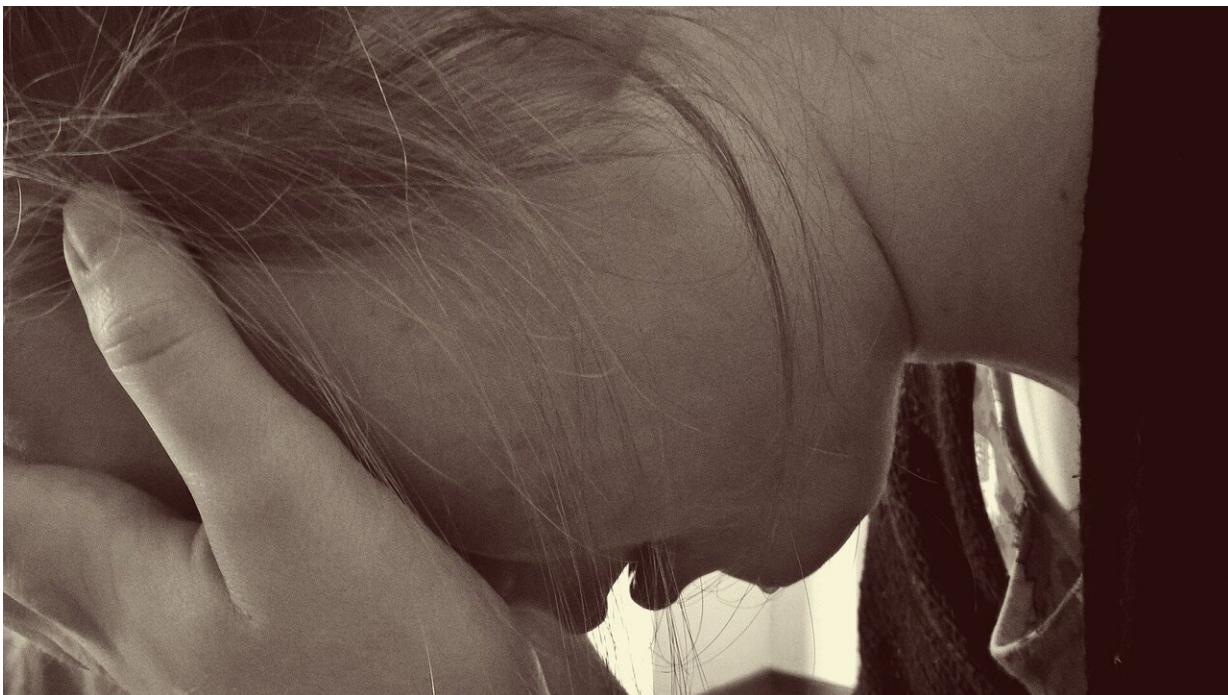


Adolescents living in U.S. but born elsewhere have higher rates of suicide ideation

August 30 2021



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

As tensions continue to run high in the Middle East, a new study from the Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis finds that adolescents from the conflict-affected region who are residing in the United States have lower levels of resilience and a heightened risk of suicide ideation compared with their American-born peers.

"Given the collapse in Afghanistan and President Biden's stated commitments, we need to be prepared to not only welcome refugees, but to understand how to support them," said Lindsay Stark, associate professor and associate dean of global programs. "Our findings show that having a strong sense of hope for the future and a sense of school-belonging bolstered [resilience](#) and reduced risk of [suicide](#) ideation for students coming from the Middle East."

Stark, an internationally recognized expert on the protection and well-being of women and children, is lead author of the article "Correlates of Suicide Ideation and Resilience Among Native- and Foreign-Born Adolescents in the United States," which was published in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*.

"Our study suggests a need for targeted, culturally responsive interventions to destigmatize [mental health](#) and psycho-social well-being, bolster sources of resilience and encourage help-seeking," said Ilana Seff, research assistant professor at the Brown School and co-author on the study.

Stark and her co-authors analyzed [quantitative data](#) from the Study of Adolescent Lives after Migration to America in Detroit and Harrisonburg, Virginia. More than 40 percent of the sample was born outside the United States, with the majority born in the Middle East and North Africa. The authors modeled outcomes of resilience and suicide ideation using measures of hope, school belonging, stressful life events and being born outside the United States.

Adolescents with greater hope and school belonging showed higher resilience, while lower levels of school belonging were correlated with higher levels of suicide ideation. More stressful life events and being born outside the U.S. were both associated with suicide ideation, while those from the Middle East and North Africa regions faced a significant

increase in the risk of suicide ideation.

More information: Lindsay Stark et al, Correlates of Suicide Ideation and Resilience Among Native- and Foreign-Born Adolescents in the United States, *Journal of Adolescent Health* (2021). [DOI: 10.1016/j.jadohealth.2021.07.012](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2021.07.012)

Provided by Washington University in St. Louis

Citation: Adolescents living in U.S. but born elsewhere have higher rates of suicide ideation (2021, August 30) retrieved 10 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-08-adolescents-born-higher-suicide-ideation.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.