

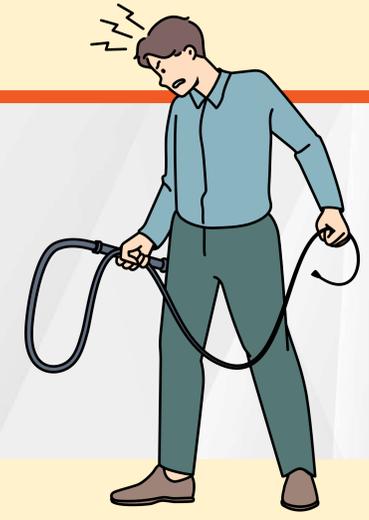
# Prevalence of physical abuse at home and its associated factors among adolescents in Malaysia: findings from the National Health and Morbidity Survey in 2022



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## INTRODUCTION

- Physical abuse among adolescents is a deeply concerning issue that involves the use of force to cause harm or injury to individuals in their teenage years.
- This form of abuse can have significant and long-lasting effects on their physical, emotional, and psychological well-being.
- Recognizing and addressing physical abuse is essential to ensure the safety and well-being of those affected.

## OBJECTIVE

This study aimed to determine the prevalence of physical abuse at home among adolescents in Malaysia.

## METHOD

- The data was obtained from the National Health and Morbidity 2022, a cross-sectional study conducted from June to July 2022.
- An adapted Global School-based Student Health Survey (GSHS) questionnaire was used to collect data from school-going adolescents aged 13-17 years old.
- Prevalence and binary logistic regression analysis were carried out, taking into account the multistage cluster design, using IBM SPSS ver 28.0.

## RESULT & DISCUSSION

- This study showed a total of 33,523 respondents participated in the survey with a response rate of 89.4%.
- The prevalence of physical abuse at home among adolescents was 7.5% (n=33107).
- The highest prevalence of physical abuse among adolescents at home were among females (8.14%), age group 13 (10.20%), others ethnicity (9.85%) and those adolescents who having separated/widowed parents (9.45%). (Table 1)
- Multiple logistic regression analysis showed that younger age had higher odds of experiencing physical abuse at home.
- Female adolescents (aOR = 1.34, 95% CI = 1.15-1.54) had higher odds of physical abuse at home compared to males.
- There were significant associations between high-risk behaviours such as depression, suicidal attempts, smoking cigarettes, alcohol use, drug use, truancy, physical fights and being bullied in line with findings from Klevens, et al<sup>5</sup>.
- Our study also showed there was no significant association between physical abuse with ethnicity and marital status of parents.

Table 1. Prevalence of Physical Abuse by Sociodemographic Factors (N = 33107)

		95% Confidence Interval		
		Prevalence (%)	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
<b>Overall physical abuse</b>		33107 (7.5)	7.0	8.0
<b>Sociodemographic characteristics</b>				
<b>Age (years)</b>	13	706 (10.20)	9.20	11.00
	14	564 (8.59)	7.58	9.74
	15	440 (7.30)	6.39	8.34
	16	357 (6.26)	5.18	7.56
	17	267 (4.74)	4.08	5.50
<b>Gender</b>	Boys	990 (6.85)	6.16	7.61
	Female	1344 (8.14)	7.49	8.85
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Malay	1534 (7.30)	6.70	7.95
	Chinese	299 (6.03)	5.23	6.94
	Indian	148 (8.99)	7.25	11.10
	Others	353 (9.85)	8.69	11.15
<b>Marital status of parents</b>	Married	1804 (6.92)	6.42	7.46
	Separated/Widowed	430 (9.45)	8.36	10.67
<b>Mental health characteristics</b>				
<b>Depression</b>	Yes	1233 (14.40)	13.30	15.60
	No	1091 (4.90)	4.50	5.40
<b>Loneliness</b>	Yes	762 (14.80)	13.40	16.30
	No	1572 (6.10)	5.60	6.60
<b>Suicidal plan</b>	Yes	615 (19.60)	17.80	21.50
	No	1718 (6.20)	5.60	6.70
<b>Suicidal attempt</b>	Yes	671 (22.50)	20.50	24.70
	No	1661 (5.90)	5.40	6.50
<b>Substance abuse characteristics</b>				
<b>Smokes cigarette</b>	Yes	338 (18.90)	16.40	93.70
	No	1992 (6.70)	6.30	7.20
<b>Alcohol</b>	Yes	303 (15.20)	13.20	17.40
	No	2031 (6.90)	6.40	7.40
<b>Drug use</b>	Yes	321 (34.50)	30.10	39.20
	No	1988 (6.70)	6.20	7.20
<b>Behavioural characteristics</b>				
<b>Truancy</b>	Yes	911 (12.20)	11.10	13.30
	No	1407 (5.90)	5.40	6.30
<b>Physical fight</b>	Yes	1178 (4.50)	4.20	4.90
	No	1156 (23.10)	21.70	24.50
<b>Bullied</b>	Yes	1528 (5.30)	4.90	57.0
	No	803 (30.90)	28.40	33.50

Table 2. Univariate and Multivariate Logistic Regression for Factors Associated with Physical Abuse

Sociodemographic characteristics		Crude Odds Ratio (OR)	95% Confidence Interval			Adjusted OR	95% Confidence Interval			P value
			Lower Limit	Upper Limit	P value		Lower Limit	Upper Limit	P value	
<b>Age</b>	13	2.27	1.89	2.74	<.001	2.29	1.89	2.77	<.001	
	14	1.89	1.56	2.30	<.001	1.76	1.43	2.18	<.001	
	15	1.58	1.28	1.96	<.001	1.66	1.33	2.06	<.001	
	16	1.34	1.06	1.71	0.015	1.48	1.18	1.87	0.001	
	17	1.00	-	-	-	1.00	-	-	-	
<b>Gender</b>	Male	1.00	-	-	-	1.00	-	-	-	
	Female	1.21	1.05	1.38	0.008	1.34	1.15	1.54	<.001	
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Malay	1.00	-	-	-	1.00	-	-	-	
	Chinese	0.81	0.68	0.97	0.025	0.99	0.83	1.17	0.872	
	Indian	1.25	0.98	1.60	0.070	1.12	0.83	1.52	0.455	
	Others	1.39	1.19	1.62	<.001	1.17	0.98	1.38	0.079	
<b>Marital status of parents</b>	Married	1.00	-	-	-	1.00	-	-	-	
	Separated/Widowed	1.40	1.22	1.62	<.001	1.14	0.97	1.33	0.113	
	Widowed	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Mental health characteristics</b>										
<b>Depression</b>	Yes	3.24	2.88	3.64	<.001	1.59	1.38	1.84	<.001	
	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Loneliness</b>	Yes	2.68	2.33	3.08	<.001	1.18	0.97	1.42	0.094	
	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Suicidal plan</b>	Yes	3.71	3.20	4.31	<.001	1.23	1.00	1.51	0.050	
	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Suicidal attempt</b>	Yes	4.63	3.96	5.42	<.001	1.89	1.50	2.39	<.001	
	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Substance abuse characteristics</b>										
<b>Smokes cigarette</b>	Yes	3.22	2.69	3.86	<.001	1.89	1.53	2.32	<.001	
	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Alcohol</b>	Yes	2.43	2.06	2.86	<.001	1.36	1.14	1.63	<.001	
	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Drug use</b>	Yes	7.39	6.01	9.08	<.001	2.82	2.22	3.58	0.001	
	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Behavioural characteristics</b>										
<b>Truancy</b>	Yes	2.22	2.00	2.47	<.001	1.57	1.37	1.79	<.001	
	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Physical fight</b>	Yes	6.32	5.71	7.00	<.001	3.28	2.92	3.69	<.001	
	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Bullied</b>	Yes	8.01	7.02	9.14	<.001	3.50	3.00	4.07	<.001	
	No	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

## CONCLUSION

- The study revealed that the physical abuse at home was associated with mental health problems, substance abuse and problems at school.
- Thus, a comprehensive approach involving schools, professionals, and the community is warranted to address this issue and protect adolescents from physical abuse at home.

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