

**ASSOCIATION BETWEEN TRUANCY AND SUICIDALITY AMONG EUROPEAN YOUNG. PRELIMINARY DATA FROM AN ITALIAN SAMPLE. WE-STAY PROJECT**

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**Introduction:** Truancy is a serious public health problem that affects adolescents from all countries around the world. It negatively affects almost every aspect in the life, including physical, mental health, social and economical conditions. Young who are habitual truants are more likely to engage in at-risk behaviour like suicidal behaviours.

**Objectives:** This analysis investigated the prevalence of truancy and suicidal behaviours in the Italian sample.

**Aims:** to reduce truancy among European adolescents improving mental health in European high schools.

**Methods:** the WE- STAY intervention carried out in 6 different European Countries. In Italy a sample of 2265 High school students (mean age 15.6±0.6; 64.4% females) was selected. Baseline evaluation of students' lifestyle, coping styles, at-risk truancy, suicidal behaviour and mental health issues was collected using a structured questionnaire.

**Results:** 6% has been absent from school for 7 days or more without a valid excuse during the past year (6.6% male); 20.3% as considered as truant student (three or more skipped days per month without a valid excuse in the past year). 4.6% have seriously considered taking own life during past 2 weeks have thought about suicide, and 1.2% tried to take own life in past 2 weeks. The analysis showed as correlation between skipped school and suicidal behaviour ( $p < .001$ )

**Conclusions:** Teens engaging in risk behaviours are at increased odds of depression, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts (Hallfors et al. 2004). The preliminary We-Stay data confirm the prevalence of at-risk behaviours is higher among truant students.