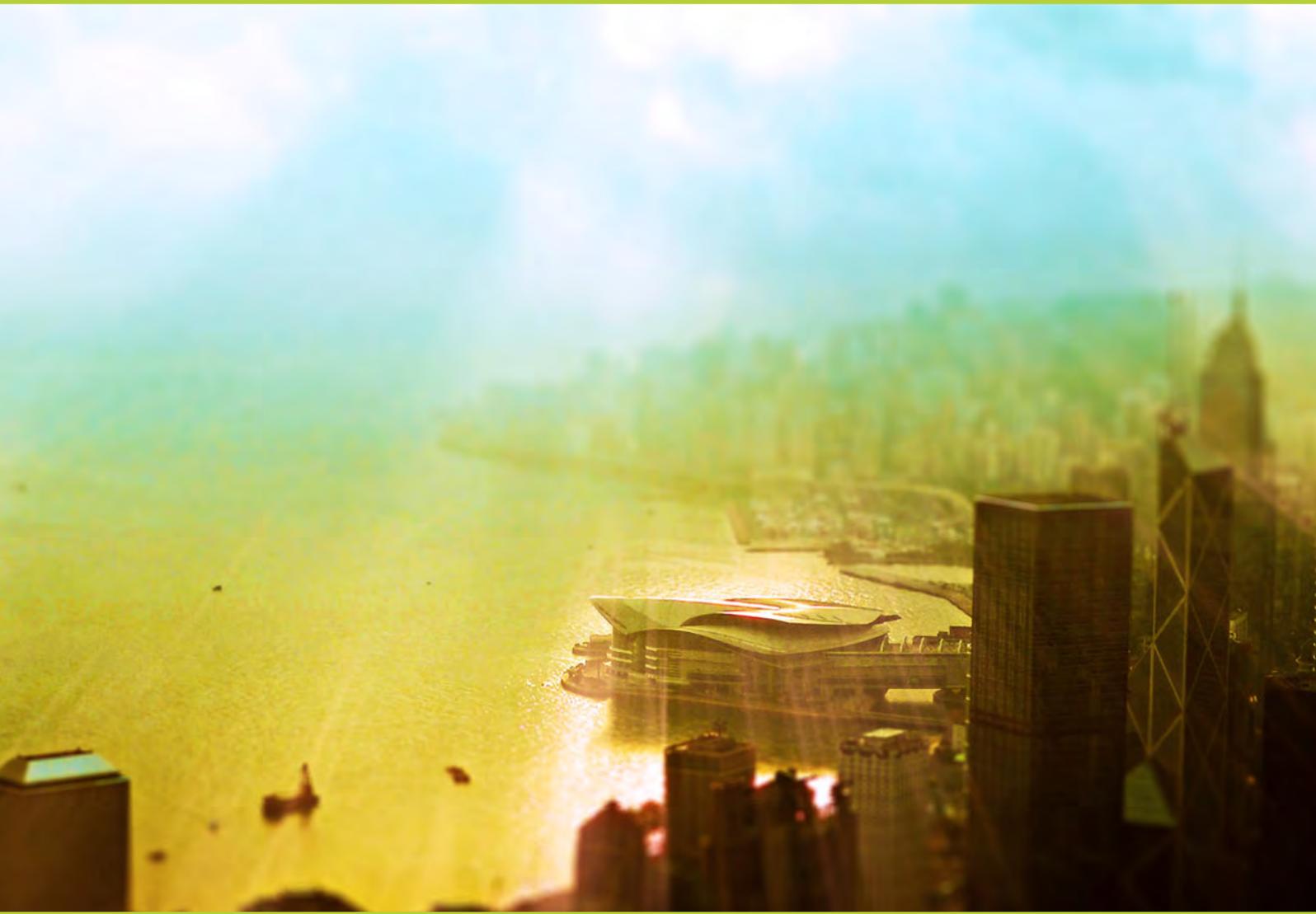


February 2009

CSRP NEWSLETTER



Cherishing Life. Nourishing Hope.

珍惜生命 懷抱希望

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THE HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB
Centre for Suicide Research
and Prevention
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG



Foreword

By Paul Yip

Greetings! We had an exciting year for the Centre in 2008 but the year of 2009 is going to be challenging for suicide prevention due to the global financial crisis.

We hosted the 3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference with the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) from 31st October to 3rd November, 2008. The conference could not be timelier. We are in the midst of the financial crisis, unemployment is rising, and people's mental health is being adversely affected. However, suicide rate is not necessitated to increase, as in the past, if suitable measures are implemented, for example, strengthening social support and inducing hope into the community. We need to learn our lessons from the experiences of the past decade in order to better address the challenges ahead! We must distinguish those groups and individuals who are most vulnerable to these financial uncertainties, and focus our efforts to mitigate the impact of the current.

Suicide, like today's financial crisis, is a global challenge. There is no single solution. One size doesn't fit all -- whether we are speaking of the need to tailor diverse solutions for different cultures, or distinctive approaches to different segments of the population with a country. Each of us must develop culturally-attuned, locally relevant, evidence-based suicide prevention programs. And where we do not have the necessary evidence, we must simultaneously implement novel approaches and rigorously evaluate them. Anything less is unacceptable. We have enclosed the details of the six good practice programs in this region in this newsletter. Though there is still room for improvement, I do hope we can generate new ideas and learn from each other, to do suicide prevention work more effectively. The need is large and the opportunity is great for suicide prevention in Asia.

The Center has also been actively engaged in research and training. We are grateful to the Quality Education Fund for providing the support to enhancing mental well-being of secondary school students. It is estimated about 20% of secondary school students have had suicidal ideation in the past twelve months. We have run a broadening course on stress, depression and suicide for the undergraduate students at The University of Hong Kong. It is well received. It would be much more cost effective if we can provide training and learning on how to build up resilience among the youth when they are still in a school setting.

The economic cost due to suicide is estimated to be HK\$ 1.4 billion and any effective intervention in saving lives would be proved to be very cost effective.

Mr. Peter Lee has shared with me his inspiring story about the movie Schindler's List, where a wealthy businessman saved many Jews during the Holocaust. He recalled that Oskar Schindler drove himself to use his own resources to save as many he could. But Peter does not plan to look back, as Schindler did later in his life, and wonder whether he could have done more; rather he is striving to make life-changing differences now. Central to his concerns are the needs of survivors of suicide; people who often feel alone and ashamed. A pilot study to engage the survivors in the public mortuaries has been launched and three survivor groups have been set up by Peter Lee's Care for Life Foundation. Moreover, survivors who have attended these services now reach out to others in an effort to enhance suicide prevention efforts, and to challenge the stigma that

serves as a barrier to communication and mutual support. These survivors are champions and have enriched us with the much needed information for suicide prevention.

It is encouraging to see that the suicide rate in Hong Kong has reduced from the historical high of 18.6 per 100,000 in 2003 to 13.6 in

2006 as indicated. The provisional figure for 2007 looks promising as well. It is roughly a 30% reduction for the period 2003-2007. It is no luck but commitment and hard work from the stakeholders in the community.

I hope the newsletter will provide some useful information to demonstrate how we can join forces and share ideas to overcome the challenges that confront all of us. Though the whole world is experiencing the pain induced by the financial tsunami, let's work together to help those in need. By "cherishing life and nourishing hope" as promoted by Mrs. Selina Tsang, Wife of Chief Executive, HKSAR, everyone is doing their fair share to make a better world, and we shall overcome. Reducing the number of suicides in the next years will be challenging, however, by making good use of the community resources and reconnecting its members, we can make a difference and see the changes in the lives of many, especially the weak and vulnerable.

"Suicide, like today's financial crisis, is a global challenge. ..Together we can make a difference in the lives of many."



3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference of International Association for Suicide Prevention

Co-sponsored by the World Health Organization and co-organized by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) and The University of Hong Kong, the 3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association for Suicide Prevention was held from October 31 to November 3, 2008 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre with great success.

The Conference's main theme, Suicide Research and Prevention in Times of Rapid Change in the Asia Pacific Region: Opportunities and Challenges, is of great importance to the global suicide prevention effort, since sixty percent of the over one million suicides every year take place in Asia.

The Conference has attracted more than 300 participants from over 20 countries, ranging from policy makers, health care practitioners, researchers, academics, social workers, volunteers to suicide survivors, to attend about 150 presentations including keynote addresses, plenary presentations, oral and poster presentations, workshops and symposia. The Conference has further demonstrated the collaborative efforts of multidisciplinary professionals to share the state-of-the-art knowledge on best practices of suicide prevention in the region and the move we made towards a better, caring society.

The Conference was supported by Mrs. Selina Tsang, Wife of Chief Executive who kindly agreed to serve as the Conference Patron. She also paid a visit to the Centre on April 21, 2008 to show her concern on suicide prevention works in this region.

A special thank to Ms Elsie Leung who serves as the Chair of our Centre's international advisory committee. Throughout the past decade, she has given us a 100% support. Whatever

her other work – she has never flinched from backing our efforts to serve this community and to make a tangible difference in the lives of Hong Kong's residents. We always marvel at her ability to see a future filled with better and safer lives.

A total of 26 delegates received bursaries which supported them to attend and give presentations in the Conference. Special thanks are given to Syngenta and Peter KK Lee Care for Life Foundation Ltd. for providing the bursaries.

Six researchers were also honored the Conference's abstract awards. The awardees are listed as follow (last name in alphabetical order): Braj Bhushan (India), Shu-sen Chang (United Kingdom), Jayoung Jeo (USA), Ronghuan Jiang (China), Teizo Kuba (Japan), Yik Wa Law (Hong Kong) and Virginia Routley (Australia).

The aims of the Acknowledgement Scheme are to encourage evidence-based programmes/practices aimed at reducing suicidal behaviors with solid conceptual framework, clear identification of target populations, and thorough intervention with measurable outcomes. A total of SIX programmes have been selected from nominations made by National Representatives of IASP. Each selected programme are presented with a small cash prize as a token of appreciation and encouragement for further development of their meaningful endeavors. Special thanks are given to Members of the Selection Panel: Prof. Murad M. Khan, Dr. Jerry Reed, Mrs. Vanda Scott, and Prof. Paul S.F. Yip and National Representatives of IASP: Dr. Jane Pirkis (Australia), Prof. Michael Phillips (China), Dr. Yoon-Young Nam (South Korea) and Mrs. Lakshmi Ratnayake, (Sri Lanka).

3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference of International Association for Suicide Prevention

Feedback from the Participants



“I feel the enthusiasm among the organizers and participants in the conference. It is one of the conferences in which I really enjoy. It is most timely and relevant to the region”

Dr. Shigeru Omi
Regional Director for the
Western Pacific
World Health Organization



“It is stimulating, thought provoking, and educating. I was impressed by its high academic standard and excellent organization.”

Dr. Xiangdong Wang
Regional Adviser in Mental
Health and
Control of Substance Abuse
World Health Organization



“I thought it was a wonderful conference and all the "behind-the-scenes" work was quite evident in how smoothly it went. Thank you for inviting me to participate.”

Dr. Morton Silverman
Editor-in-Chief, Suicide
and Life-Threatening
Behaviour, U.S.A.



“Thank you very much once again for your hospitality. Nobody else could have organized such a wonderful conference. My batteries were recharged.”

Prof. Yoshitomo Takahashi
Division of Behavioral Sciences
National Defense Medical
College Research institute,
Japan



“Let me express my congratulations on the beautiful conference you have organised. It went very well, and I feel that everyone was very happy with everything”

Prof. Diego De Leo,
Director, Australian
Institute for Suicide
Research and Prevention, Griffith University,
Brisbane, Australia



“It was a wonderful conference! It was a pleasure and privilege to take part in it and you must be extremely pleased at how smoothly the whole programme went. Your warm welcome and hospitality made my stay so enjoyable. I must also congratulate your fantastic team for the nice organisation.”

Prof. Lakshmi Vijayakumar,
Head, Department of Psychiatry, Voluntary
Health Services, Adyar, India



“Congratulation for the great success of the wonderful conference! It is a golden opportunity to know so many different scholars and agency representatives. Most important, many of the papers and findings presented are insightful, stimulating us to rethink about our services, as well as about the issue of suicide. It is the honour of HK people that the conference can be so successfully run here! Congratulation to you again.”

Ms. Elsie Chien,
Deputy Director, Suicide Prevention Services
Hong Kong

3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference of International Association for Suicide Prevention



Chinese Musical Performance by the Hospital Authority Delegates at the Welcome Reception staff at the Welcome Reception



Invited Speakers, Scientific and Organizing Committee



Officiating Guests of the Open Ceremony



Prof. Lap-Chee Tsui, Vice Chancellor and President, HKU



Mr. Paul Tang, JP, Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare, HKSAR



Miss Lily Wu, a Rotary scholar, Emcee of the Conference (left) and Ms. Elsie Leung, GBM, JP, GBM, JP, Deputy Director of the Basic Law Committee of The HKSAR of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of The PRC (right)



(left to right) Mr. William Yiu, Executive Director, Charities, The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, Prof. Lap-Chee Tsui, Vice Chancellor and President, HKU, Prof. Brian Mishara, President, IASP, Ms. Elsie Leung, GBM, JP, Deputy Director of the Basic Law Committee of The HKSAR of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of The PRC



(left to right) Prof. Paul Yip, Conference Chairman, Dr. Shigeru Omi, Regional Director for the Western Pacific, World Health Organization and Prof. Ian Holliday, Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences



Dr. Shigeru Omi, Regional Director for the Western Pacific, WHO



Prof. Diego De Leo, Director, Australian Institute for Suicide Research and Prevention at Griffith University



Prof. Yueqin Huang, Director, National Center for Mental Health of China CDC

3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference of International Association for Suicide Prevention



(left to right) Prof. Ian Holliday, Mr. Paul Tang, Mr. William Yiu, Prof. Lap-Chee Tsui, Prof. Brian Mishara, Ms. Elsie Leung, Dr. Shigeru Omi & Prof. Paul Yip



Head Table, Peter Lee Gale Dinner, Mr. Stephen Lam (front row, second from the right), Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, HKSAR Government



(left to right) Mr. Peter Lee, Prof. Brian Mishara, Prof. Paul Yip



Dinner reception at the deck



Ms. Sally Wu, Phoenix TV



Ms. Kim Chan, Dr. Phillip Beh and Prof. Lakshmi Vijayakumar



Presenting souvenir to Mr. Peter Lee from Ms. Chung, a member of survivor group initiated by Peter Lee Care for Life Project



Wanna dance tonight?



Enjoyable moment

3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference of International Association for Suicide Prevention



Welcoming dinner hosted by Ms. Elsie Leung



Closing ceremony, Way Forward



Dr. S.F. Hung, Hong Kong College of Psychiatrists



Prof. Cecilia Chan, Centre on Behavioral Health, HKU



Prof. Grace Tang, Hong Kong Academy of Medicine



Ms. Margaret Tay, Hospital Authority



Prof. Michael Phillips, BSRPC



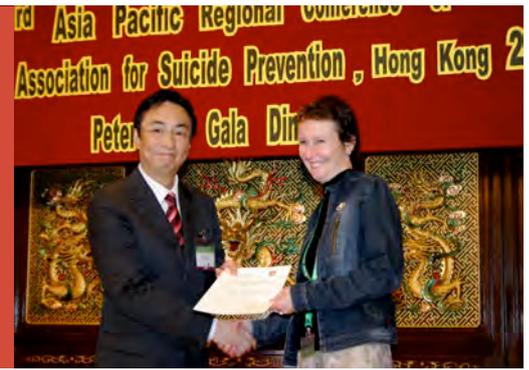
First Organizing Committee Meeting - Back (left to right) : KW Fu, Fiona Yau, Dr. Paul Wong, Frances Law; Front (left to right) Alice Lau, Vincent Ng, Margaret Tay, Dr. Lisa Yip, Dr. Xiang-dong Wang, Prof. Paul Yip, Dr. Eddie Chan, Amy Chan, Agnes Chiu, Robert Wong, Helen Lui



Mrs. Selina Tsang, Wife of Chief Executive, HKSAR, visited our Centre on 21st April 2008. From left to right: Dr. Dominic Lee, Prof. Paul Yip, Dr. Sandra Tsang, Mrs. Selina Tsang, Prof. Ian Holliday and Prof. Karen Laidler

Six Awardees of the Acknowledgement Schemes for Good Practices of Suicide Prevention in the Asia Pacific Region

Reach Out
www.reachout.com.au
an initiative of
the Inspire Foundation



Responsible person(s)

Dr. Jane Burns, Mr. Heath Jack & Ms. Graham Kerry

Organization

The Inspire Foundation, Australia

Objective

It aims to improve the mental health and well-being of young Australians by building a foundation to promote mental health literacy; it also provides young people with opportunities to identify pathways to improve help seeking, promote treatment and offer professional help.

Target population

Youth or young adults and helping professionals.

Intervention

It sets up online database of health information, establishes online community forum with advice from clinicians, and designs interactive gaming to engage young people. The website also supplies resources for professionals to use Reach Out! in their day to day practice.

Results

Reach Out! has received 7,331,441 unique visits and 40,000 subscriptions to the Reach Out! newsletter. It has been evaluated as a trustworthy, honest and credible website improving users' knowledge and attitudes about mental health issues.

**LIFE
SUCKS
NOW
HAS
A
WEBSITE**

www.reachout.com.au

Six Awardees of the Acknowledgement Schemes for Good Practices of Suicide Prevention in the Asia Pacific Region

Men and Women's Joint Intervention in Life Crisis



Responsible person(s)

Ms Xie Li Hua (謝麗華) & Ms Xu Rong (許容)

Organization

Beijing Cultural Development Center for Rural Women, China (Hebei Province)

Objective

It aims to promote gender equality, reduce the suicide rate in the project villages, increase residents' ability to deal with conflicts and improve their social support system.

Target population

All the villagers in the 9 project villages, particularly those in high-risk groups and their relatives and friends.

Intervention

Different kinds of training were launched for participants to ease the mood of the target population, improve their communication and coping skills. Established groups within villages organized various cultural activities to help build-up good social atmosphere.

Results

The number of suicide attempts was reduced from 88 to 3. No complete suicides have been recorded in the region since the implementation of the project. 99% of the people liked the project and the project and the support groups were very useful in building up social integration, promoting psychological health, enriching cultural life in the village and improving sex equality within family and village.

获奖感言

「获得“亚太地区预防自杀优秀实践”奖，让我们兴奋不已。非常感谢会议给予我们项目的肯定，非常感谢费立鹏教授和北京心理危机研究与干预中心多年来的帮助与支持。此外河北各县的妇联组织、妇女健康促进会和妇女姐妹，在多年的项目实践中与我们携手共同走过无数艰难坎坷，在此一并感谢。

十年前，当我们开始筹划项目时，步履维艰，几乎所有人都不愿提起“自杀”这一敏感话题，尤其是在农村。然而自杀现象却经常甚至每天都在发生着，支撑我们的仍是那句话：“没有什么比挽救人的生命更重要的事情了”。

项目在农村成立妇女健康支持小组，朋辈学习与互助，完善妇女的社会支持系统，促进社区良好氛围的形成，以达到项目预期效果。欣慰的是，在项目开展的五年期间，我们实现了零自杀死亡目标，探索出一条预防农村妇女自杀的有效途径。

预防自杀是一项长期而又艰苦的工作，我们将会继续努力，不断探索与实践，与世界各国识之士共同为之奋斗。」

北京农家女文化发展中心



Six Awardees of the Acknowledgement Schemes for Good Practices of Suicide Prevention in the Asia Pacific Region

WHO-Suicide Prevention Supre-Miss in China



Responsible person(s)

Dr. Xueli Zhang

Organization

People's Hospital of Yuncheng County, China (Shandong Province)

Objective

It aims to reduce mortality and morbidity associated with suicidal behaviors, increase the awareness about the burden of suicidal behaviors, and improve the efficiency of general health care services through the identification of specific interventions effective for the reduction of suicide attempters.

Target population

Suicide attempters

Intervention

Attempters in the intervention groups received brief education on suicide prevention at the hospital, follow-up psychosocial intervention and assessments, following the index visit to the emergency room.

Results

Patient are reassessed and revised at subsequent follow-up visits (2,3,6,9,12 and 18 months); the intervention significantly improves the frequency of the attempters' suicidal ideation, subjective sense of well-being, level of psychological disability, impulsiveness, and so forth.

获奖感言

「郓城县人民医院协助回龙观医院开展了自杀病人调查及预防的一系列研究，经过数年的努力，我们的工作取得了一定的成绩，此次被评为“第三届亚太地区预防自杀优秀实践奖”，我们首先想到的是感谢，感谢上级医院对我们的帮助与信任，感谢社会对我们一如既往的支持与关注！获奖是对我们工作的肯定和鞭策，成绩是大家共同努力的结果。荣誉属于过去。我们从事的是一项充满希望的事业，为了这一事业，我们会继续同心协力，加倍工作，以严谨、科学的态度进行实践活动，为人类的健康事业做出贡献！」

山东省郓城县人民医院



Six Awardees of the Acknowledgement Schemes for Good Practices of Suicide Prevention in the Asia Pacific Region

Eastern District Project on Prevention of Deliberate Self Harm (DSH), Hong Kong



Responsible person(s)

Chief Superintendent Peter Morgan, Hong Kong Police Force

Organizations

Hong Kong Police Force, Social Welfare Department, Housing Authority, Caritas, Pamela Youde Nethersole Hospital & The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.

Objective

It adopts a community-based approach on prevention of deliberate self-harm (DSH) by forming a multi-agency working group to streamline referral procedures; enhance training of police in dealing with deliberate self harm, raise public awareness and foster community support.

Target population

High risk group, helping professionals and gatekeepers.

Intervention

Setting up a database on DSH cases for identifying contributing factors to DSH; Producing a self-developed training package; Holding training seminars to housing staff, teachers, and parents, and general practitioners; Establishing Police-Social Welfare Department referral mechanism, and Developing professional-led psycho-educational groups for bereaved families.

Results

A decrease of 9.1% (5 cases of suicide) and an increase of 6.7% (8 cases of attempted suicide) in one of the sub-areas; Elderly suicide rates (60+) declined by 23%.

Feedback

"Having recently attended the internationally recognised and very successful 3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association for Suicide Prevention excellently organised by the Centre for Suicide Studies, I was greatly surprised and honoured to find that the very hard work of the many stakeholders in the Eastern District Prevention of Deliberate Self-Harm Working Group (PDSWHG) was duly recognised with an award for good practices of suicide prevention in the Asia Pacific Region. Of course, the very good work and efforts of all the organisations and agencies committed to suicide prevention must also be duly recognised and acknowledged but it is certainly gratifying that, at such a prestigious conference, the dedication and commitment demonstrated by the PDSWHG and its members was highlighted for praise. I am certain that with this positive encouragement, the PDSWHG will continue its important and meaningful multi-agency work in enhancing suicide prevention awareness and efforts within the community".

Mr. Peter Morgan
District Commander (Eastern District), HKPF

Eastern District Project on Prevention of Deliberate Self-Harm
防止自毀 - 東區社區共融計劃

THIS YOUNG GIRL IS SUFFERING FROM DELIBERATE SELF HARM
「她」就是自毀的受害者之一

She has seen her grandmother commit suicide and her own mother try to harm herself. Experts have shown that close family members are themselves six times more likely to also commit DSH, which puts this young girl at risk in the future. Suicides in Hong Kong more than doubled from 8.8 per 100,000 population in 1983 to 18.6 in 2003. In 2008, there were 252 persons in Eastern HK who committed DSH. That's why the EDIST Project on the Prevention of Deliberate Self Harm is helping to support families by ensuring that they are given timely and expert help. Help us to help them by supporting this project.

「她」曾目睹祖母自殺及母親嘗試自殺。據研究所得，自殺者親屬的自殺率會高於常人6倍之多。因此「她」已被推推向一條不歸路。從1983年到2003年，香港的自殺率已由每十萬人的8.8宗躍至每十萬人的18.6宗。在2006年，東區處理了252宗自殺案件。因此，東區防止自殺工作小組正專注轉介及協助遺屬尋求專業的輔導，請支持我們全面推行這個計劃！

This project is done by people who want to make a difference.
Something everyone can do
這個自毀的計劃是勇於求變的方案，而且每一個警察都可以攜手推行

This project is dedicated to those who thought they had no other choice...
And to those who still do
死者已矣...然而，對高危者和遺屬而言，我們還可以為他們做更多的工作

Six Awardees of the Acknowledgement Schemes for Good Practices of Suicide Prevention in the Asia Pacific Region

Suicide Prevention Program for adolescents



Responsible person(s)

Prof. Young Moon Lee & Ms. Min Jeong Baek

Organization

Suwon Centre for Suicide Prevention, South Korea

Objective

The program aims at enhancing early detection of potentially risk adolescence, help-seeking in the community, and early intervention to adolescences with potential risk of suicide.

Target population

High risk group of youth and helping professionals

Intervention

Students who had potentially suicidal risk were arranged to participate 3 phases of activities, in which they could learn stress management skills, review their interpersonal relationship and receive counseling services or referral services.

Results

Significant reductions of suicide ideation and depression level were found from evaluation on those participants. Their self-esteems were improved after joining the program.

Feedback

“First, it is my great honor to receive IASP award in Hong Kong. The efforts about suicide prevention program in Korea are just starting point, which means we have a lack of suicide prevention institutes or special agencies. Through this award, we do have a great opportunity to develop suicide prevention campaign and education for public. Until now, Suwon Center for suicide prevention is concentrating on adolescent programs for educating them. In the near future, we are going out for all programs covering entire life schedules individually or collectively. Korean government is also trying to spread out any kinds of suicide prevention programs according to annual plans to set up into community mental health areas, schools and working places.

During we attended the conference at Hong Kong, we had learned many programs from other countries, including Hong Kong and Australia, far advanced ones and realized that the most important thing to make up suicide prevention programs is the public understandings to each culture we are involved within. This award will be the watershed to continue the efforts for suicide prevention in Korean society. I would like to thank you again for everyone who is interested in suicide prevention and life respect.”

Young Moon Lee
Director, Suwon Centre for Suicide Prevention,
South Korea



Six Awardees of the Acknowledgement Schemes for Good Practices of Suicide Prevention in the Asia Pacific Region

Sri Lanka Sumithrayo Rural Programme



Responsible person(s)

Mrs. Lakshmi Ratnayeke & Mr. Anura Wijemanne

Organization

Sri Lanka Sumithrayo, Sri Lanka

Objective

It aims at a reduction of deliberate self harm and suicide in the areas of Sumithrayo by empowering the stress-coping skills of rural people, improving awareness on mental health and, helping enhancement of self worth and self respect amongst the rural population.

Target population

Village heads, village temple priest, other village elders and suicide attempters of 72 suicide prone remote villages in the North Western, and Southern Provinces of Sri Lanka; the majority of the villagers are poor farmers.

Intervention

Volunteers and workers visited all six of the State hospitals to befriend those who have survived their attempts at suicide, and made follow-up visits to their families. Life Skills programmes and Suicide Awareness programmes were conducted for students in villages. The programme also ran Befriending & Crisis Intervention Centre in the territory.

Results

A steady decrease of the self-harm rate was found in the 34 participating Sumithrayo North Western villages, where other controlled villages' rates increased on the contrary. A gradual decline of DSH and suicide figures was also resulted in the south.

Feedback

“The Sumithrayo Rural Programme is honoured to be the recipient of an award presented by the Acknowledgement Scheme for good Practices in Suicide Prevention in the Asia Pacific Region. We thank the IASP, Mr. Peter Lee and all those associated with the Acknowledgement Scheme for the recognition given to Sumithrayo.

The Sumithrayo Rural Programme was initiated in 1996 in response to escalating rates of suicide in Sri Lanka and statistics that revealed that 75% of the suicides took place in the rural areas of the country. Little did the Sumithrayo imagine then, that the programme would be sustainable over a period of time let alone grow to the extent it has, and be as successful as it has proved to be.

Being recognised at an international level for their work has been a much needed incentive for those working in the Programme. It is a common failing that work done by volunteers who remain mostly anonymous and non-attention seeking goes un-noticed, and un-recognised in their own countries. The fact that their work has been otherwise acclaimed gives them the much needed encouragement to carry on in spite of the dearth of human resources, difficult ground conditions and other constraints.”

Mrs. Lakshmi Ratnayeke
The Director Rural Programmes



Peter Lee – Care for Suicide Survivor Project



進度撮要 Progress report

此撮要簡述本中心進行李家傑關生希望計劃的進度

- 截至九月底止，共有3,325人受惠於李家傑先生贊助的李家傑關生希望計劃所提供的服務
- 額外提供了共1,248節（每節1小時）的輔導及跟進服務
- 本中心的臨床心理學家為自殺者家屬提供了94節（每節1小時）的臨床心理輔導服務
- 而當中亦收到自殺者家屬對此服務的一些寶貴意見及讚賞，如下：“我感到輔導人員很耐心聆聽，關懷，願意提供支援渠道，而感到安慰，更希望繼續跟進多一段時間，以平伏哀傷情緒，而返回正常生活” “很好，在處理實際問題和情緒時，知道會有人可以幫到我，有安全感” “很感謝此服務的工作人員為我們幾兄弟姊妹解答各種疑難及情緒支援，多謝”



By end of 2008, a total of 3,325 suicide survivors benefited from this meaningful programme sponsored by Mr Peter Lee. Some of them have received additional counseling and follow-up services. They also send us positive feedback. (Please refer to the Chinese version)

精神健康分享會 Mental health seminar and psycho-educational group for people bereaved by suicide

由東區警署、社會福利署、本中心及明愛筲箕灣綜合家庭服務中心組成的「東區防止自毀行為工作小組」於10月至11月份再次舉辦自殺者家屬支援小組。於小組進行前，我們舉辦了一次精神健康分享會以作小組前之簡介。分享於9月27日(星期六)舉行，我們邀請了13位自殺者家屬到社會福利署東柴灣綜合家庭服務中心出席是次分享會。於分享會中，本中心臨床心理學家黃蔚澄博士首先講解了一些香港的自殺現象及對自殺者家屬的情緒影響，然後再由過來人分享重拾新生活的經歷；期間亦有社工帶領進行了一節放鬆練習。此外，我們更邀請了6位前小組組員於會後與家屬作小組討論和傾談，他們互相支持及交流經驗。分享會完結後，共有8位家屬表示有興趣參與新一期的自殺者家屬支援小組。

On 27 September 2008 (Sat), Social Welfare Department, Caritas, The Hong Kong Police of the Eastern District Inter-Departmental Working Group on the Prevention of Deliberate Self-Harm and our centre, conducted the 2nd Seminar on Mental Health for people bereaved by suicide. Thirteen families attended the seminar. Families who had participated in the 1st psycho-educational group came along and shared their experience with the newly bereaved. After the seminar, eight families showed their interests in joining the 2nd psycho-educational group.

亞太區防止自殺會議 IASP

於是次會議中，本中心的臨床心理學家黃蔚澄博士及社工陳彥君小姐發佈此計劃的初步研究結果。黃博士將會就整個幫助香港自殺者家屬的「李家傑關生希望計劃」的成效和啟發進行演說；而陳小姐亦會為以認知行為治療的概念去支援自殺者家屬的先導小組作口頭報告。本中心亦邀請了第一個自殺者家屬支援小組 - 「生命彩虹」的組員出席李家傑先生是次贊助於珍寶海鮮舫舉行之晚宴。這機會不但可讓他們有另一次組後重聚的機會，更可感謝他們對其他自殺者家屬一直的支持。組員之一鍾小姐在晚宴上亦分享對計劃的看法，並向李家傑先生致送紀念品。

Dr. Paul Wong and Ms. Kim Chan shared their experiences of the project at the 3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference of The International Association for Suicide Prevention in October 2008. Dr. Wong introduced the project and presented the preliminary results of the survivor project. Ms. Chan reported the conceptual framework and the preliminary results of psycho-educational group using the Cognitive-Behavioral Approach for people bereaved by suicide. We are also very grateful and honored to have invited 12 families joining us at the Peter Lee Gala Dinner on the 2nd November 2008. Of one of the families, Ms. Chung shared her insight and wish about the prospect of how to help future families bereaved by suicide. She presented a souvenir to Mr. Peter Lee. The souvenir was a small plant. Ms. Chung said that “We hope the work on suicide survivorship in Hong Kong will be alike with a plant; it will grow and grow with the right nutrients.”

Peter Lee – Care for Suicide Survivor Project

被社會遺忘的一群 關注自殺者家屬的需要 (刊登於明報2008-06-27)

作者: 葉兆輝、羅亦華

節錄: 日前, 一名母親疑因思念月前自殺的兒子, 在家中同一窗口跳下, 墮樓身亡 (詳見6月14日報道)。這類家人先後自殺的個案, 在香港並不罕見, 上月有一名母親在女兒上吊的地點自縊 (詳見5月13日報章報道); 年前一名傳媒高層在母親自殺地點懸樑自盡, 一名明星的母親和侄兒則先後在同一地點自殺。香港每年有近1000人自殺, 若估計一個個案影響6個親屬或朋友, 每年便有6000多名自殺者家屬, 而且每年遞增, 他們的自殺風險和心理健康需要正視。

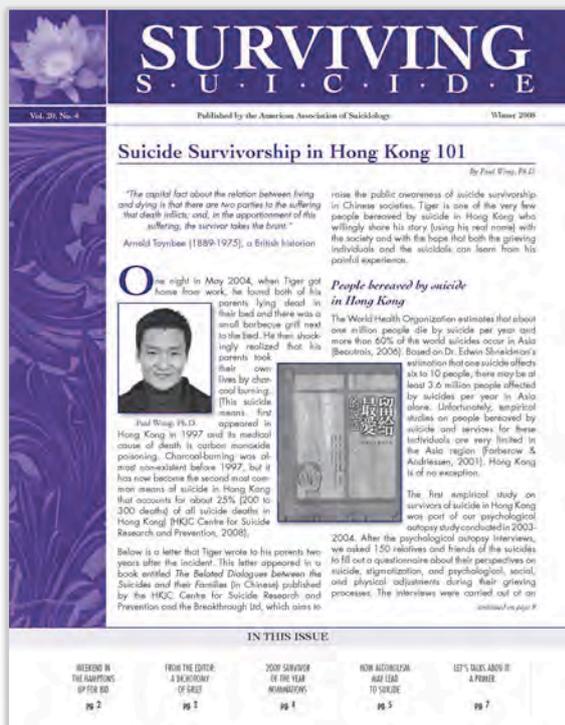


很可惜, 自殺者家屬一直被社會遺忘。表面上自殺喪親者與其他喪親者的情緒反應, 沒有多大分別, 同樣會震驚、否認、憤怒、抑鬱、極度孤單及持續感到若有所失。但據本中心訪談自殺喪親者所得, 兩者有以下幾點分別。

1. 由於約八成的自殺行為在家中進行, 很多家屬不願回家, 以免睹物思人。兒童或會感到孤獨、發噩夢, 甚至失禁; 老人家或會喃喃自語, 精神不集中。事故首數周, 家屬還可依賴親友陪伴, 日子久了, 各人開始新生活, 在無人陪伴下, 家屬或因思念而觸發自我傷害的行為;
2. 喪親後, 很多家屬需為口奔馳, 並往往因為需要長時間工作, 無暇照顧其他親人, 特別是喪親的小孩;
3. 若自殺的一方是丈夫或妻子, 遺屬經常會把自殺歸咎婚姻問題, 或認為與伴侶生前的爭執或某一些說話有關, 因內疚而增加其自殺風險。

本中心有以下建議: 一) 事發後, 有關方面應為有需要的家屬盡快提供住屋安排或臨時居所, 減少痛苦經歷; 二) 或向家屬提供照顧老人家或小孩的服務, 如配合社區的託管服務, 並對自殺者家屬特別恩恤; 三) 考慮長期在3間公共殮房提供即時的資訊及輔導服務。

自殺者家屬專責小組《通訊》 IASP Task-force Newsletter



本中心應 International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP)及American Association of Suicidology (AAS) 的邀請, 撰寫一篇文章簡述現時本港自殺者家屬的支援工作。該文章已被刊登於最新一期的IASP及AAS自殺者家屬專責小組《通訊》中。

We are invited by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) and the American Association of Suicidology (AAS) to write up the updated progress of our survivor project on the IASP Taskforce Newsletter.

For details, 詳情請瀏覽

http://www.iasp.info/pdf/postvention/2008_postvention_newsletter_vol_2_no_5_oct.pdf

Dr. Paul WC Wong



School-based Mental Health Enhancement Programme



Mrs. Beatrice Poon, Lung Cheung Government Secondary School

Our Centre is pleased to receive the support by the Quality Education Fund of HK\$2 million for the expansion of our well-received school-based mental health enhancement programme “Little Prince is Depressed” to at least ten more secondary schools in Hong Kong in the school years 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Preliminary findings of the Phase 1 pilot programme were presented at the 3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference of International Association for Suicide Prevention on 1st November 2008. This was an opportunity to exchange our experience on this innovative school-based mental health project with the international mental health and suicide prevention professionals/researchers community. The abstract of this conference presentation is provided here [Page 17].

On 21st November 2008, a teacher seminar entitled “走過抗逆之旅、建構健康人生－開辦中學精神健康課程經驗分享” was jointly organized by the Home-School Cooperation Section, Education Bureau, HKSAR Government and our Centre. Prof. Paul Yip and Dr. Paul Wong presented the research findings and our experience in developing and implementing

this programme. Mrs. Beatrice Poon from Lung Cheung Government Secondary School, a school who has joined this programme as pilot school since 2006, shared her front line knowledge in bringing this innovative programme into classrooms. After the seminar, tremendous interest and positive feedback were received from more than 80 participants. About 20 schools have expressed interest in joining our second round school-based programme.



School-based Mental Health Enhancement Programme

Title: Efficacy of a school-based psycho-educational programme using cognitive-behavioral approach: a pilot case-control study in secondary schools

Background

Increasing mental health literacy and awareness and removing stigma have been suggested as important strategies of reducing mental health problems among adolescents. The cognitive-behavioral therapeutic (CBT) approach has found to be an effective approach to treat mental disorders. Limited studies have been conducted on the use of CBT approach in school settings as a way to reduce psychiatric symptoms of students.

Aims

To evaluate a school-based psycho-educational programme using the CBT approach on improving the mental health of students in Hong Kong.

Method

A case-control comparison research methodology was adopted in this study. 216 students from two schools in Hong Kong were assigned to intervention and control groups. The intervention group took a 12-session psycho-educational course and the control group attended their classes as usual. Pre- and post-tests were conducted to measure all participants' depressive and anxiety symptoms, and attitudes toward help seeking.

Results

Result revealed a significant improvement of help seeking attitude in the intervention group ($p < 0.05$) but no change in the prevalence of depressive and anxiety symptoms. Nevertheless while examining the proportion of students with high depressive score (90 percentile of pre-test score) before and after the programme, a larger reduction was found in the intervention group (from 13.4% to 8.3%), whereas no significant difference was observed in the control group.

Conclusion: This school-based programme demonstrates its efficacy to encourage the help-seeking attitudes of students. It also seems to be more promising among the students with severe depressive symptoms.

Sharing our experience in program development and implementation



Tremendous interest and positive feedback from participants



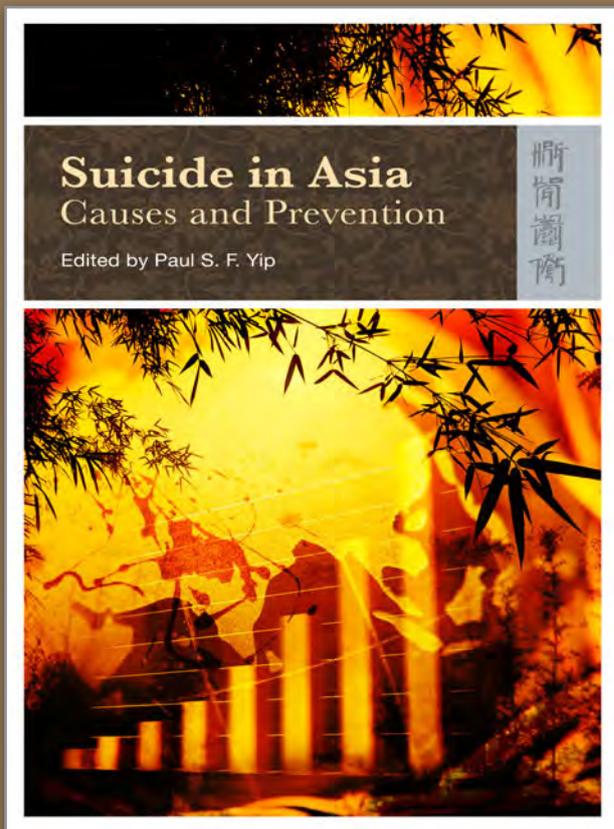
Recent Publications

1. **Yip PS, Wong PW, Cheung YT, Chan KS, Beh SL.** (2009) An empirical study of characteristics and types of homicide-suicides in Hong Kong, 1989-2005., *J Affect Disord.* Volume 112, 184 - 192
2. Chen YY, & **Yip PSF** (2008) Rethinking suicide prevention in Asian countries. *The Lancet*, 372(9650), 1629-1630.
3. **Fu KW, Yip PSF**, Changes in Reporting of Suicide News After the Promotion of the WHO Media Recommendations, *Suicide Life Threat Behav*, 38(5), October 2008, p.631-636
4. Hendin, H, Phillips MR, Vijayakumar, Pirkis, J, Wang, H, **Yip, P.** Wassermann, D. Bertolote, JM, Fleischmann, A. (2008). Suicides and suicide prevention in Asia. World Health Organization, WHO Geneva. 1-108
5. **Chan WSC, Law CK, Liu K., Wong PWC, Law YW, & Yip P.** (2008) Suicidality in Chinese adolescents in Hong Kong: the role of family and cultural influences. *Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol* (online first)
6. **Law CK, Yip PSF, Chan WSC, Fu KW, Wong PWC & Law YW** (2008). Evaluating the effectiveness of barrier installation for preventing railway suicides in Hong Kong. *J Affect Disord*, Sep 12. [Epub ahead of print]
7. **Yip, PSF (Ed.)**. (2008). *Suicide and Suicide Prevention in Asia*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
8. **Liu KY, Chen EY, Cheung AS, Yip PS.** (2008) Psychiatric history modifies the gender ratio of suicide: an East and West comparison., *Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol*. 2008 Jul 25. [Epub ahead of print]
9. **Cheung MW, Wong PWC, Liu KY, Yip PS, Fan SY, & Lam TH** (2008). A study of sexual satisfaction and frequency of sex among Hong Kong chinese couples. *J Sex Res*, 45(2), 129-139.
10. **Yip PSF, Liu KY, Law CK** (2008) Years of Life Lost from Suicide in China, 1990–2000, *Crisis: The Journal of Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention*, 29(3), 131-136
11. **Cheung YT, Chau PH, Yip PS.** (2008) A revisit on older adults suicides and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic in Hong Kong. *Int J Geriatr Psychiatry* 23(12), 1231 - 1238
12. Lin H, **Yip PS**, Huggins RM. (2008) A double-nonparametric procedure for estimating the number of delay-reported cases. *Stat Med*. 27:3325-39.
13. **Wong PWC, Chan WSC, Chen EYH, Chan SSM, Law Y W, Yip PSF** (2008) Suicide among adults aged 30-49: a psychological autopsy study in Hong Kong, *BMC Public Health* 8:147



Suicide in Asia: Causes and Prevention

Edited by: Paul S. F. Yip
 Publisher: Hong Kong University Press, 2008.
 ISBN: 978-962-209-943-2



Over one million people worldwide commit suicide every year, and more than 60% of suicide deaths occur in Asia. However, very little reliable information is available to permit a good understanding of the multifaceted and complex issues involved in suicide prevention in the region. This book provides detailed analyses of suicide in eight Asian societies. While each society has its own unique characteristics, Asia as a whole is under rapid transition and transformation, and the associated stress and depression are both closely linked to suicide. Hopefully, a better, evidence-based understanding of suicide will enable governments and non-government organizations to establish effective and culturally sensitive suicide prevention strategies for the region.

"In recent years, through research and greater openness, the extent and nature of the problem of suicide in Asia have become more apparent. It is clear that the causes of suicide in Asia and hence the optimal prevention strategies have some specific features which differ from those elsewhere in the world. It is therefore extremely welcome to see a book specifically focussed on suicide in Asia. The editor and authors are to be congratulated on having prepared a valuable contribution that will help in tackling this important issue."

Professor Keith Hawton, University of Oxford

"This useful compilation of findings on suicide in Asian societies will be important for suicide researchers worldwide. The interpretations of their meanings are also important and raise questions about the intersection of rapid societal changes, changes in subjectivity and moral experience, and culture that will fuel research for the next decade. A real achievement!"

Professor Arthur Kleinman, Harvard University

"This book contributes significantly to our understanding of suicide in Asian societies. Most of what we know about suicide in the world comes from studies in Western countries, despite the fact that a majority of the world's suicides occur in Asia. The information in this volume provides an essential basis for understanding suicide in Asian countries in order to develop culture-sensitive prevention strategies in the Asian region."

Professor Brian L Mishara, President, International Association for Suicide Prevention

Training Programme and Events

Macau Training in June 2008

A visit to Macau was organized by the Macau Richmond Society, Health Bureau, Macau SAR, and our centre. About 100 participants attended the half-day seminar. All presentations of the seminar can be downloaded from the following website: <http://csrp.hku.hk/WEB/eng/pageHandler.asp?id=670>



Training for mentors of Youth Engaging Deliberate Self-Harm Behavior

Volunteers have been a major force in suicide prevention in Hong Kong. Unfortunately, their efforts have not been well acknowledged because limited efficacy study has been conducted on volunteering services in suicide prevention and, thus, we cannot find empirical evidence to demonstrate the efficacy of this type of intervention.

Consequently, our centre has developed a study to examine the efficacy of volunteers in preventing suicidal behavior. The aims of this training are to enhance the knowledge, confidence, and competency of the potential volunteers who will help individuals who have history of DSH behaviour.



Evaluating the effectiveness of barrier installation for preventing railway suicides in Hong Kong

Speaker: Dr. Stephen CK Law (HKJC Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention)

Abstract: Background: This study aims to examine the effectiveness of installing platform screen doors (PSDs) for preventing railway suicides; any sign of substitution of suicide location; and changes in psychiatric profile of suicide deceased after the PSD installation in the subway system of Hong Kong. **Methods:** Cases of railway suicide and related information from 1997 to 2007 were provided by the railway operators and the Coroner's Court. The effectiveness of installing PSDs was assessed through a quasi-experimental setting. Poisson regression and chi-squared test were used. **Results:** Over the 11-year study period, a total of 76 railway suicide cases (0.71% of all suicides) were reported. A significant reduction of 59.9% ($p = 0.0003$) in railway suicides was found after the PSD installation. Analyses confirmed that there was no significant sign of substitution by displacing potential attempters to unsealed platforms ($p = 0.9051$). Those having psychosis would be better protected as no suicide cases with such psychiatric background were reported after the installation of PSDs. **Conclusions:** This study shows that PSDs can effectively prevent suicides with no substitution by "delethalizing" the image and altering people's perception about the desirability of railway suicide. Railway operators should extend the coverage of PSD to all railway stations in Hong Kong without any delay.

Other Research Seminars in 2008

Pattern of Sites of Suicidal Jumps in Taipei, Taiwan

Speaker: Dr. Ying-Yeh Chen M.D. Sc.D., Taipei City Psychiatric Center, Taipei City Hospital, Taipei, Taiwan Date: 7 April 2008

Suicidality in Chinese adolescents in Hong Kong: the role of family and cultural influences

Speaker: Ms. Wincy Chan (Honorary Associate Fellow, HKJC Centre of Suicide Research and Prevention & Senior Research Assistant, Centre for the Advancement of University Teaching, HKU) Date: 16 October 2008

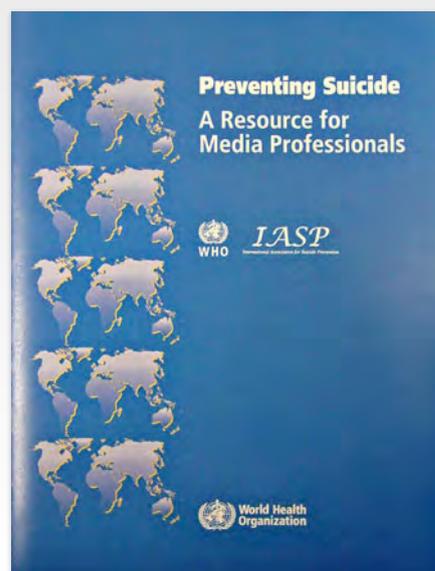


Dr. Ying-Yeh Chen (Right Four)

Training Programme and Events

Preventing suicide: A resource for media professionals (2008 edition)

Two CSRP researchers (Director Prof. Paul Yip and researcher KW Fu) have participated in the World Health Organization's (WHO) international effort of drafting the newly revised Preventing suicide: A resource for media professionals (2008 edition), which serves as a global reference for media reporting on suicides.



Press Conference of World Suicide Prevention Day 2008 "Heightened Suicide Risk among the Unemployed Population"

On a press conference held on 9th September 2008, our centre announced a research finding on unemployment and suicide. Despite a rebounding economy, declining unemployment rate and decreasing suicide rate during the period from 2004 to 2006, we find that the unemployed were facing more heightened suicide risk than ever. This heightened risk was more pronounced among the unemployed females. The relative risk, which is a ratio of the probability of the event occurring in a group versus another group, of completing suicide among the unemployed females rose from 6.0 in 2002 to 21.0 in 2006, which is a 3.5-fold increase.

"Data suggest that our local unemployed individuals are not benefiting from the recent recover of Hong Kong economy. Even worse, their risks for suicide are markedly increased" a remark made by Prof. Paul Yip in the press conference.



(From left to right) Mr. Vincent Ng, Suicide Prevention Services; Prof. Paul Yip, HKJC Centre for Suicide Research & Prevention, HKU; Mr. Kan Pak kei, Samaritan Befrienders Hong Kong; Mrs. Liz Chamberlain, The Samaritans Multi-Lingual Service Hong Kong

World Suicide Prevention Day in Seoul 2008

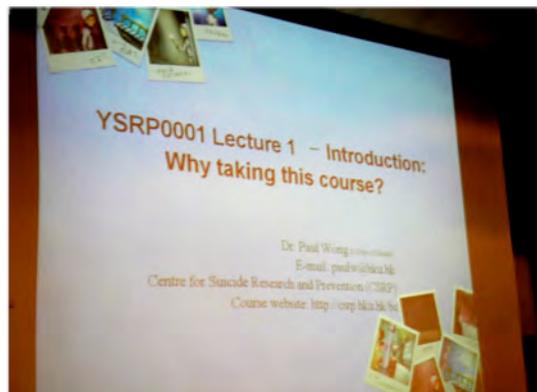
In an event of the World Suicide Prevention Day held at Seoul, South Korea, organized by the Korean Suicide Prevention Association and the Health Bureau of the Korean Government on 10th September 2008, Dr. Paul Wong was invited to share the valuable experience in conducting the psychological autopsy study and suicide survivorship study in Hong Kong.



Presentation to Police Welfare Officers

Ms. Frances Law and Dr. Paul Wong were invited to give a presentation to Police Welfare Officers on the topic of "Family as a protective factor in preventing suicides amongst people who may suffer from financial loss or other related problems" during their internal training-day on December 12, 2008.

Broadening course “Stress, Depression, and Suicide” in the University of Hong Kong taught by Dr Paul Wong, a clinical psychologist at the Centre



We believe that university students should possess both intellectual and psychological competences to meet various future challenges. Thus, we have designed a course that utilizes a cognitive-behavioural model to give a comprehensive overview on stress, depression and suicide. The major aims of this course are to enhance the mental health literacy of our undergraduate students and to introduce evidence-based practical skills in dealing with everyday life hassles. Details of the course can be found online <http://csrpk.hku.hk/bc>

In the year 2007/2008, about 220 multidisciplinary undergraduate students enrolled in this course. Below is some of the interesting feedback generated from their reflective reports:

General comments about the course

- “I can find comfort whenever attending the lectures, as if someone understanding me is teaching me how to walk on.”.
- “Dr. Wong not only taught us to use the skills ourselves but also told us how to teach them to others. I think this is the most important element of the course”.
- “My parents and I appreciate this course very much as we have never thought that certain daily life related courses would appear in the university which cares much about students’ mental health. We have used the problem-solving and anger management exercises together”.



Examples of helping others by what has been learned from the course

- Helping a patient (from a nursing student). “One of my patients had suicidal ideation so his movements had to be restricted. The next day I tried to practice the problem-solving exercise with him. He was suicidal because his face got burned in an accident and he was afraid others may discriminate him for his appearance. We brainstormed some solutions and we found some of them like “perform plastic surgery after his condition stabilized” and “skin grafting”, which are more feasible. I reflected the problem to the nurse and doctors and they thought the solutions could be feasible. A few days later, good news came. The doctor decided to do the skin grafting for the patient. The patient was delighted and thanked me for my help. The next day his restrainers were off and was preparing for his skin grafting surgery”

Comments on education method

- “This course is like a cookery programme which introduces to its audience the ingredients and demonstrates the method of cooking once. After that, the audience will try to cook the dishes if they think the recipe is good. Whereas other courses are like food and beverages programmes, which give the audience its comments after tasting the dishes; there is no way for the audience to experience it at all that way.”
- “I would like to praise the good organization of this course – the in-class activities gave us opportunities to practice individually; the after class activities provided us with chances to use and practice what was learnt in class and develop an automatic-processing system in our mind; the report-writing tasks enabled us to reflect what we learned with real-life applications.”



金融海嘯未必增加自殺率

葉兆輝 香港大學防止自殺研究中心總監

傅景華 香港大學新聞及傳媒研究中心專職研究員

2008年11月22日刊明報A24版

本中心剛於周前與國際防止自殺協會 (International Association for Suicide Prevention) 合作，在香港舉辦第三屆亞太區防止自殺地區研討會，20多個國家超過300名與會者，討論亞太區的自殺問題和有效防止自殺的計劃。當然大家亦十分關注金融海嘯的後遺症，以及對市民精神健康的影響。本中心亦與國際防止自殺協會舉行記者會，解釋有關問題。我們認為，面對全球金融危機，引致經濟不景，失業情況不樂觀，各國應關注可能引發的精神健康和自殺問題；不過，誠如國際防止自殺協會主席Brian Mishara教授所言，金融海嘯與自殺率增加兩者關係並非必然，他並且舉出美國二三十年代的大蕭條為例，說明經濟危機與自殺率增加並不一定有直接關連。

香港步入經濟困境，問題逐步浮現，有公司倒閉，也有大小企業裁員。從富豪到小投資者，很多人也在金融市場損手，更有人失掉畢生積蓄。近期傳媒更大事報道數宗自殺個案，並且有意無意間將死因與自殺者生前的個人經濟問題扯上關係。這種隨着社會趨勢，想當然的將自殺「定性」為某一原因的傳媒報道手法，把罕見的行為視為常態。這難免令讀者以為社會上不少人在經濟困境下最終自殺。但這個見解絕對並非事實。

自殺原因絕非單一

自殺成因複雜，有部分自殺者生前的確會遇上經濟問題，但這絕不可能只是一個單一因素；事實上，為數更多遇上經濟困擾的人士，並沒有輕生，卻以理性冷靜的方式面對問題，以正面態度面對生活，但可惜這些故事卻鮮有受到傳媒青睞。

遇上經濟困境的失業者，可以以理性方式來處理面前困境，這個結論有實證研究支持。根據本中心的研究「香港人自殺成因探究」，對照比較自殺死亡的失業人士與一般的失業者，自殺死亡的通常是男性、缺乏社會支持、受情緒病困擾和解決問題能力較差的人士。換言之，當人面對經濟或失業的困境，若能冷靜處理問題，獲得家人的體諒及互相支持，以及願意在需要時尋找專業人士的幫助，難題總可以找到出路。所以，失業率增加沒有必然令自殺率上升。

防止自殺，可以由個人做起，但政府和社會大眾同樣有責任。我們總結了過往10年的經驗，認為失業和經濟困擾是自殺的重要風險因素，政府及有關方面必須正視問題。根據我們早前公布的研究結果，去年香港的經濟情況雖較2003年大為改善，失業率大幅下降；而自殺個案亦自03年的歷史高位，下跌至2007年少於1000宗。不過，我們的研究指出，就業人士的自殺風險並未因此而顯著改善，失業人士的自殺風險卻逐年上升，其中以

女性失業人士的升幅最為顯著，2006年的自殺風險是2002年的3倍半。

政府應該竭盡所能，避免失業率上升，包括減省不必要的官僚行政程序，盡快開展已獲社會共識的基建項目；提供多方面的實質協助，令中小型企業渡過今次這個經濟關口，減少企業倒閉和裁員；政府亦應以實質措施鼓勵失業人士進修和接受培訓，等待經濟好轉時尋找工作可更具競爭力。我們亦希望香港的大企業，本着企業的社會責任，非不必要也不減省人手，應視裁員為減省成本的最終選擇，以免令失業情況惡化；尤其是大業主，可以主動減租以助中小企業營運。而個人亦可以調校一些生活方式，學習體諒和理解；若有能力的話，可向有需要者施予援手，施比受更有福，重建社會關懷的網絡。通過這個過程，香港社會才學會怎樣做到和諧與共融。



別輕視劫後情緒救援 台灣南投地震後自殺率大升的啟示

葉兆輝 香港大學防止自殺研究中心總監
2008年05月16 明報

四川省一場7.8級的大地震，令天府之國生靈塗炭，無數家園被震毀，報章電視傳來一幅幅倖存人面對喪親之苦的圖像，痛者流淚，聞者心傷。第一時間跑上前線的溫家寶總理說得好：「快一秒鐘就可多救一人」，非常實在的道出當前急務，挽救埋在瓦礫中的生還者，要與時間競賽，分秒必爭。香港人亦積極以行動支援，血濃於水，慷慨解囊，捐出善款和組織救援隊，希望協助災民渡過難關。

災民急需即時實質的支援，跟着要重建家園，投入生活；而因天災喪失親人的倖存人，除了要面對劫後的適應，更需要面對家人離世後的人生路。中國不少家庭只得一名小孩，面對喪子喪女之痛的家庭，劫後所受的打擊或會更大。

據海外及國內的多項研究結果所得，社會有必要特別照顧劫後重生的一群的精神健康，面對新的生活。

以一九九九年台灣9.12大地震為例，據一項台灣的研究所得，重災區南投市的自殺率，在二零零零及零一年皆大幅上升，自殺的增加主要來自男性，但同時其他市鎮並沒有同樣的自殺率增幅（除了高雄市和埔里鎮外）。據本中心的數據，有關台灣地區與南投市在九八至零二年的自殺率見【表一】，女性的自殺率在九九年

大幅上升，男性自殺率的增長則有濟後的現象，到二零零零年才大幅上升。

另一項由台灣學者跟進三百四十多萬名台灣中部居民的研究指出，若以劫後受害者（喪親、受傷或失去財物）來與非劫後受害者比較，在往後二至十五個月內自殺的調整後機會比例（adjusted odds ratio）達到1.46，這顯示劫後受害者的自殺風險顯著高於非受害者。

另外，世界衛生組織西太平洋區域顧問王向東醫生，曾經在二零零零年發表論文，追蹤兩個受到一九九八年河北省6.2級地震影響的村落，一共二百多名人士的創傷後壓力後遺症情況（Post-traumatic stress disorder；PTSD），結果發現受地震影響較大的村落，在獲得即時援助及重建支援下，比較影響較少卻獲得較少援助的村落，出現創傷後壓力症的機會較低（發病率分別是19.8%及30.3%）。

中南大學公共衛生學院的肖水源院長五月十四日在人民網發表文章（<http://scitech.people.com.cn/GB/7238911.html>），呼籲有關方面要在災區進行心理救援的工作，他的建議包括：一）對生還者進行有系統的心理調查和追蹤研究；二）把心理救援列入重建規劃之內；三）組織



心理救援工作隊；四）組織當地的互助支援工作。

我們十分支持肖院長的呼籲。根據現時的情況，對生還者的支持，特別要針對喪失子女、喪夫的中年女性及因家園被毀並失業的中年男性和年長有病的長者等。本中心希望本港不同界別人士，能夠盡力作出支援。香港人除了可以用金錢和物資協助國內劫後的同胞，本港有不少從事精神健康、公共健康和防止自殺的人士，對提供心理救援的工作，有一定的專業知識，亦可望為協助制定心理救援的重建規劃盡一分力，照顧劫後重生的四川災民的精神健康。對災民而言，金錢和心理上的支援同樣重要，可以減少創傷後壓力後遺症的出現，將不必要的傷害和死亡減至最低。

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【表一】台灣地區與南投市在九八至零二年的自殺率

項目	年份	男		女		整體	
		南投	台灣	南投	台灣	南投	台灣
自殺率	1998	18.6	12.8	6.1	6.9	12.6	9.9
	1999	19.0	13.7	14.2	6.8	16.7	10.3
	2000	23.7	14.4	13.1	7.6	18.7	11.1
	2001	33.6	16.6	11.2	8.0	22.9	12.4
% 改變 (與1998比較)	1999 較 1998	2.32	6.64	131.92	-1.01	32.36	3.93
	2000 較 1998	27.57	12.81	114.01	9.84	47.55	11.68
	2001 較 1998	80.99	29.77	82.25	16.21	81.09	24.97

小心報導名人自殺新聞

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2008年7月15日刊台灣蘋果日報A17版

日前，台灣媒體以顯著篇幅報導白文正先生在澎湖自殺事件。各大報章除了採用頭版的報導，還鉅細靡遺的描寫自殺的過程，甚至對白先生的自殺原因作出多方面揣測，白先生的自殺被描繪成一段商業鉅子以死明志的悲劇。

歷史不斷循環。大家若不善忘，應記得藝人倪敏然上吊身亡，媒體以頭版顯著篇幅報導，有線電視24小時不斷放送，多方揣測倪自殺原因。中央研究院鄭泰安教授在國際流行病學雜誌發表的研究顯示，在傳媒大幅報導倪先生自殺四星期內，台灣自殺風險增加了17%，當中以男性（增加30%）及採用上吊自殺（增加51%）的增幅最顯著。

香港大學自殺防治中心分析三位亞洲區娛樂界明星的自殺個案：張國榮、倪敏然及李恩珠，我們發現綜合三者自殺後首四星期，社區的自殺風險增加了25%，同樣地，顯著增幅主要出現於同一性別及同一種自殺方法上。

台灣及香港媒體報導自殺新聞有其獨特的「文化」。二〇〇〇年，有47%的香港自殺個案曾於報章刊載，同年澳洲只有1%；香港87.5%的自殺新聞附上相片，澳洲只有14%，瑞典8%。自1998年香港報章出現燒炭自殺報導後，燒炭自殺迅即蔓延至鄰近地區，學界認為媒體廣泛報導是箇中原因之一。



廣泛報導導致蔓延

至於台灣，二〇〇六年首六個月台灣四家主要報章的自殺新聞，27%的附上照片、1%刊於頭版、70%的標題明確表明自殺方法、33%的標題顯示媒體揣測的自殺原因，不過只有13%會刊載求助資料。若我們根據世界衛生組織《防止自殺：專業傳媒指引》所載的建議，台灣媒體報導名人自殺的表現如何？大家可參看【表一】，便知報導手法有不少值得改進的地方。自殺原因複雜，媒體報導只是其中一個因素。我們期待媒體本著專業精神處理自殺新聞，降低悲劇的發生，並進一步負起教育宣導的功能，例如針對台灣政界動輒揚言「自殺以明志」，或是要敵對陣營「切腹謝罪」等過度表演而不負責任的官場文化予以撻伐，讓民眾看到自殺並非問題解決之道。

【表一】台灣四大報章7月5日報導白文正先生的報導綜合分析（按照世界衛生組織的標準）

世界衛生組織的建議	分析
不應刊登自殺者照片或自殺遺書	主要媒體皆刊登死者相片，甚至浮屍海面的照片，與及他的電話遺言
不應詳細描述自殺的方式	有傳媒以連環圖方式講述自殺流程，例如「死亡之旅行程表」
不應簡化自殺的原因	暗示與白先生身前的傳媒報導和涉及的官司有關
不應美化或感性化自殺行為	採用「生前樂於到澎湖，也選擇在這裏結束人生」、「名譽重於生命，他以死明志」或「一路好走」等字眼
不應強調輕生者的個人特質、背景或宗教	強調其商界成功背景（「白」手起家），及參慈善活動
不應藉報道責備任何人	有媒體標題如《媒體害死白文正》、《媒體殺人》、《XX要負道德責任》

Report on Hong Kong Suicide Deaths in 2006

This report sheds light on suicide trends and profiles of suicide completers during the period of 2004 to 2006. Data was collected from the Coroner's Court and various variables related to suicide in Hong Kong were studied. During the study period, a downward trend of suicides was observed, with a significant reduction in suicide incidents from 1,053 cases in 2004 to 935 cases in 2006. Throughout the entire period, the ex-married working age group and the elderly (60+) were the high-risk groups. The age group of 40-59 had the largest reduction in suicides. The young of aged 15-24 had an increase of 17.9% between 2005 and 2006.

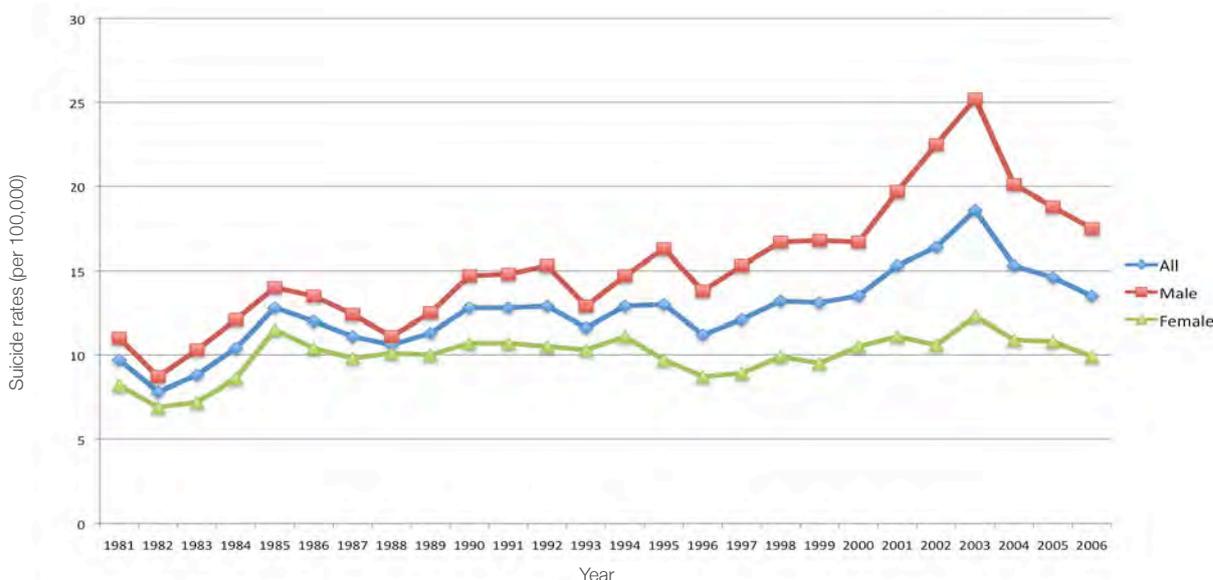
In particular, unemployed and public housing residents were more vulnerable to suicide. Moreover, jumping from a height remained the most commonly used method, while hanging and poisoning by charcoal burning came the second and the third. The number of charcoal burning suicides has reduced

from its historical high of 320 in 2003 to 165 in 2006. The reduction has a significant impact on the overall suicide suicides in Hong Kong.

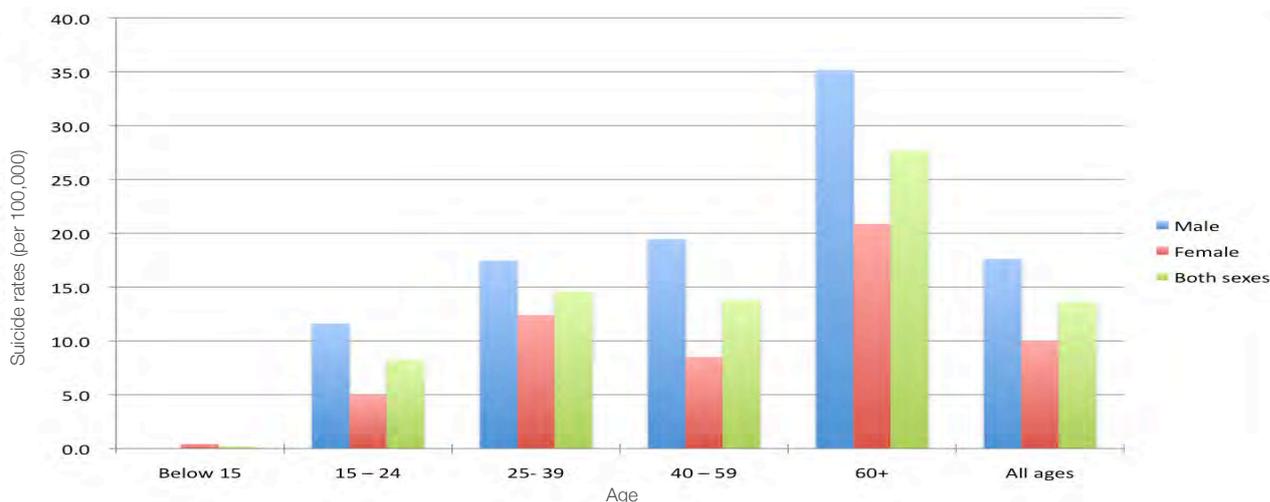
To further reduce suicides in Hong Kong, recommendations targeting different levels have been made with the suggestion that the Government should take a more active role to coordinate suicide prevention initiatives, and to create more jobs especially in the time of financial crisis. Full report can be found online <http://csrp.hku.hk>



Suicide rates (per 100,000) by gender 1981 - 2006



Distribution of suicide deaths by age and sex 2006



About Us

Congratulations to Our Friends and Members of the Centre



Derek Cheung has completed his MPhil (Sociology) and his thesis is on *Suicidal behaviours among illicit drug users*. He is going to pursue his doctoral degree in the School of Population Health at the University of Melbourne on the study of contagion of suicide news in 2009.

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