

HKU Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention reports high 2024 suicide rates in Hong Kong, with raising trends among young adult males over three years

September 10 is the World Suicide Prevention Day. The Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (CSRP) of the University of Hong Kong (HKU), a member of IASP, hosted a joint press conference today with the Suicide Prevention Services (SPS). The conference unveiled the latest suicide statistics for Hong Kong and addressed the challenges that we are currently facing.

Latest Research Findings

With data extracted from the Coroner's Court, CSRP estimated that the 2024 suicide rate¹ in Hong Kong was 14.1, which is higher than the 13.5 recorded in 2023. To enable a valid comparison of suicide rates among different regions, suicide rates were standardized and adjusted according to the age structure of the world population. Since ageing in Hong Kong is more severe than in other regions, after adjustment, the age standardized suicide rate in Hong Kong is estimated at 10.6 for 2024, which is higher than the global rate of 8.9 for 2021 (World Health Organization, 2025).

Significant Decrease in Suicide Rates Among Children under 15

The report indicated a 46.7% decrease in the suicide rate among children below 15 in 2024. Suicide rate of males decreased by 50%, dropping from 6 to 3 case, and suicide rate of females decreased by 44%, dropping from 9 to 5 cases. This reduction could be linked to increased suicide prevention efforts in schools and a growing public awareness specifically targeted at this age group in the community. However, it is important to note that the total number of suicides among students aged 15–24 in 2024 remained similar to the figure recorded in 2023.

Rising Suicide Rates Among Young Adult Males, a Focus on Financial Issues

Young adult males' suicide has become a matter of heightened public concern in recent years as the suicide rate among 25 to 39-year-old males saw a significant increase from 10.0 in 2021 to 14.4 in 2024. Among people in this group, unemployed individuals face a significantly higher risk of dying by suicide, with a rate 5-6 times greater than their employed counterparts. Their main reason for suicide is financial issues (37.7%), with over 40% experiencing debt problems, of which illegal gambling being the most common cause.

¹ All suicide rates are calculated as per 100,000 people.

An analysis of suicide notes reveals that both men and women frequently expressed deep concern for their families. However, men often appeared to be influenced by a more traditional sense of role and responsibility as the primary financial caretakers, which may have contributed to their distress.

Encouraging Help-Seeking and Building Gatekeeper Skills

According to the statistics, there is a rising demand of SPS's Hotline service. From Jan to Aug 2025, SPS received 85,583 calls, a 15.5% increase compared to the same period of 2024. According to the statistics for the full year of 2024, over 114,000 calls were received. Among the callers disclosed their age, 4,280 were from young male callers aged 25-40, a 66.1% increase compared to 2023. Regarding the presenting problems, while mental problem ranked first at 34.6%, 21.2% of young male callers in 2024 were troubled by work and 12% by financial problem.

A young man in his 20s called SPS. He was experiencing severe emotional distress, poor relationship with family and even contemplating suicide due to financial problems. During the call, the worker listened patiently, calmed his emotions with a sincere, non-judgmental attitude, and encouraged him to accept follow-up. He ultimately agreed to face-to-face counseling. After several sessions, his mood improved further, he resolved his emotional issues, and continued to work and try to rebuild his relationships with his family.


Suicide prevention is now a critical community-wide responsibility, as these tragedies are increasingly visible in all corners of community. Learning to recognize the signs of suicide is a vital lifesaving skill. The call to action highlights the need for a dual approach: promoting help-seeking among vulnerable groups and walk together to find solutions to their problems while simultaneously building a network of skilled community "gatekeepers" capable of identifying and supporting individuals in distress.

Photo caption:



Photo 1: The Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention at the University of Hong Kong, together with Suicide Prevention Services, today (September 10) released the latest suicide statistics and trends in Hong Kong. Attendees include Professor Paul Yip Siu-fai, Director of the HKJC Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (second from the right), Ms. Lisa Ho Sin-hang, Training Consultant and Clinical Psychologist at the HKJC Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (first from the right), Dr. Wendy So Wing-yan, Senior Research Manager at the HKJC Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (second from the left) and Mr. Vincent Ng Chi-kwan, Executive

	<p>Director of SPS (first from the left).</p>
	<p>Photo 2: Professor Paul Yip Siu-fai, Director of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention at the University of Hong Kong, points out that the overall suicide figures in Hong Kong remained high in 2024. Specifically, there was a marked increase in the suicide rate among young adult males aged 25-39.</p>
	<p>Photo 3: Mr. Vincent Ng Chi-kwan, Executive Director of Suicide Prevention Services (SPS), highlights a growing trend in the use of their hotline. He noted that men may be more inclined to use anonymous hotline services, as the protection of their identity can make them feel more comfortable seeking support.</p>

	<p>Photo 4: Ms. Lisa Ho Sin-hang, Training Consultant and Clinical Psychologist at the Centre, highlighted that men are often influenced by a traditional sense of role and responsibility. She also emphasized the importance of learning how to respond supportively when loved ones express distress or suicidal thoughts, as this can be a critical step in connecting them with professional help.</p>
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About HKJC Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (CSRP), HKU

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

About Suicide Prevention Services (SPS)

Founded in 1995, SPS is a registered charitable organization committed to serving people who are suicidal, despairing or distressed by means of befriending and other services supporting them to regain control of their emotions and the will to live on. SPS has been helped more than 1,200,000 people, providing services including: 24-hour Suicide Prevention Hotline Service, Suicide Prevention Service for the Elderly, Services for Family with Elderly, Services for Survivors of Sudden Death and Suicide Loss, Community Education and Life Education for Youth.

For media enquiries, please email csrp@hku.hk.

References

World Health Organization. (2025). Age-standardized suicide rates (per 100,000 population) [Data file]. Retrieved from [https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/age-standardized-suicide-rates-\(per-100-000-population\)](https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/age-standardized-suicide-rates-(per-100-000-population))