

Study: Self harm high among Goth youths

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Researchers at the University of Glasgow say they've determined rates of self harm and attempted suicide are high within the Goth youth subculture.

The longitudinal cohort study suggests deliberate self harm is common among young people, with rates as high as 14 percent in the United Kingdom. And researchers say it is particularly widespread in certain populations and may be linked to depression, attempted suicide and various psychiatric disorders in later life.

University scientists surveyed 1,258 young people during their final year of primary school at age 11 and again at ages 13, 15 and 19. The students were asked about self harm and identification with a variety of youth subcultures, including Goth.

Researchers found that belonging to the Goth subculture was strongly associated with a lifetime prevalence of self harm -- 53 percent -- and attempted suicide -- 47 percent.

Even after adjusting for factors such as social class, parental separation, smoking, alcohol use or previous depression, Goth identification remained the single strongest predictor of either self harm or attempted suicide.

The study is detailed in the current issue of the British Medical Journal.

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