawa schools

1244 girls (59%) and 875 boys
(41%)

Age 12 to 20 yrs (mean: 15.2)

Self-reported questionnaires



Clinical follow-up
meetings have been
offered to 264 at-
risk students

Targeted Prevention

Funded by the Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health at CHEO
and the University of Ottawa Medical Research Fund

Method – Measures

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- Suicidal ideation

One item from Kovacs' Children Depression Inventory (CDI) asking participants to report on suicidal thoughts in the **past two weeks**:

(0) *“I do not think about killing myself”*;

(1) *“I think about killing myself but I will not do it”*

(2) *“I want to kill myself”*

- Scores of 1 or 2 indicated the presence of suicidal ideation

Method – Measures (continued)

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- Variables controlled for: gender, age, parental education
- Mental health symptoms
 1. Children Depression Inventory (CDI)
 2. Multidimensional Anxiety Scale for Children (MASC)
 3. Eating Disorders Diagnostic Scale (EDDS)
 4. Substance use subscale (McKnight Risk Factor Survey-IV - MRFS-IV)
- Other correlates
 1. State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (STAXI)
 2. School performance (MRFS-IV)
 3. Life events (MRFS-IV)

Method – Measures (continued)

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- **Social and family support**
- 1. **Number of supportive persons (MRFS-IV)**
 - Selected from a list
 - (0) 0-1, (1) 2-3, (2) 4+
- 2. **Perceived social support (MRFS-IV)**
 - Do you have someone to talk to, share worries with and get help ?
 - (0) low, (1) high
- 3. **Role model (MRFS-IV)**
 - Do you have a role model –a supportive woman or man— in your life you look up to and/or talk to about things that happen to you ?
 - (0) no, (1) yes
- 4. **Family cohesion (Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale - FACES-II)**
 - Measures emotional bonding and connectedness (16-items)
 - (0) low cohesion, (1) cohesion

Prevalence of suicidal ideation per gender and age

REAL study



7.6 %

11-12 years old

10.9 %

16.8 %

13-14 years old

8.5 %

20.8 %

15+ years old

12.2%

15.2%

overall

10.1 %

N = 2119 students in grades 7-12

Table 1. Predicting Suicidal Ideation with Mental Health and Support Correlates Using Logistic Regression Analysis

Variables	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI) ^a
Depression	20.61 (12.87-33.00)	6.45 (3.79-10.96)
Anxiety	3.72 (2.62-5.28)	2.30 (1.51-3.51)
Eating Disorder	3.75 (2.89-4.86)	1.69 (1.23-2.34)
Substance Use	2.65 (2.05-3.43)	1.52 (1.08-2.15)
Anger	4.20 (3.23-5.45)	1.79 (1.30-2.45)
Life Events		
2-3	1.44 (0.99-2.10)	1.11 (0.74-1.67)
4+	3.02 (2.09-4.36)	1.60 (1.05-2.42)
Supporting Persons		
2-3	0.50 (0.37-0.67)	0.68 (0.47-0.98)
4+	0.45 (0.32-0.64)	0.67 (0.43-1.03)
Perceived Social Support	0.55 (0.42-0.70)	0.96 (0.70-1.31)
Role Model	0.40 (0.30-0.52)	0.68 (0.49-0.96)
Family Cohesion	0.27 (0.20-0.38)	0.56 (0.39-0.81)

(a) controlling for gender, age, parental education, depression, and other variables

Table 2. Aggregate Effect of Mental Health Issues, and Supportive Factors in Predicting Suicidal Ideation with Logistic Regression Analysis



Variables	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI) ^a
Number of Mental Health Issues		
1	1.05 (0.80-1.39)	2.65 (1.83-3.85)
2	3.57 (2.68-4.76)	6.66 (4.45-9.99)
3	9.12 (5.34-15.57)	16.05 (8.55-30.12)
4	25.35 (7.03-91.45)	44.70 (11.58-172.50)
Number of Supportive Factors		
1	2.57 (1.87-3.52)	0.68 (0.40-1.13)
2	1.00 (0.75-1.36)	0.34 (0.21-0.56)
3	0.88 (0.67-1.16)	0.32 (0.20-0.52)
4	0.25 (0.16-0.38)	0.16 (0.09-0.28)

(a) OR's adjusted for all variables in model

Social support, mental health and suicidal ideation in adolescence

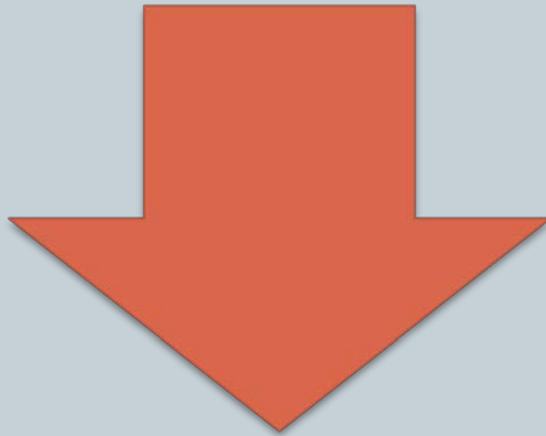


Supportive persons

Social support

Role model

Family cohesion



Mental health issues
Life events

