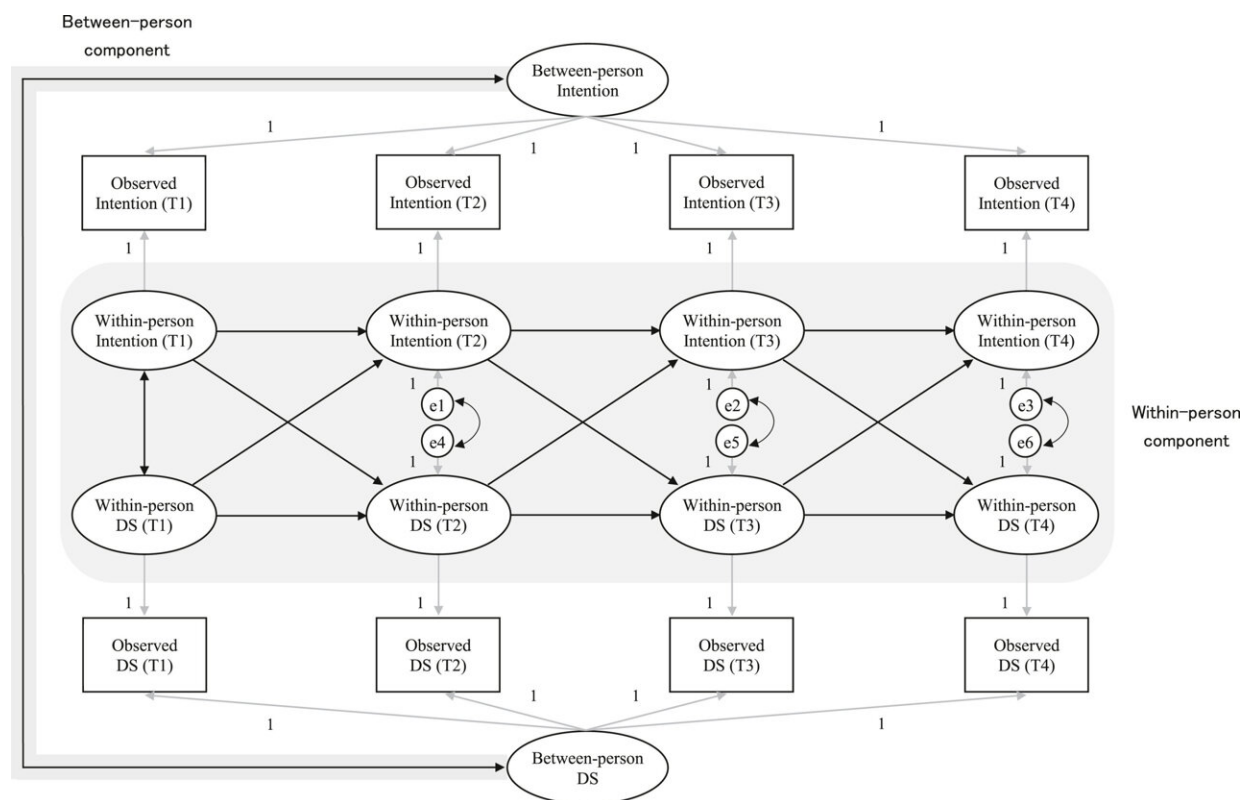


Worsening depressive symptoms found to decrease subsequent help-seeking intentions in adolescents

December 13 2023



Full specification of random intercept cross-lagged panel model analyzing longitudinal associations between intentions to seek help from others and depressive symptoms in adolescents. Note: squares represent observed variables, and circles represent latent variables. DS: depressive symptoms; Intention: intentions to seek help from others; e1–e6: errors; T1: age 10; T2: age 12; T3: age 14; T4: age 16. Credit: *Journal of Adolescent Health* (2023). DOI: 10.1016/j.jadohealth.2023.06.033

One in four adolescents are reported to have depressive symptoms. However, most adolescents with depressive symptoms do not receive appropriate care. Cross-sectional studies have observed an association between depressive symptoms and help-seeking intentions among adolescents, suggesting a possibility that adolescents with depressive symptoms have difficulties seeking help for their symptoms.

This study, published in [published](#) in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*, examined longitudinal relationships between antecedent depressive symptoms and subsequent help-seeking intentions among [adolescents](#) using data obtained from a population-based birth cohort study in Tokyo, Japan (Tokyo Teen Cohort).

In the Tokyo Teen Cohort, we assessed help-seeking intentions and depressive symptoms among adolescents at four time points, each with a two-year interval (10y, 12y, 14y, and 16y). We examined longitudinal relationships between the two variables using a random intercept cross-lagged panel model. Subsequently, we found that antecedent worsening depressive symptoms decrease subsequent help-seeking intentions across all time points (10y–12y, 12y–14y, and 14y–16y) (Image).

This is the first study reporting that worsening [depressive symptoms](#) decrease subsequent help-seeking intentions, highlighting the social need for adults who are close to adolescents experiencing mental health difficulties to provide them with proactive support. This result also indicates that creating a supportive environment is crucial to encourage adolescents to disclose their [psychological distress](#) to adults without hesitation.

More information: Satoshi Yamaguchi et al, Longitudinal Relationships Between Help-Seeking Intentions and Depressive

Symptoms in Adolescents, *Journal of Adolescent Health* (2023). DOI: [10.1016/j.jadohealth.2023.06.033](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2023.06.033)

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