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GENDER DIFFERENCES IN ADOLESCENT SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR

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Introduction: The relationship between psychiatric disorders and adolescent suicide is well established. The aim of the present study was to examine gender differences in suicidal behavior among adolescents.

Methods: A structured diagnostic interview (Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview Kid (M.I.N.I. Kid)) was used to determine 25 psychiatric diagnoses defined by the DSM-IV and suicidal behavior (having any current suicidal ideations or suicide attempts). The study population consisted of adolescents (aged 11-18), who were consecutively, first time admitted patients with suicidal behavior (according to the M.I.N.I. Kid) into the Vadaskert Child Psychiatry Hospital, Budapest.

Results: Altogether 81 adolescents (46 girls (56.8%) and 35 boys (43.2%)) met the inclusion criteria. The most common psychiatric disorder of suicidal boys (n=35) was attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (n=17; 48.6%), followed by oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) (n=16; 45.7%) and generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) (n=13; 37.1%). Among girls (n=46) the most common psychiatric disorder was dysthymia (n=23; 50%), followed by GAD (n=22; 47.8%) and ODD (n=20; 43.5%).

Limitations: This study examined an inpatient population with suicidal behavior, generalizations about outpatient and community samples cannot be made.

Conclusions: Based on the present study in adolescent suicide prevention, in both sexes professionals have to pay attention to externalization and internalization disorders as well. The striking finding is the very high prevalence of ADHD among suicidal boys. It's important to emphasize the important role of GAD and ODD as risk factors of suicidal behavior in both sexes and dysthymia among suicidal girls.