

Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation webinar

Young Suicide in Japan

Thursday, 3 April

Postvention for Young Suicide Loss Survivors in Japan

Daisuke Kawashima, Ph.D.

Professor, School of Psychology, Chukyo University

Nagoya Castle



<https://press.moviewalker.jp/news/article/1110623/>



Ghibli Park

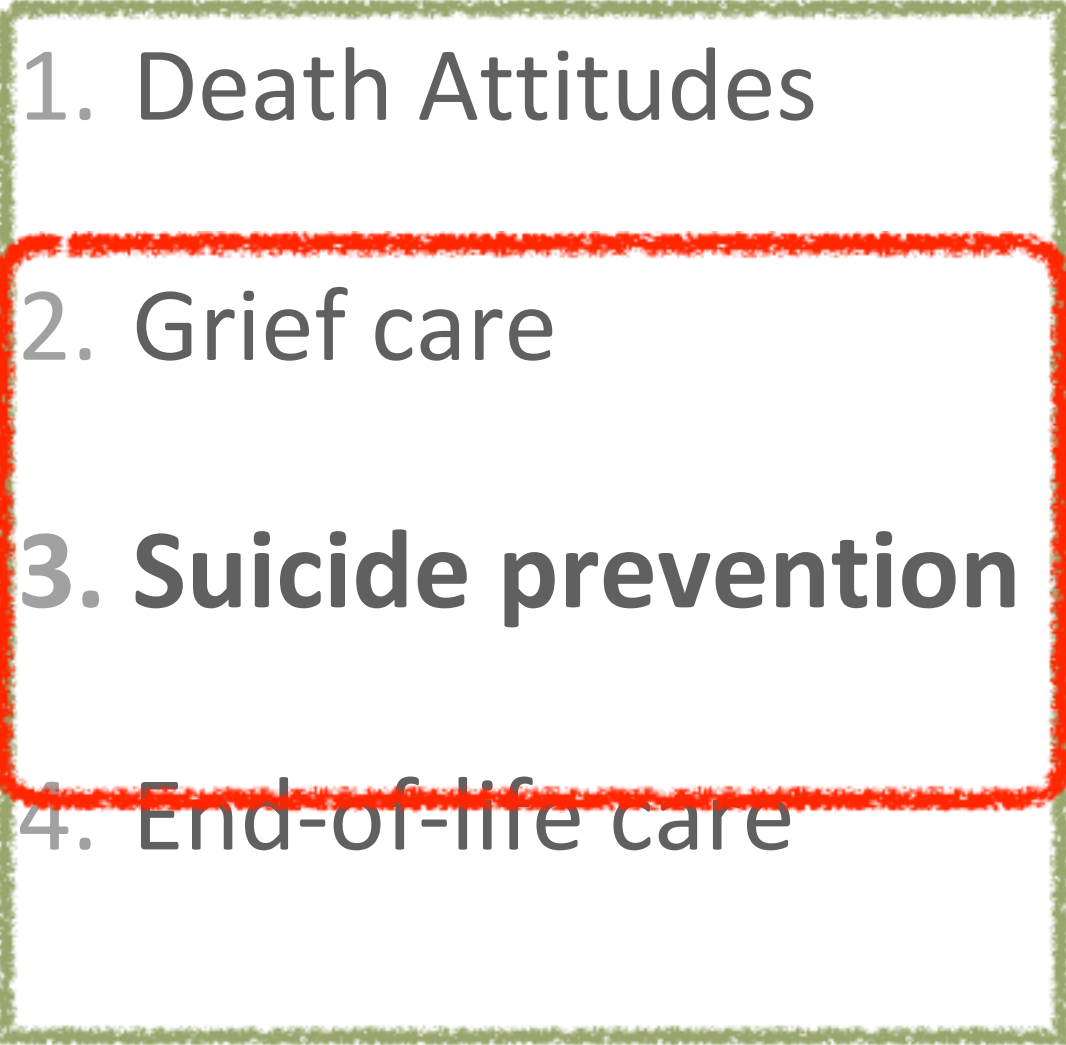


<https://www.triptojapan.com/ja/blog/nagoya-historical-treasures-castles-shrines-museums>

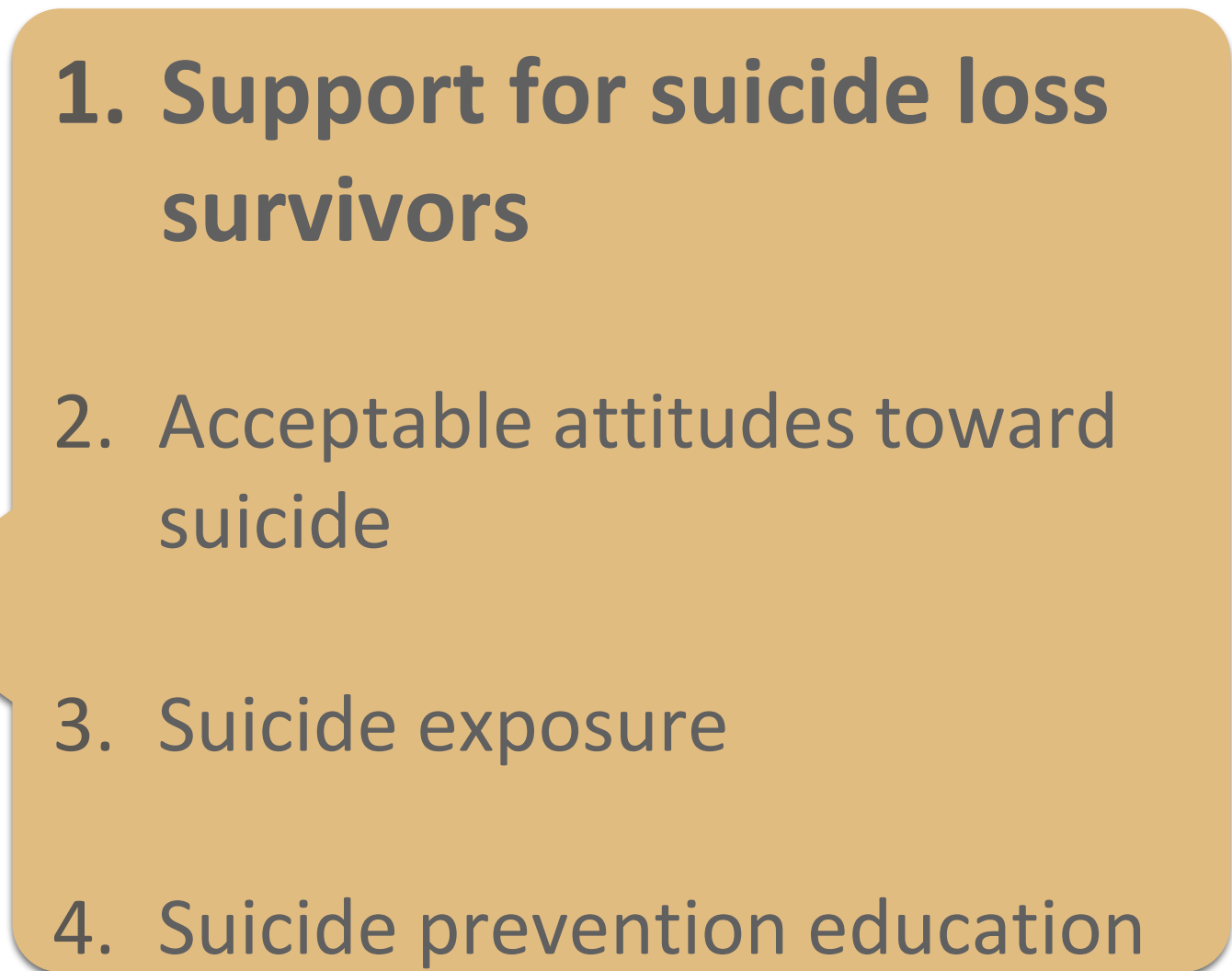
RESEARCH INTERESTS:

DEATH AND LIFE STUDIES

Main Themes

- 
1. Death Attitudes
 2. Grief care
 - 3. Suicide prevention**
 4. End-of-life care

Research Interests

- 
- 1. Support for suicide loss survivors**
 2. Acceptable attitudes toward suicide
 3. Suicide exposure
 4. Suicide prevention education

TERMINOLOGY

- “Suicide loss survivor” is someone who is profoundly affected by a suicide death (e.g., Cerel et al., 2013).
- “Postvention” refers to actions taken to provide support after someone dies by suicide.

A NESTED MODEL OF SUICIDE SURVIVORSHIP

community-level
postvention

Suicide exposed

**Higher risk of suicidal
behaviors than those
unexposed.**

Maple et al. (2017). Is Exposure to
Suicide Beyond Kin Associated with Risk
for Suicidal Behavior? Suicide Life Threat
Behav, 47, 461-474.

Suicide affected

Suicide bereaved,
short term

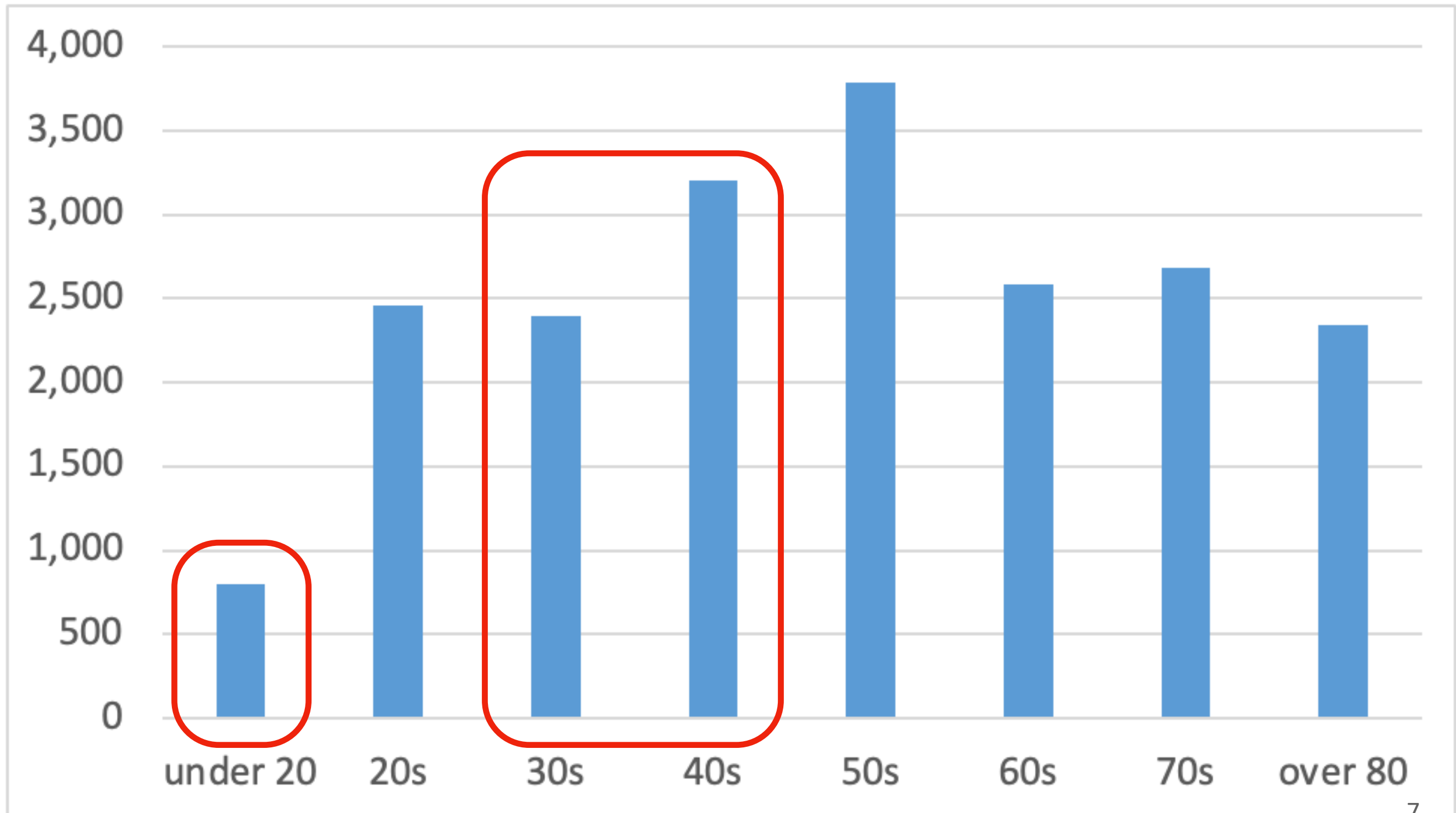
Suicide
bereaved,
Long term

Cerel, J., et al.(2014).
The Continuum of
“Survivorship”. Suicide
and Life-Threatening
Behavior, 44(6), 591-
600.

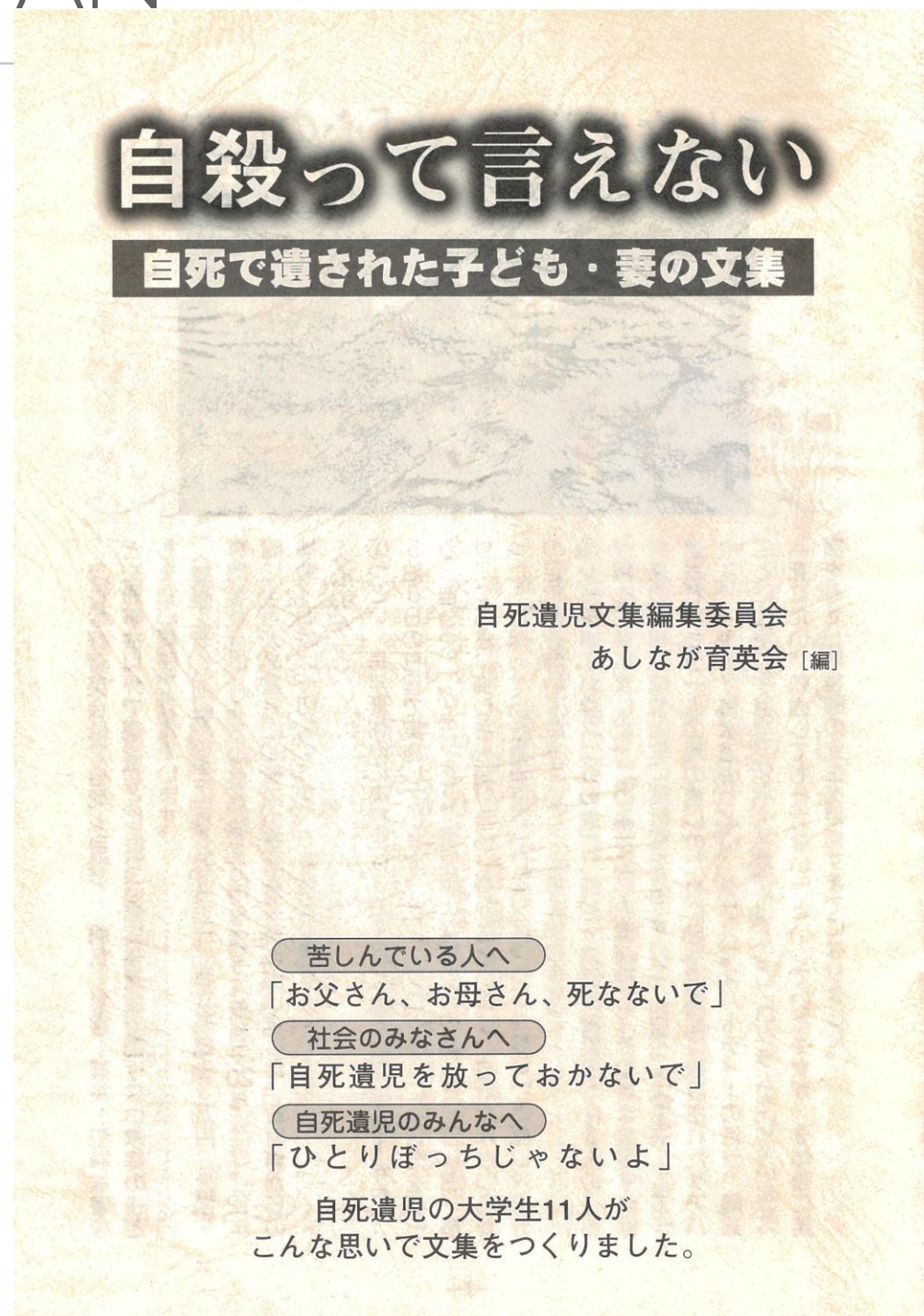
SUICIDE DEATH IN JAPAN

- Each year, more than 20,000 people die by suicide in Japan.
- With a moderate estimate of six individuals affected per suicide (Shneidman, 1969), **at least 120,000 people are left bereaved by suicide** each year.
- To support suicide loss survivors, there are many related efforts, such as organizing support groups, in Japan. However, empirical investigations are very limited.

NUMBER OF SUICIDE DEATHS IN 2024



HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT OF SUICIDE PREVENTION AND POSTVENTION IN JAPAN



HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT OF SUICIDE PREVENTION AND POSTVENTION IN JAPAN (CONT.)

- The Basic Act for Suicide Prevention (2006)
 - *Suicide prevention and survivor support are two wheels of the same cart.*
- Leads a variety of postvention activities, including support groups and counseling services.

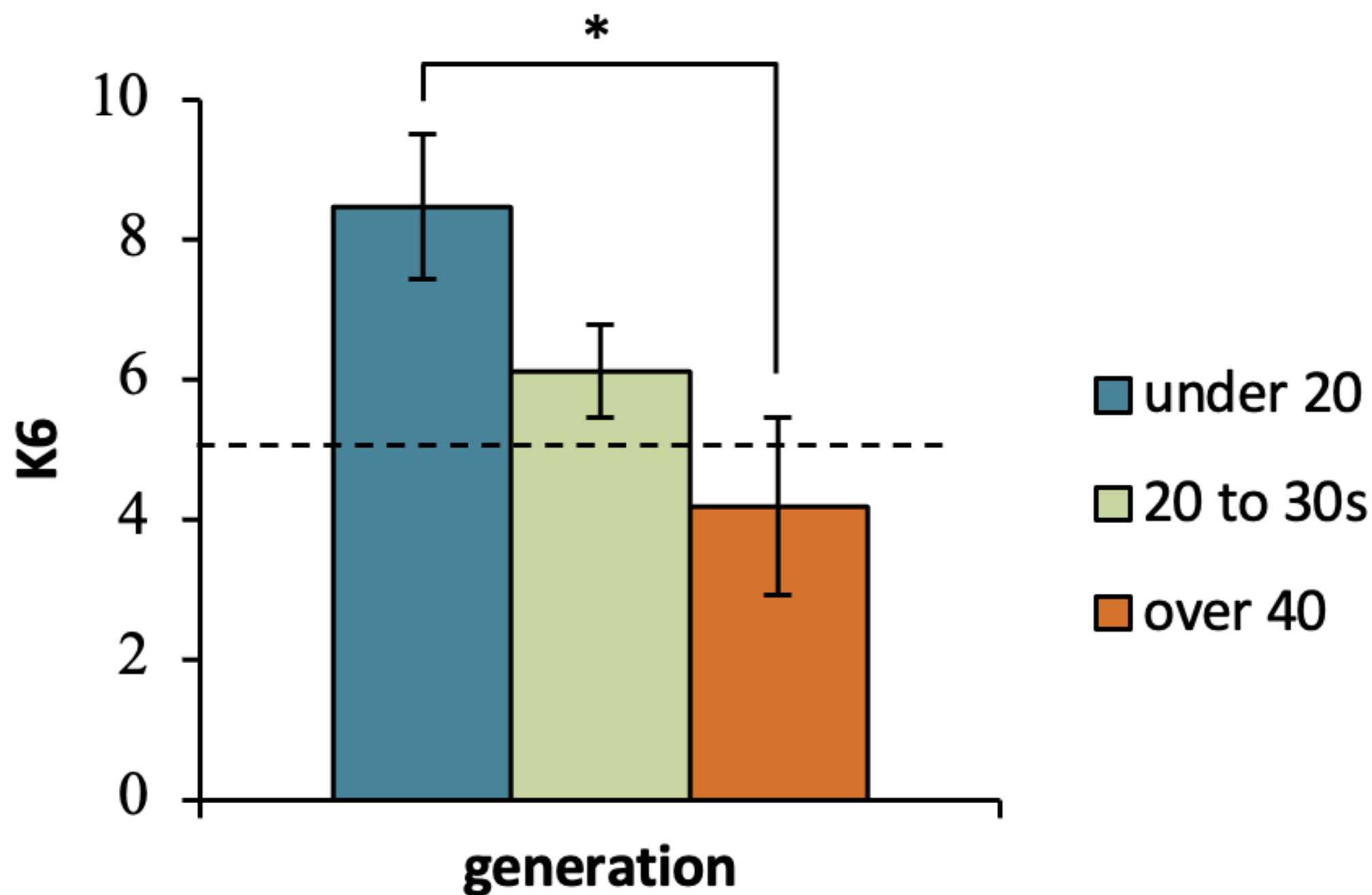
HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT OF SUICIDE PREVENTION AND POSTVENTION IN JAPAN (CONT.)

- The majority of users of these services are middle-aged or older adults, while younger survivors may not gain any benefits from them.
- Empirical studies examining suicide bereavement during childhood and the effects on adjustment are very limited.

CHILDHOOD SUICIDE BEREAVEMENT AND HOW IT AFFECTS ADJUSTMENT

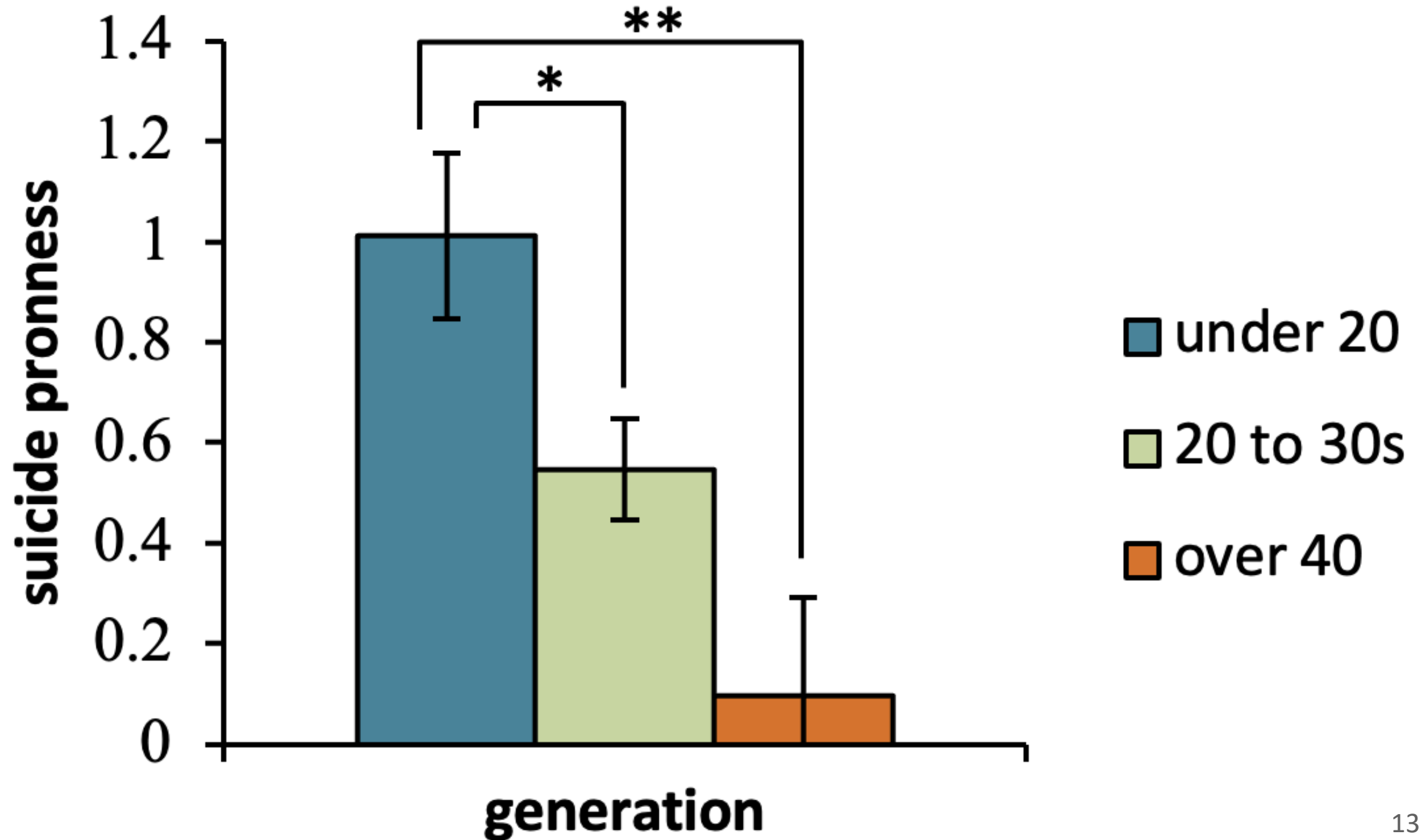
- **Do individuals who experienced the loss of a loved one to suicide during childhood exhibit poorer adaptation after bereavement compared to other survivors?**
- Statistical analysis using data from 186 Japanese suicide loss survivors
 - Controlled for the effects of the deceased's age, the survivor's closeness to the deceased, the years since the loss, experience with a support group, and social support.

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS



Note . Horizontal dotted line indicates cut-off.

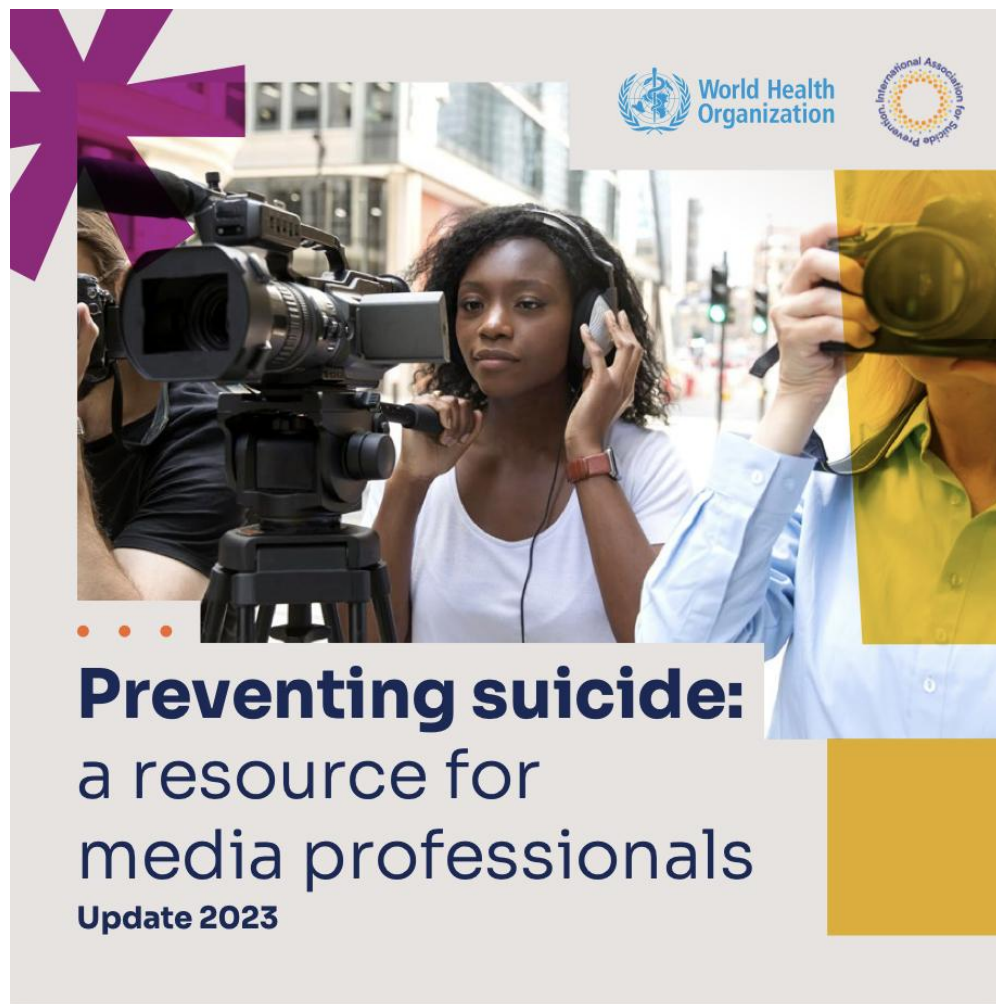
EMPIRICAL FINDINGS (CONT.)



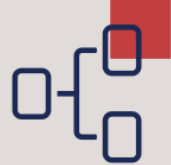
SUICIDE EXPOSURE FROM SOCIAL MEDIA AND HOW IT AFFECTS ADJUSTMENT

- Widely shared stories about suicide often lead to an increase in suicides within the population.
- Frequent use of social networking sites (SNS) and the internet is associated with higher rates of suicide attempts (Sedgwick et al., 2019).

REPORTING GUIDELINES



How about
social media?

✕ Don'ts	
	Don't use sensational language in headlines.
	Don't describe the method used .
	Don't name or provide details about the site/location.
	Don't report the details of suicide notes.
	Don't oversimplify the reason for a suicide or reduce it to a single factor.
	Don't use photographs, video footage, audio recordings, or digital or social media links .
	Don't use language/content which sensationalizes, romanticizes or normalizes suicide, or that presents it as a viable solution to problems .
	Don't position suicide-related content as the top story and don't unduly repeat such stories.

SURVEY OUTLINES

- We surveyed 125 university students to explore how young adults perceive media portrayals of suicide.
- Exposure and mental health are significantly associated with suicide-related behaviors.
- Exposure may elevate suicide risk even in individuals with good mental health.

IMPLICATIONS

- Childhood suicide bereavement can affect maladjustment, especially by causing deterioration in mental health and heightening suicidality.
- Exposure to suicide-related content on social media can heighten the risk of suicide, even when mental health remains relatively stable.
- We were unable to find effective suggestions to help prevent maladjustment.

FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR POSTVENTION

- Several case reports indicate that warm and respectful support from others is essential for promoting adjustment.
- Therefore, postvention activities at different levels (such as community, institutional, and personal levels) are essential for fostering a compassionate community for suicide loss survivors.

POSTVENTION ACTIVITIES

Flyers

自死で身近な人を亡くされた方・
遺された人の身近にいる方へ

中京大学心理学部川島ゼミ

【今回の企画について】

私たち川島ゼミでは、死生心理学を主に研究しています。死生心理学とは、自分自身の死や身近な人との死別、自殺の問題などについて心理学の観点から研究・実践を行う学問です。今回の企画では、大学生などの若者が、自身の大切な人を自死で亡くしたときにどのような影響を受けるか、またその経験と向き合うために役立つ情報や支援機関について知ってもらうことを目的としています。

また身近でそうした経験を持つ友人や知り合いがいた場合に、どのような声かけや関わりが求められるのかについても知ってもらいたいと思い、企画しました。

遺された人が影響を受けるのは、家族だけにとどまりません。親戚や友人、クラスメイト、アルバイト先の同僚、芸能人など、その続柄は本来様々です。この企画をきっかけに、自死やその支援についてより深く知っていただけたら幸いです。



Public Awareness Activities

POSTVENTION ACTIVITIES (CONT.)

Lectures and workshops for
professionals/paraprofessionals



Radio Appearances



Panel Exhibition

POSTVENTION ACTIVITIES (CONT.)

Suicide Loss day

グリーフプラザ とともに
～身近な人を自死で亡くした方とあゆむ～

年の瀬のつどい 2024

Program

13:30～ 受付

13:40～ ウェルカムセレモニー

14:10～ グループに分かれて交流タイム

15:50～ ブレイクタイム (ティータイム)

16:20～ キャンドルサービス

16:50 閉会

NPO法人
グリーフプラザ とともに

身近な人を自死で亡くされた方専用
無料 LINE通話相談

LINE ID検索またはQRコードから「友だち追加」
無料通話にてお電話ください
[ID] @700tgyoc
[毎月 第2第・4火曜日/夜9:30～1:00 (最終受付12:30)]

- ビデオ通話は受け付けておりません。
- チャット相談ではありません。通話による相談です。

ご家族だけでなく、友人、恋人、同僚、同級生など、
身近な人の自死により遺されてしまったすべての方からの
相談電話をお受けしています。
自分ひとりで悩まず、まずはお電話ください。

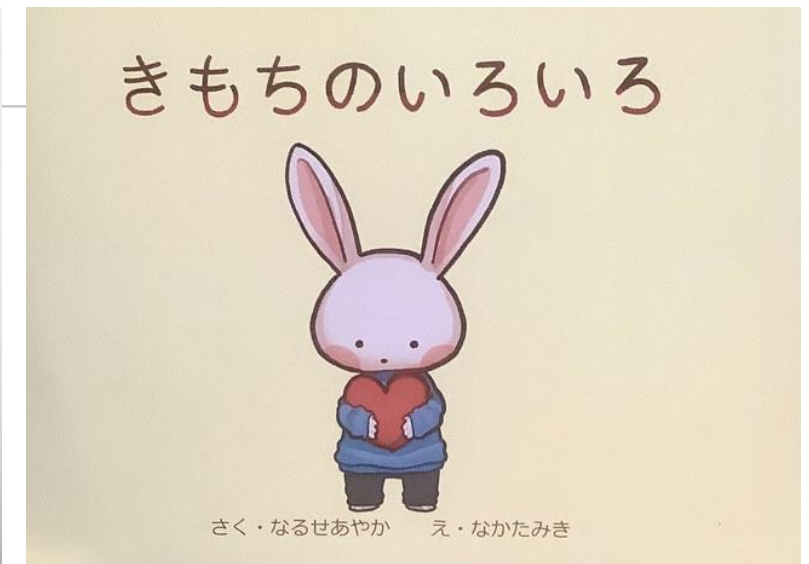
夜になると
気持ちが溢れてきて
誰かに話を聞いてほしいくなる

日中は学校や仕事
家事が忙しく
相談する時間がない

そんな方のために夜遅くから深夜までお電話を受け付けております。
どうぞ安心してゆっくりあなたの思いをお話ください。

- お話しいただいた内容はすべて秘密厳守とします。
- 電話が混み合って話し中になることがありますのでご了承ください。
- お名前などの個人情報は一切伺いません。
- 相談時間は午前1時までです。時間に余裕をもっておかけください。

NPO法人 グリーフプラザ とともに
<https://www.griefplaza-tomoni.com/>
E-mail: info@griefplaza-tomoni.com



Picture books



YouTube

Helpline for Survivors

A landscape photograph showing a vast field of tall grass or crops in the foreground, leading to a distant treeline. The sky is filled with large, dramatic clouds, and the sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. Bare tree branches are visible in the upper right corner.

*Thank you for your kind
attention!*