

Suicide
Grade7/Year 8

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

Schimmel, K.D. (2000). Suicide (Fast Track Project Technical Report) [On-line]. Available: <http://www.fasttrackproject.org/sui8tech.doc>

Data Sources

Raw: c8aa

Scored: sui8

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, and whether a family member or a friend has attempted suicide over the last year.

II. Report Sample

Initial exploration was conducted on Year 8, Cohort 1 data (the first year in which the instrument was used), including both high-risk control ($n = 155$) and normative samples ($n = 387$ including overlap, total $N = 463$); treatment students were not included. 78 students (17 % of Cohort 1) were missing responses for the entire scale, including 68 normative students (18 %) and 24 high-risk students (15 %). The non-respondents included 15 students from the Durham site, 22 students from Nashville, 17 students from Pennsylvania, and 24 students from Seattle. No cases were missing responses for individual items (other than items omitted due to structural branching in the instrument).

III. Scaling

For the items in this instrument, there is no obvious scoring. Most items are naturally dichotomous (e.g., thought about committing suicide in past twelve months). Only students who reported thoughts of suicide

were asked the subsequent item that assesses the number of suicide attempts ($n = 16$). This item is measured on a 4-point scale ranging from "0 time" to "6 or more times." Only student who reported one or more suicide attempts were then asked about whether they received medical treatment ($n = 6$). Only students who reported that a friend ($n = 42$) or a family member ($n = 14$) attempted suicide were asked the two items that assessed whether any of them succeeded.

IV. Differences Between Groups

Differences between the high-risk control sample and the non-high-risk normative sample were assessed on the scale items individually, scanning for significant differences at the .05 level. A t-test was used to determine a difference between groups for the item assessing number of suicide attempts by subjects in the past year. Differences in the other items were assessed by chi-squared tests of independence. Note that levels of reported attempted suicide are quite low in this sample, compromising the ability to detect group differences.

Significance tests indicated high-risk students were more likely to report having a friend that attempted suicide in the past year than normative children (7% vs. 2%). Significant differences were not found on the remaining items.

V. Recommendations for Use

Most items 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.

Note: The data sets could not be compared with missing data information for any of the cohorts as information was not yet available at the time of this report.

VI. Item Means and SD's

Suicide Items - Normative Sample

Variable	Label	N	Mean	Std Dev	Minimum	Maximum
C8AA1	Ever Seriously Considered Suicide?	319	0.034	0.183	0.000	1.000
C8AA2	Actual Suicide Attempts in Past Year?	11	0.727	1.272	0.000	4.000
C8AA3	Attempts Resulting in Medical Treatment?	4	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
C8AA4	Any Friends Tried Suicide in Past Year?	319	0.103	0.305	0.000	1.000
C8AA5	Did Any of Your Friends Commit Suicide?	33	0.182	0.392	0.000	1.000
C8AA6	Any Friends Tried Suicide in Past Year?	319	0.025	0.157	0.000	1.000
C8AA7	Did Any of Your Family Commit Suicide?	9	0.333	0.500	0.000	1.000

Suicide Items - High-Risk Control Sample

Variable	Label	N	Mean	Std Dev	Minimum	Maximum
C8AA1	Ever Seriously Considered Suicide?	131	0.053	0.226	0.000	1.000
C8AA2	Actual Suicide Attempts in Past Year?	7	1.143	1.464	0.000	3.000
C8AA3	Attempts Resulting in Medical Treatment?	3	0.333	0.577	0.000	1.000
C8AA4	Any Friends Tried Suicide in Past Year?	131	0.122	0.329	0.000	1.000
C8AA5	Did Any of Your Friends Commit Suicide?	16	0.250	0.447	0.000	1.000
C8AA6	Any Friends Tried Suicide in Past Year?	131	0.069	0.254	0.000	1.000
C8AA7	Did Any of Your Family Commit Suicide?	10	0.300	0.483	0.000	1.000

VII. Item Correlations

Suicide Items - Full Sample Correlation Analysis

Pearson Correlation Coefficients / Prob > |R| under Ho: Rho=0 / Number of Observations

	C8AA1	C8AA2	C8AA3	C8AA4
C8AA1	1.00000	.	.	0.17761
Ever Seriously Considered Suicide?	0.0	.	.	0.0005
	385	16	6	385
C8AA2	.	1.00000	0.26968	0.07352
Actual Suicide Attempts in Past Year?	.	0.0	0.6053	0.7867
	16	16	6	16
C8AA3	.	0.26968	1.00000	0.44721
Attempts Resulting in Medical Treatment?	.	0.6053	0.0	0.3739
	6	6	6	6
C8AA4	0.17761	0.07352	0.44721	1.00000
Any Friends Tried Suicide in Past Year?	0.0005	0.7867	0.3739	0.0
	385	16	6	385
C8AA5	0.28427	-0.57735	-0.50000	.
Did Any of Your Friends Commit Suicide?	0.0681	0.2302	0.6667	.
	42	6	3	42
C8AA6	0.10518	0.17937	-0.20000	0.07296
Any Friends Tried Suicide in Past Year?	0.0391	0.5062	0.7040	0.1530
	385	16	6	385
C8AA7	0.19365	-1.00000	.	0.44039
Did Any of Your Family Commit Suicide?	0.5071	.	.	0.1150
	14	2	1	14

Suicide Items - Full Sample

Correlation Analysis

Pearson Correlation Coefficients / Prob > |R| under Ho: Rho=0 / Number of Observations

	C8AA5	C8AA6	C8AA7
C8AA1	0.28427	0.10518	0.19365
Ever Seriously Considered Suicide?	0.0681	0.0391	0.5071
	42	385	14
C8AA2	-0.57735	0.17937	-1.00000
Actual Suicide Attempts in Past Year?	0.2302	0.5062	.
	6	16	2
C8AA3	-0.50000	-0.20000	.
Attempts Resulting in Medical Treatment?	0.6667	0.7040	.
	3	6	1
C8AA4	.	0.07296	0.44039
Any Friends Tried Suicide in Past Year?	.	0.1530	0.1150
	42	385	14
C8AA5	1.00000	0.08047	0.50000
Did Any of Your Friends Commit Suicide?	0.0	0.6125	0.6667
	42	42	3
C8AA6	0.08047	1.00000	-0.43853
Any Friends Tried Suicide in Past Year?	0.6125	0.0	0.1168
	42	385	14
C8AA7	0.50000	-0.43853	1.00000
Did Any of Your Family Commit Suicide?	0.6667	0.1168	0.0
	3	14	14