

Suicide
Grade 8/Year 9

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

McCarty, C.A. & Doyle, S.R. (2002). Suicide (Fast Track Project Technical Report) [On-line]. Available: <http://www.fasttrackproject.org>

Data Sources

Raw: c9aa

Scored: sui9 (note that scored data is identical to raw data due to the use of items)

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

This technical report is based upon Year 9, Cohort 1 data, including both high-risk control and normative samples. With missing cases excluded, the total N (including overlap) was 368, with 305 normative and 126 high-risk control youth.

95 youth (21% of cohort) were missing observations for the entire measure, including 82 normative youth (21%) and 29 high-risk youth (19%). The missing cases included 19 observations from the Durham site, 31 observations from Nashville, 21 observations from Pennsylvania, and 24 observations from Seattle. Data were missing for 38 girls and 57 boys. Ethnic breakdown for missing data was: 1 Asian, 40 Black, 3 Hispanic, 46 White, and 5 Other.

III. Recommendations for Use

Items 1 and 4-7 are dichotomous items, with relatively low base rates. Only students who reported thoughts of suicide were asked the subsequent item (#2) that assess the number of suicide attempts. This item is measured on a 4-point scale ranging from “0 times” to “6 or more times.” Only youth who reported one or more suicide attempts were then asked about whether they received medical treatment. Only students who reported that a friend or family member attempted suicide were asked the two items that assessed whether they were completed. Base rates for the endorsement of suicide attempts by themselves or by friends or family members are relatively low.

IV. Item Frequencies by Group

Normative Sample

		Response	Freq	Percent	n
C9AA1	Ever seriously considered suicide?	Yes	8	(2.62%)	305
C9AA2	Actual Suicide attempts made in past year?	> 0	4	(50.00%)	8
C9AA3	Attempts resulting in medical treatment	> 0	0	(0.00%)	4
C9AA4	Any friends tried suicide in past year?	Yes	29	(9.51%)	305
C9AA5	Did any of your friends commit suicide?	Yes	4	(13.79%)	29
C9AA6	Any family tried suicide in past year?	Yes	14	(4.59%)	305
C9AA7	Did any of your family commit suicide?	Yes	2	(14.29%)	14

High Risk Control Sample

		Response	Freq	Percent	n
C9AA1	Ever seriously considered suicide?	Yes	5	(3.97%)	126
C9AA2	Actual Suicide attempts made in past year?	> 0	2	(40.00%)	5
C9AA3	Attempts resulting in medical treatment	> 0	0	(0.00%)	2
C9AA4	Any friends tried suicide in past year?	Yes	12	(9.52%)	126
C9AA5	Did any of your friends commit suicide?	Yes	1	(8.33%)	12
C9AA6	Any family tried suicide in past year?	Yes	7	(5.56%)	126
C9AA7	Did any of your family commit suicide?	Yes	0	(0.00%)	7