

# Nonsuicidal self-injury rate up in sexual-minority youth

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(HealthDay)—The prevalence of nonsuicidal self-injury (NSSI; i.e.,

intentional self-harm without wanting to die) is higher among sexual-minority youth than heterosexual youth, according to a research letter published online June 3 in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

Richard T. Liu, Ph.D., from the Alpert Medical School of Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, examined trends in NSSI among sexual-minority and heterosexual youth using data from the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System for 2005 to 2017. Respondents were asked about a single instance of NSSI in the previous 12 months; data were stratified by sexual orientation.

Liu found that across the study period, the prevalence rates of NSSI ranged from 10.79 to 20.41 percent among heterosexual youth and from 38.04 to 52.97 percent among sexual-minority youth. When sexual orientation was based on [sexual identity](#), there was a significant decrease in NSSI for [heterosexual](#) youth across this period (annual percentage change, -2.51), but not for sexual-minority youth. The pattern of results was similar when [sexual orientation](#) was based on sexual behavior, but no significant changes over time were noted in any group.

"The absence of a decline in NSSI prevalence among sexual minority youth across this time period is all the more striking given that the very high rates of NSSI allow for more potential room for improvement," Liu writes. "Collectively, these findings indicate that there remains much opportunity for progress in addressing this public health concern."

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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