Resilience mitigates the suicide risk associated with childhood trauma.

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE: We wished to examine whether resilience might be a protective factor in relation to suicidal behavior.

METHOD: To do this resilience was examined in relation to childhood trauma, a well established risk factor for suicidal behavior, in two samples. In a preliminary sample 20 abstinent substance abuse patients who had attempted suicide were matched for age and their score on the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ) with 20 substance abuse patients who had never attempted suicide. The two age and CTQ matched attempter (N=20) and non-attempter (N=20) groups were then compared for their scores on the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC). In the second sample 166 prisoners who had attempted suicide were matched for age and their scores on the CTQ with 166 prisoners who had never attempted suicide. These two age and CTQ matched attempter (N=166) and non-attempter (N=166) groups were similarly compared for their CD-RISC resilience scores.

RESULTS: In the preliminary substance abuse sample, patients who had never attempted suicide (N=20) had significantly higher mean CD-RISC resilience scores than the age and CTQ matched patients who had attempted suicide (N=20). Similarly in the prisoner sample, those who had never attempted suicide (N=166) had significantly higher CD-RISC resilience scores than the age and CTQ matched prisoners who had attempted suicide (N=166).

CONCLUSIONS: The results from these two studies suggest that resilience may be a protective factor mitigating the risk of suicidal behavior associated with childhood trauma.

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MeSH Terms

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