

**Self-directed violence in Brazil: prevalence and characterization of reported cases  
between 2009 and 2019**

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**Thematic importance:** The present study discusses the prevalence and characterization of reported cases of self-directed violence in Brazil obtained from the records of the Information System for Notifiable Diseases (SINAN), an initiative implemented by the government to collect and disseminate data generated by State and Local Surveillance Systems. Thus, the submission is articulated with the theme “Measurement issues related to child well-being and understanding children’s lives” insofar as the data systematized by SINAN allow measuring indicators of violence related to children and adolescents, in addition to expanding knowledge about the sociodemographic and contextual aspects associated with cases reported in the national territory. Furthermore, the identification of the incidence and epidemiological profile of situations of self-directed violence is a key action for the problem dimensioning and for the development of prevention actions aligned with the population demands. **Introduction and objectives:** Self-directed violence is a public health problem due to its high incidence and its consequent psychosocial and family damages. The epidemiological data obtained until now suggest that the global prevalence among children and adolescents rates in the 7,5% - 46,5% range, which alerts to the expressive manifestation of self-injurious behaviors in childhood and adolescence. In Brazil, notification of this conduct occurs through the Violence and Accident Surveillance System (VIVA), which is part of SINAN. Therefore, this study aims to describe the prevalence and characterize the cases reported in Brazil obtained from VIVA/SINAN records between 2009 and 2019. **Method:** This is a descriptive and quantitative study. Among the cases of self-directed violence that occurred in the national territory and were registered in SINAN, information related to the sociodemographic profile (gender, age group, race and education) and the

characteristics of self-injurious conduct (place of occurrence and repeated violence) were investigated. Data were extracted using the Tabnet tool, available on the DATASUS website, and exported to Microsoft Excel 2007. Descriptive analysis were performed using absolute and relative distributions. **Results:** Statistical analysis revealed that 467,208 cases of self-directed violence were recorded in the national territory in the investigated period, indicating the increasing in the number of records every year. Most notifications involved females (68.33%), aged between 15 and 29 years (47.69%), white (48.84%) and with incomplete elementary school (14.35%) or complete high school (14.70%). It is important to note the expressive percentage of children and adolescents between 10 and 14 years old (7.97%) who manifested self-injurious behavior. The cases occurred mainly at home (81.38%) and involved more than one episode (35.19%). **Conclusions and implications:** The data provide an epidemiological overview of notifications and contribute to the monitoring and design of prevention strategies. Also, they generate public health indicators related to childhood and adolescence, considered stages with greater vulnerability to self-directed violence, which may provide subsidies for the elaboration of public policies and interventions directed to different contexts, such as the family, school and health services. Thus, it is suggested that further studies be carried out in order to the estimates remain constantly updated and that include inferential analysis.