

Innovative Research Program on Suicide Countermeasures in FY2022: Report on Commissioned Research Results

**Field 2: Analysis and approach towards high-risk groups for suicide**

**Topic number : R4-2-2**

Research topic:

Comprehensive study on understanding, preventing and intervening to suicide and self-injury among high-risk youth with delinquent behaviour

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Summary:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the lifetime experience rates of suicide-related behaviours and other characteristics of high-risk justice-involved youths. In 2022, the first year of the study, a self-administered questionnaire survey was conducted on youths in four Juvenile Classification Homes in the Kansai region. The study participants were 398 individuals who had entered a Juvenile Classification Home and agreed to provide data for the study, 351 (88.19%) were male and 47 (11.81%) were female. The mean age of the participants was 17.03 years ( $SD = 1.59$ ). Lifetime experience rates of suicidal ideation, suicide attempts and non-suicidal self-injury were 19.3%, 8.0% and 46.3% for male

and 46.8%, 31.9% and 74.5% for female, respectively. Females had significantly higher experience rates than males for all of them. Regarding the function of non-suicidal self-injury, items related to negative reinforcement within the individual, such as emotional regulation, were selected most frequently. On the other hand, items related to positive reinforcement within the individual, such as self-punishment, and social reinforcement, such as wanting others to understand one's pain, were also selected to a certain extent, suggesting that the functions were diverse. It was also shown that those who found a wider range of functions in non-suicidal self-injury did so more frequently and were more strongly associated with suicidal ideation and suicide attempts. Although there was no clear association between help-seeking style and non-suicidal self-injury, approximately half of the participants had confessed their own self-injury to others. Furthermore, childhood adversity experiences were significantly associated with suicide-related behaviour, even after adjusting for demographic variables.