



An Internet survey of adolescent self-injurers

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Abstract

This paper reports an Internet survey of adolescent self-injurers (n=128, mean age 16.7 years). Details regarding personal information, types of self injury engaged in, behavioural history associated with respondent's self-injury, romantic relationships, emotions in relation to self-injury, life events, and consultation with health professionals were collected and data were analysed descriptively. This survey reveals a picture of the adolescent self-injurer as someone who is usually female, often with a history of sexual and/or physical abuse and an eating disorder. 'She' tends to cut her arms and legs on a daily or weekly basis, and usually hides her self-injury from others. Respondents indicated that the practice of self-injury helped to reduce anxiety, confusion, and depression. Implications for advancing preventative approaches to mental health are discussed.

Keywords

adolescence, cutting, Internet, self-injury, self-harm, survey

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