

**“Light up - Create Hope Through Action”
HKU CSRP Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention
releases the latest suicide figures and prevention recommendations**

Everyone can make a difference in suicide prevention by working together. World Suicide Prevention Day is observed each year on September 10 by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP). As a member of the IASP, the Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (CSRP) of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) held a press conference today (September 10) with the theme “Light up - Create Hope Through Action” to release the latest suicide figures in Hong Kong.

Latest Suicide Figures and Trends

With data extracted from the Coroner’s Court, CSRP estimated that the 2020 suicide rate¹ in Hong Kong was 12.1, which is lower than the 13.1 recorded in 2019. To enable valid comparison of suicide rates among different regions, suicide rates are standardised and adjusted according to the age structure of the world population. Since aging in Hong Kong is more serious than in other regions, after adjustment, the age-standardised suicide rate in Hong Kong is estimated at 9.1 for 2020, lower than the global rate of 10.5 for 2016 (World Health Organization, 2018).

Elderly Suicide Rates

From 1997 to the latest figures estimated for 2020, the suicide rate of males has remained consistently higher and double that of females (Males: 16.3; Females: 8.6). Compared to 2019, the overall suicide rate for males has decreased (18.9 to 16.3), while the suicide rate for females has seen a slight increase (8.2 to 8.6). The suicide rate of elderly people has always been higher than that of other age groups. Within the elderly population, the suicide rate of men aged 60 or above has decreased from its peak at 34.0 in 2009 to the current 24.5, while the suicide rate of women aged 60 or above has shown a significant increase from 11.9 in 2019 to 15.3 in 2020.

Youth Suicide Rates

In recent years, youth suicides have become a heightened concern in society. The suicide rate of 15- to 24-year-olds had increased from 8.3 in 2012 to 10.4 in 2017. The suicide rate of adolescents for 2020 is estimated at 8.2 to 8.3, similar to 2019’s. Notably, there was an increase in suicide rates among females in this age group (from 4.0 in 2019 to 6.1 in 2020). On the other hand, among children aged 15 and below, the suicide rate of males is 1.3, which is higher than the recorded 0.7 in 2019, while the suicide rate of females in this group remains at 1.2.

¹ All suicide rates are calculated as per 100,000 people. Taking the overall suicide rate in 2018 (12.2) as example, it means there were 12.2 per 100,000 people in Hong Kong died by suicide.

Press release

For immediate release

Suicide Prevention is a key global public health concern, and Director of the CSRP Professor Paul Yip calls on all members of the society to create hope through action to prevent suicide and protect lives for the betterment of society.

With the Covid-19 pandemic and uncertain economic outlook in a rapidly changing society, suicide prevention is challenging. The Centre continues to collaborate with non-governmental organisations to provide effective youth and elderly crisis support services and reduce the risk of suicide.

About the HKJC Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (CSRP), HKU

Founded in 2002, CSRP has established its worldwide reputation in suicide research and prevention and extended its scope of research to the well-being of individuals as well as the whole society. CSRP believes that empirical research would optimise practices and contribute to the improvement of a society.

This press release, the PowerPoint and the photos for the press conference can be downloaded from the following website after 16:00, September 10, 2021:

<https://csrp.hku.hk/wspd2021/>

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