

To New Editors/ Assignment Editors:

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Press Release (For immediate dissemination)

Hong Kong's Overall Suicide Rate Declines in 2025, but Surges Among Youths Under 15

Research Reveals the Ripple Effect of Online Discussions on Suicide Cases

New Recommendations Launched to Promote "Responsible Information Dissemination"

HONG KONG, September 10, 2026- Today is the World Suicide Prevention Day. The Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (CSRP) at The University of Hong Kong (HKU), in collaboration with the Hong Kong Press Council (HKPC), held a joint press conference at HKU to announce Hong Kong's latest suicide data for 2025. The two organizations also released the findings of the latest research project, supported by The Better Hong Kong Foundation, titled *A Mixed-Methods Research Analysis of Traditional Media, Social Media, and Suicide in Hong Kong*. The study found that social media significantly impacts the emotional well-being and suicide risk of young people. CSRP and HKPC urge the press media industry to exercise self-regulation in handling suicide news and call upon all Hong Kong citizens to shoulder the responsibility of being "Responsible Information Disseminators" when using social media.

Based on data extracted from the Coroner's Court, CSRP estimates Hong Kong's suicide rate in 2025 to be 13.0¹, a decrease from 13.8 in 2024. To facilitate effective comparison across the world, the data has been age-standardised according to the global population age structure. After adjustment, the estimated age-standardised suicide rate for Hong Kong in 2025 is 9.8, slightly higher than the global average of 8.9. An analysis by age group shows that, apart from a significant rise in the suicide rate among youths under 15, all other age groups showed a decline, with males aged 60 or above recording the most notable drop. Although overall figures for the elderly have improved, society should maintain continuous vigilance over elderly individuals living alone, particularly regarding their mental health, sense of loneliness, and need for social support.

The increase in the suicide rate among youths under 15 was primarily driven by males, whose rate escalated from 0.3 to a concerning 4.0 in 2025. The majority of these cases involved falling from height at home and were predominantly related to academic stress or peer relationships. Regarding family backgrounds, the majority of these cases came from typical households, indicating that the risk is no longer confined to traditional high-risk profiles such as single-

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

parent families. Recent data further indicates that among suicide cases involving youths under 15, the majority were attending schools with higher academic performance. CSRP makes a special appeal to schools and parents not to exert excessive pressure in the pursuit of academic excellence. The data indicates that such cases are highly concealed and unpredictable. Traditional "high-risk factors" are no longer sufficient to identify vulnerable youth, making it imperative for schools and parents to closely observe students' mental health and subtle behavioral changes.

Study Reveals Room for Improvement in Media Reporting; Social Media Exerts Greater Impact

A Mixed-Methods Research Analysis of Traditional Media, Social Media, and Suicide in Hong Kong is a collaborative project between CSRP and HKPC supported by The Better Hong Kong Foundation. It reviewed 1,200 online news reports related to suicide between December 2023 and November 2025. The study reveals that news media coverage continues to show a degree of non-compliance with World Health Organization (WHO) reporting guidelines, particularly regarding an absence of information in suicide warning signs and risk factors, detailed descriptions of incident location, lack of prevention information, and inclusion of suicide method details. This indicates that media reporting still has room for improvement. Concerningly, the study shows that social media typically generates the highest volume of negative discussions within two days following a suicide incident. The study also found that traditional news reports directly trigger online discussions. Once a report is published, it rapidly triggers secondary discussions and shares on social media. Importantly, discussions about suicide on social platforms show a statistically significant positive correlation with suicide numbers among the youth demographic under 35.

CSRP and HKPC Jointly Urge the Public to be "Responsible Information Disseminators"

Professor Paul Yip, Director of CSRP, noted that as many people nowadays consume suicide news and information through social media, some netizens leave comments evaluating the individuals' actions or even making speculations without factual basis. Driven by the rapid speed of information transmission on social media, such commentary can exert negative impacts on young people and potentially trigger copycat behavior. He hopes the general public can cultivate digital literacy and use social platforms responsibly to foster a safe and supportive online community.

Ms. Melissa Kaye Pang, Chairperson of HKPC, pointed out that in an era where everyone is an information disseminator, relying solely on media self-regulation is insufficient. She urged all Hong Kong citizens to "pause and think" when encountering information related to suicide on social media: do not like, do not leave comments, and do not forward, to avoid spreading the incident's details or sensationalised language. If posting is necessary, it should focus on positive information and include help-seeking hotlines and support resources.

Professor Scarlet Tso Hung, Vice Chairperson of HKPC, stated that while handling public complaints, HKPC will continue to promote media information literacy education. By reaching out to primary and secondary schools as well as various organizations, they aim to educate the public on identifying the authenticity of information, encourage everyone to act as a "Responsible Information Disseminator," and collectively build a safer online environment to prevent further tragedies.

CSRP released the newly updated *Recommendations on Suicide Reporting and Online Information Dissemination (2026 Edition)* (<https://csrp.hku.hk/recommendations-suicide-reportin-online-information-dissemination/>), providing clear recommendations for the media industry and the public. It covers recommendations for traditional media reporting, social media usage guidelines, and frequently asked questions, aiming to promote the practice of "responsible information dissemination" across society.

The End

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

Founded in 2002, the CSRP is based at the Faculty of Social Sciences, The University of Hong Kong. The Centre is dedicated to researching the causes and prevention of self-harm and suicide, and collaborates with local and international partners to promote the Public Health Approach to suicide prevention. In addition to conducting academic research, the Centre coordinates training and interventions to promote good mental health in the community. As Hong Kong's primary suicide surveillance center, CSRP continuously monitors self-harm and suicide trends, providing accurate information and insights to the media and policymakers.

About the Hong Kong Press Council

Established in July 2000, the Hong Kong Press Council is the city's first professional self-regulatory body dedicated to receiving public complaints regarding newspaper content. It is an independent, non-profit charitable organisation recognised by the HKSAR Government. In recent years, the Council has actively promoted media and information literacy education. To ensure independent and impartial operation, both the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen are appointed from non-industry members. The Council currently comprises 10 member newspapers, including *Hong Kong Economic Journal*, *Ming Pao*, *Hong Kong Economic Times*, *South China Morning Post*, *Sing Tao Daily*, *The Standard*, *Hong Kong Commercial Daily*, *Bastille Post*, *China Daily*, and *am730*.

About The Better Hong Kong Foundation

Founded in 1995, The Better Hong Kong Foundation is a privately funded, independent, non-profit organisation with no political affiliation. It is dedicated to facilitating communication and building bridges between Hong Kong, Mainland China, and the international community. The Foundation's core mission is to uphold the integrity of the "One Country, Two Systems" framework and the Basic Law, which serve as the essential cornerstone of the Hong Kong SAR. Through constructive dialogue and close collaboration with the business sector, the Foundation presents an authentic narrative of Hong Kong and Mainland China to the world, showcasing

the city's unique charm and economic potential under the belief that mutual trust and cooperation foster positive global impact.

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Photo caption:



Photo 1: The Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention at the University of Hong Kong, together with the Hong Kong Press Council, today (September 10) released the latest suicide statistics and the findings of the latest research project titled *A Mixed-Methods Research Analysis of Traditional Media, Social Media, and Suicide in Hong Kong*. Attendees include Professor Paul Siu Fai Yip, Director of the HKJC Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (first from the left), Ms. Melissa Kaye Pang, Chairman of the Hong Kong Press Council (middle) and Prof. Scarlet Tso, Vice Chairman of the Hong Kong Press Council (first from the right).

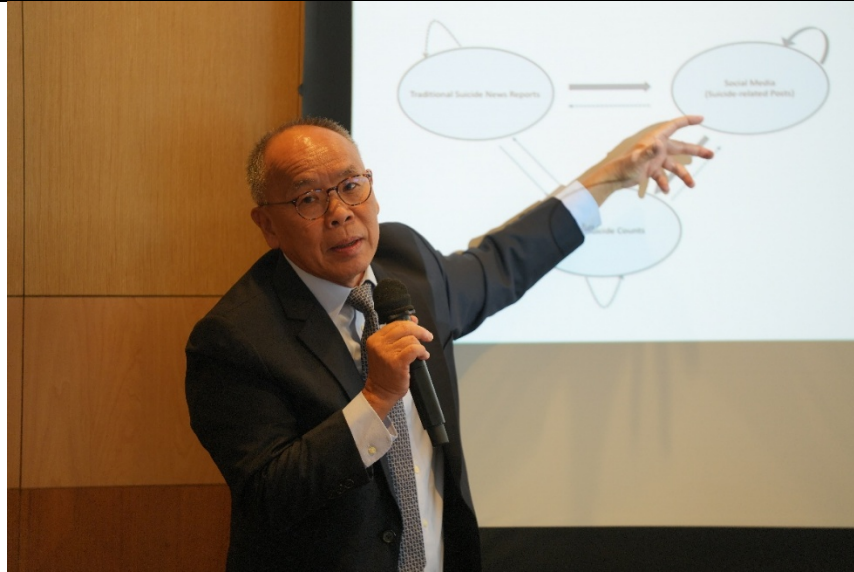


Photo 2: Prof. Paul Siu Fai Yip, Director of CSRP, highlights that news media reports trigger secondary discussions and shares on social platforms, with online discussions showing a statistically significant positive correlation with suicide numbers among youth under 35.



Photo 3: Ms. Melissa Kaye Pang, Chairman of the Hong Kong Press Council, emphasizes that information dissemination is no longer confined to traditional news organizations; every netizen, influencer, community moderator, and platform operator acts as information disseminators. Building a safe digital environment requires self-regulation not just from the media, but from every individual across social platforms.



Photo 4: Prof. Scarlet Tso, Vice Chairman of the Hong Kong Press Council, notes that in today's era of thriving social media and advanced AI, anyone can become a reporter or "Information Disseminator", and yet not everyone understands the importance of professional ethics and media integrity.