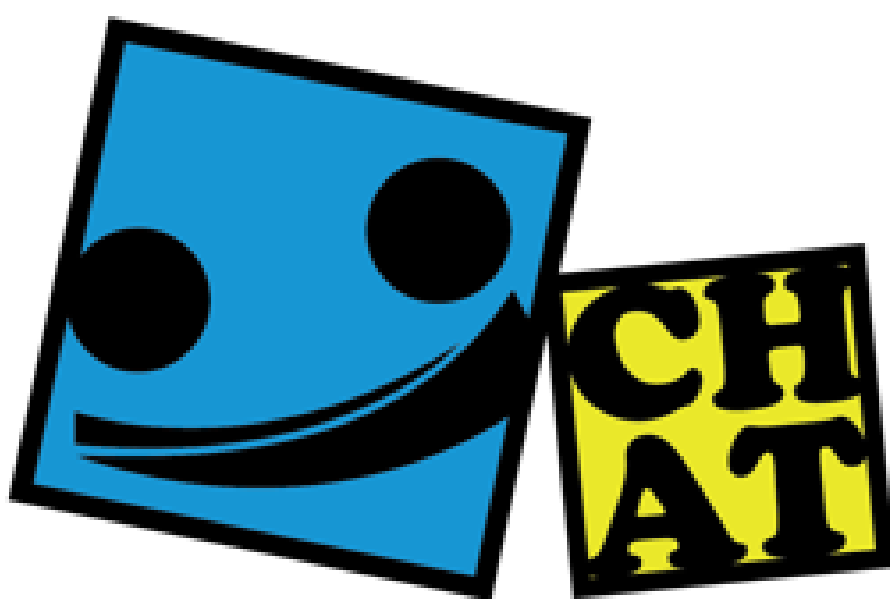


# Prevalence and correlates associated with suicidality in youths: Results from a national survey in Singapore

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Young People's Minds Matter

## Background

Suicide among youths in Singapore has seen a troubling rise in recent years. In 2022, there were 476 suicides reported<sup>1</sup>, marking the highest number in over two decades. This increase is especially pronounced among young people, with those aged 10 to 29 constituting the largest group affected<sup>1</sup>. This study aimed to establish the prevalence of suicidality and explore sociodemographic correlates associated with suicidality among youths in Singapore.

## Methods

Data on suicidality was collected from 552 individuals who participated in the National Youth Mental Health Study<sup>2</sup>, a cross-sectional nationwide survey of youths aged 15-35 years. Participants were asked if they had any of the following experiences in the preceding 12 months: “Serious thoughts about committing suicide”; “Made a plan for committing suicide”; “Attempted suicide”. Unweighted frequencies are presented, and logistic regression was conducted to identify sociodemographic correlates of suicidality.

## Results

The prevalence of suicidality was 11.4% among the study population, with participants having responded positively to at least one of the three questions. 55 (10.0%) participants had serious thoughts about committing suicide; 26 (4.7%) had made a plan; and 10 (1.8%) had attempted suicide.

There were no statistically significant differences in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, employment, and monthly household income.

Youths with educational attainment of primary school and below (OR=24.8,  $p<.001$ ), secondary school (OR=10.6,  $p<.001$ ); post-secondary (OR=3.4,  $p<.05$ ) were more likely to report suicidality compared to youths with university and above educational attainment.

## Conclusion

A significant proportion of youths in Singapore had serious suicidal thoughts, plan and/or attempts in the preceding year. More research is needed to understand the specific motivations behind these behaviours and to develop appropriate interventions targeted at different youth subgroups.

	N (N=552)	Unweighted %
SUA. Did any of the below experiences happen to you in the past 12 months? – You seriously thought about committing suicide.	55	10.0
SUB. Did any of the below experiences happen to you in the past 12 months? – You made a plan for committing suicide.	26	4.7
SUC. Did any of the below experiences happen to you in the past 12 months? – You attempted suicide.	10	1.8
At least one of the above	63	11.4

Table 1. Frequencies of suicidal ideation and/or attempt

Measure	OR	Lower 95% CI	Upper 95% CI	P-value
<b>Age</b>				
15-19	3.1	0.5	18.2	0.217
20-24	1.6	0.3	9.0	0.586
25-29	1.7	0.8	3.8	0.197
30-35	Ref			
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	1.0	0.6	1.9	0.897
Male	Ref	-	-	-
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
Indian	0.7	0.2	2.0	0.490
Malay	0.7	0.3	1.5	0.309
Others	1.0	0.3	2.9	0.974
Chinese	Ref			
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Married/Cohabiting	0.8	0.3	1.8	0.570
Single	Ref			
<b>Employment</b>				
Unemployed	0.6	0.1	3.0	0.509
Economically inactive	0.4	0.1	2.0	0.292
Employed	Ref			
<b>Monthly Household Income</b>				
S\$20,000 and above	2.6	1.0	6.7	0.045
S\$10,000 to S\$19,000	1.6	0.7	3.5	0.247
S\$5,000 to S\$9,999	0.7	0.3	1.5	0.339
Below S\$5,000	Ref			
<b>Education</b>				
Primary and below	15.5	3.2	74.5	<.001
Secondary	7.0	2.1	23.3	0.002
Post-secondary	3.4	1.4	7.8	0.005
University and above	Ref			

Table 2. Sociodemographic correlates of any instance of suicidal ideation

## References:

1. Singapore: Samaritans of Singapore; 2023 Jul 3 [cited 2024 Feb 24]. Available from: <https://www.sos.org.sg/pressroom/highest-recorded-suicide-numbers-in-Singapore-since-2000>.

2. M Subramaniam, JA Vaingankar, B Tan, et al. Examining Psychological Distress Among Youth in Singapore: Insights from the National Youth Mental Health Study. Asian J of Psych. 2025. doi: 10.1016/j.ajp.2025.104405

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