

Sigma's VIRTUAL 31st International Nursing Research Congress (Wednesday, 22 July - Friday, 24 July)

Deliberate Self-harm among Adolescents in Thailand: Prevalence and Its Influencing Factors

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Purpose: To examine prevalence of DSH in Thai adolescents, and determine its influencing factors, including, gender, family relationship, school connectedness, resilience, stress, and self-control.

Methods: A multi-stage random sampling was used to recruit participants of 406 adolescents aged 10-19 years studying high schools in the north of Thailand in 2019. Research ethics was approved by the IRB of Faculty of Nursing, Burapha University. Six research instruments included self-report questionnaires of family relationship, school connectedness, resilience, self-control, stress, and DSH. Their reliabilities were between 0.82-0.89. Data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics and multiple logistic regression analysis.

Results:

The results revealed that the prevalence of DSH was 83.3% of adolescents had self-harmed in the past six months. Times of deliberate self-harming ranged from 2-14. Adolescent gender (boy), school connectedness, resilience, family relationship, and self-control were significantly associated with DSH ($p < .001$). The mean of family relationship in the non-deliberate self-harming group was 117.62 ± 12.66 , and the mean of family relationship in the deliberate self-harming group was 108.54 ± 7.69 . Therefore, the family relationship was a strongly significant difference. Stress was not correlated to DSH ($p > .05$). Based on the multiple logistic regression analysis, the final five factors were significantly related to DSH. Boys were more likely to have DSH 9.9 times than girls (adj. OR = 9.940, 95%CI = 4.093-24.141, $p < 0.001$) after controlling for all other variables, while family relationship, school connectedness, resilience, and self-control were protective factors of the DSH. When the family relationship had increased 1 score, the less likely they would have DSH of 11.7%. In addition, the school connectedness, resilience, and self-control had increased 1 score each, the less likely they would have DSH of 8.5%, 8.3%, and 4.2%, respectively.

Conclusion: The prevalence of DSH among Thai adolescents is high. An intervention to strengthen and enhance the family relationship, school connectedness, resilience and self-control among Thai adolescent to prevent DSH should be developed and implemented for both gender, specifically for boys.

Title:

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Keywords:

Adolescent, Deliberate self-harm, Thailand, Family relationship, Resilience, School connectedness, Boys and Self-control

Abstract Summary:

Deliberate self-harm (DSH) is an intentional behavior of direct destruction or cutting of body tissues which causes non-fatal physical trauma to the extent that bleeding occurs or causes a bruise to appear and without conscious suicidal intent. DSH in adolescents is frequently encountered in a mental health problem.

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