

Suicide
Grade 10/Year 11
Fast Track Project Technical Report
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Citation

Instrument

The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). (1994). *Suicide*. Chapel Hill, NC: Carolina Population Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Report

Kersteter, S. (2004). *Suicide (Fast Track Project Technical Report)* [On-line]. Available: <http://www.fasttrackproject.org/>

Data Sources

Raw: C11AA

Scored: SUI11

I. Scale Description

The Suicide measure is a 7-item self-administered audio-assisted instrument based on a scale used in the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. No current reliability and validity information is available. Fast Track added the measure to the child instrument battery in study year 8. The measure assesses whether the child has contemplated or attempted suicide during the past year, and whether a family member or a friend has attempted suicide over the last year. Only students who reported one or more suicide attempts were then asked about whether they received medical treatment. Only students who reported that a friend or a family member attempted suicide were asked the two items that assessed whether any of them succeeded.

II. Report Sample

These analyses were conducted with the first cohort on the control sample (n=155) and on the normative sample (n=387, N = 463 with overlap) during the eleventh year of the study. Overall, 118 records were missing the whole measure. Forty-five were missing from the control sample (8 from Durham, 12 from Nashville, 14 from Pennsylvania, and 11 from Washington) and 102 were missing from the normative sample (17 from Durham, 28 from Nashville, 31 from Pennsylvania, and 26 from Washington).

III. Scaling

For the items in this instrument, there is no obvious scoring. Most items are naturally dichotomous (e.g., either a yes or no answer). Only students who reported thoughts of suicide were asked the subsequent item that assesses the number of suicide attempts. This item is measured on a 4-point scale where 0 = 0

times, 1 = 1 time, 2 = 2 or 3 times, 3 = 4 or 5 times, and 4 = 6 or more times. Only students who reported one or suicide attempts were then asked about whether they had received medical treatment. Only students who reported that a friend or family member had attempted suicide were asked the two items (items 5 and 7) that assessed whether any of them succeeded.

The design of this measure allows certain questions to be skipped if the respondent answered “no” to the previous question. If the child answered “no” to question 1, he/she skipped to question 4. If the child answered “no” to question 4, he/she skipped to question 6. If the child answered “no” to question 6, he/she was asked no additional questions. Although no values were entered for the skipped questions, these are not considered missing data; rather, because of the “no” response to the preceding question (question 1, 4, or 6), the responses to the questions 2 and 3, 5, and 7, respectively, are actually “no.” For the purposes of these technical report analyses, if a respondent answered “no” to question 1, his/her answers to questions 2 and 3 were considered to be “no” and coded as a “0.” Likewise, if a respondent answered “no” to question 4, his/her answer to question 5 was considered to be “no” and coded as a “0,” and if a respondent answered “no” to question 6, his/her answer to question 7 was considered to be “no” and coded as a “0.”

IV. Differences Between Groups

Chi-square tests of independence were used to assess the differences between the high-risk control and normative groups for item 1 (During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously think about committing suicide?), item 3 (Did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?), item 4 (Have any of your friends tried to kill themselves during the past 12 months?), item 5 (Have any of them succeeded?), item 6 (Have any of your family tried to kill themselves during the past 12 months?), and item 7 (Have any of them succeeded?).

The frequency distribution of item 1 (C11AA1) among the control and normative samples was:

Table of C11AA1 by group			
C11AA1 (During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously think about committing suicide?)	Group		Total
	Control	Normative	
Frequency Percent Row Percent Column Percent			
0 (no)	102	216	318
	29.57	62.61	92.17
	32.08	67.92	
	92.73	91.91	
1 (yes)	8	19	27
	2.32	5.51	7.83
	29.63	70.37	
	7.27	8.09	
Total	110	235	345
	31.86	68.12	100.00
Frequency Missing = 118			

With $\chi^2 (1, N = 345) = 0.0685, p < 0.7935$, the hypothesis of independence between risk category (normative or control) and item 1 was not rejected for these data.

The frequency distribution of item 3 (C11AA3) among the control and normative samples was:

Table of C11AA3 by group			
C11AA3 (Did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?)	Group		Total
Frequency Percent Row Percent Column Percent	Control	Normative	
0 (no)	103 31.40 31.79 98.10	221 67.38 68.21 99.10	324 98.78
1 (yes)	2 0.61 50.00 1.90	2 0.61 50.00 0.90	4 1.22
Total	105 32.01	223 67.99	328 100.00
Frequency Missing = 135			

With χ^2 (1, N = 328) = 0.6020, $p < 0.4378$, the hypothesis of independence between risk category (normative or control) and item 3 was not rejected for these data.

The frequency distribution of item 4 (C11AA4) among the control and normative samples was:

Table of C11AA4 by group			
C11AA4 (Have any of your friends tried to kill themselves during the past 12 months?)	Group		Total
Frequency Percent Row Percent Column Percent	Control	Normative	
0 (no)	97 28.12 30.89 88.18	217 62.90 69.11 92.34	314 91.01
1 (yes)	13 3.77 41.94 11.82	18 5.22 58.06 7.66	31 8.99
Total	110 31.88	235 68.12	345 100.00
Frequency Missing = 118			

With χ^2 (1, N = 345) = 1.5845, $p < 0.2081$, the hypothesis of independence between risk category (normative or control) and item 4 was not rejected for these data.

The frequency distribution of item 5 (C11AA5) among the control and normative samples was:

Table of C11AA5 by group			
C11AA5 (Did any of them [friends] succeed?)	Group		Total
Frequency Percent Row Percent Column Percent	Control	Normative	
0 (no)	107	229	336
	31.01	66.38	97.39
	31.85	68.15	
	97.27	97.45	
1 (yes)	3	6	9
	0.87	1.74	2.61
	33.33	66.67	
	2.73	2.55	
Total	110	235	345
	31.88	68.12	100.00
Frequency Missing = 118			

With $\chi^2 (1, N = 345) = 0.0089$, $p < 0.9247$, the hypothesis of independence between risk category (normative or control) and item 5 was not rejected for these data.

The frequency distribution of item 6 (C11AA6) among the control and normative samples was:

Table of C11AA6 by group			
C11AA6 (Have any of your family tried to kill themselves during the past 12 months?)	Group		Total
Frequency Percent Row Percent Column Percent	Control	Normative	
0 (no)	108	226	334
	31.30	65.51	96.81
	32.34	67.66	
	98.18	96.17	
1 (yes)	2	9	11
	0.58	2.61	3.19
	18.18	81.82	
	1.82	3.83	
Total	110	235	345
	31.88	68.12	100.00
Frequency Missing = 118			

With $\chi^2 (1, N = 345) = 0.9823$, $p < 0.3216$, the hypothesis of independence between risk category (normative or control) and item 6 was not rejected for these data.

The frequency distribution of item 7 (C11AA7) among the control and normative samples was:

Table of C11AA7 by group			
C11AA7 (Have any of them [family] succeeded?)	Group		Total
Frequency Percent Row Percent Column Percent	Control	Normative	
0 (no)	110 31.88 32.07 100.00	233 67.54 67.93 99.15	343 99.42
1 (yes)	0 0.00 0.00 0.00	2 0.58 100.00 0.85	2 0.58
Total	110 31.88	235 68.12	345 100.00
Frequency Missing = 118			

With $\chi^2 (1, N = 345) = 0.9416, p < 0.3319$, the hypothesis of independence between risk category (normative or control) and item 7 was not rejected for these data.

A t-test was used to examine group differences for item 2 (During the past 12 months, how many times did you actually attempt suicide?). Analysis revealed no significant differences between the normative youth and their high-risk control counterparts for this item.

Comparison of Variable Means for Normative and Control							
Variable	Normative		Control		DF	t Value	Pr > t
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev			
C11AA2 – During the past 12 months, how many times did you actually attempt suicide?	0.07	0.44	0.06	0.43	343	-0.09	0.9298

V. Recommendations for Use

Most items in this measure are straightforward in use and interpretation. The low number of subjects that reported suicide attempts by themselves or by friends or family members indicates that this measure should be used with caution. In addition, analysts should note that while items 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 require a yes or no answer, item 2 responses range from 0 to 4. In addition, the item 2 responses 0 to 4 do not exactly represent the number of times that the child attempted suicide. Rather, 0 = 0 times, 1 = 1 time, 2 = 2 or 3 times, 3 = 3 or 4 times, and 4 = 5 or 6 times.

Analysts should also note that although 29 children responded to the question about how many times he/she had attempted suicide during the past 12 months (item 2), only 27 children indicated that they had seriously thought about committing suicide during the past 12 months (item 1).

V1. Item and Scale Means and SD's

Descriptive Statistics for High Risk Control Sample						
Variable	Label	N	Mean	Std Dev	Minimum	Maximum
C11AA1	During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously think about committing suicide?	110	0.07	0.26	0.00	1.00
C11AA2	During the past 12 months, how many times did you actually attempt suicide?	110	0.06	0.43	0.00	4.00
C11AA3	Did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?	105	0.02	0.14	0.00	1.00
C11AA4	Have any of your friends tried to kill themselves during the past 12 months?	110	0.12	0.32	0.00	1.00
C11AA5	Have any of them [friends] succeeded?	110	0.03	0.16	0.00	1.00
C11AA6	Have any of your family tried to kill themselves during the past 12 months?	110	0.02	0.13	0.00	1.00
C11AA7	Have any of them [family] succeeded?	110	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Descriptive Statistics for Normative Sample						
Variable	Label	N	Mean	Std Dev	Minimum	Maximum
C11AA1	During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously think about committing suicide?	285	0.08	0.27	0.00	1.00
C11AA2	During the past 12 months, how many times did you actually attempt suicide?	285	0.07	0.46	0.00	4.00
C11AA3	Did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?	270	0.01	0.11	0.00	1.00
C11AA4	Have any of your friends tried to kill themselves during the past 12 months?	285	0.08	0.28	0.00	1.00
C11AA5	Have any of them [friends] succeeded?	285	0.02	0.16	0.00	1.00
C11AA6	Have any of your family tried to kill themselves during the past 12 months?	285	0.04	0.18	0.00	1.00
C11AA7	Have any of them [family] succeeded?	285	0.01	0.08	0.00	1.00

VII. Scale Correlations

Correlation for Full Sample

Pearson Correlation Coefficients Prob > r under H0: Rho=0 Number of Observations							
	C11AA1	C11AA2	C11AA3	C11AA4	C11AA5	C11AA6	C11AA7
C11AA1 – During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously think about committing suicide?	1.000 345	0.525 0.000 345	0.627 0.000 328	0.324 0.000 345	0.155 0.004 345	0.193 0.000 345	0.120 0.026 345
C11AA2 – During the past 12 months, how many times did you actually attempt suicide?	0.525 0.000 345	1.000 345	0.605 0.000 328	0.231 0.000 345	0.058 0.279 345	0.086 0.112 345	-0.012 0.829 345
C11AA3 – Did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?	0.627 0.000 345	0.605 0.000 328	1.000 328	0.276 0.000 328	-0.016 0.767 328	-0.019 0.736 328	-0.006 0.912 328
C11AA4 – Have any of your friends tried to kill themselves during the past 12 months?	0.324 0.000 345	0.231 0.000 345	0.276 0.000 328	1.000 345	0.521 0.000 345	0.174 0.001 345	-0.024 0.657 345
C11AA5 – Have any of them [friends] succeeded?	0.155 0.004 345	0.058 0.279 345	-0.016 0.767 328	0.521 0.000 345	1.000 345	0.074 0.171 345	-0.013 0.817 345
C11AA6 – Have any of your family tried to kill themselves during the past 12 months?	0.193 0.000 345	0.086 0.112 345	-0.019 0.736 328	0.174 0.001 345	0.074 0.171 345	1.000 345	0.421 0.000 345
C11AA7 – Have any of them [family] succeeded?	0.120 0.026 345	-0.012 0.829 345	-0.006 0.912 328	-0.024 0.657 345	-0.013 0.817 345	0.421 0.000 345	1.000 345