

SUICIDE PREVENTION THROUGH INTERNET BASED MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION: THE SUPREME PROJECT

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Suicide is one of the leading causes of death worldwide, and the third leading cause of death among people aged below 25. Mental health promotion is a central aspect of the battle against suicide and mental ill-health. The internet and the media are effective tools for disseminating information and education to adolescents and improving their mental health and well-being. In 2011 there were 2.1 billion Internet users world-wide. In a random sample of over 3000 American adults, it was found that 58% of the Internet users reported searching for health information for themselves (Atkinson et al. 2009).

The main objective of the SUPREME project is to develop a website aimed at mental health promotion and to investigate its efficacy. A secondary goal is to compare two different strategies for promoting the use of the website: one where peers are the main promoters and another with mental health professionals. The study is partly funded by the EACH and comprises 7 European countries: Estonia, Hungary, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom, Lithuania and Sweden.

Adolescents in this study approached in a random sample of schools, in each participating country, yielding a total of 2100 participants. The schools were randomized into control (minimal intervention), and intervention conditions (minimal intervention + website access). Pre-, post- and follow-up measures are used to test the efficacy of the intervention. Each intervention school is also randomized into peer and pro dissemination groups for comparison of recruitment efficiency. Preliminary results are presented.