

# CITIES, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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*Social Isolation and Suicide*



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# Urban Age Conference – Cities Health and Well-being

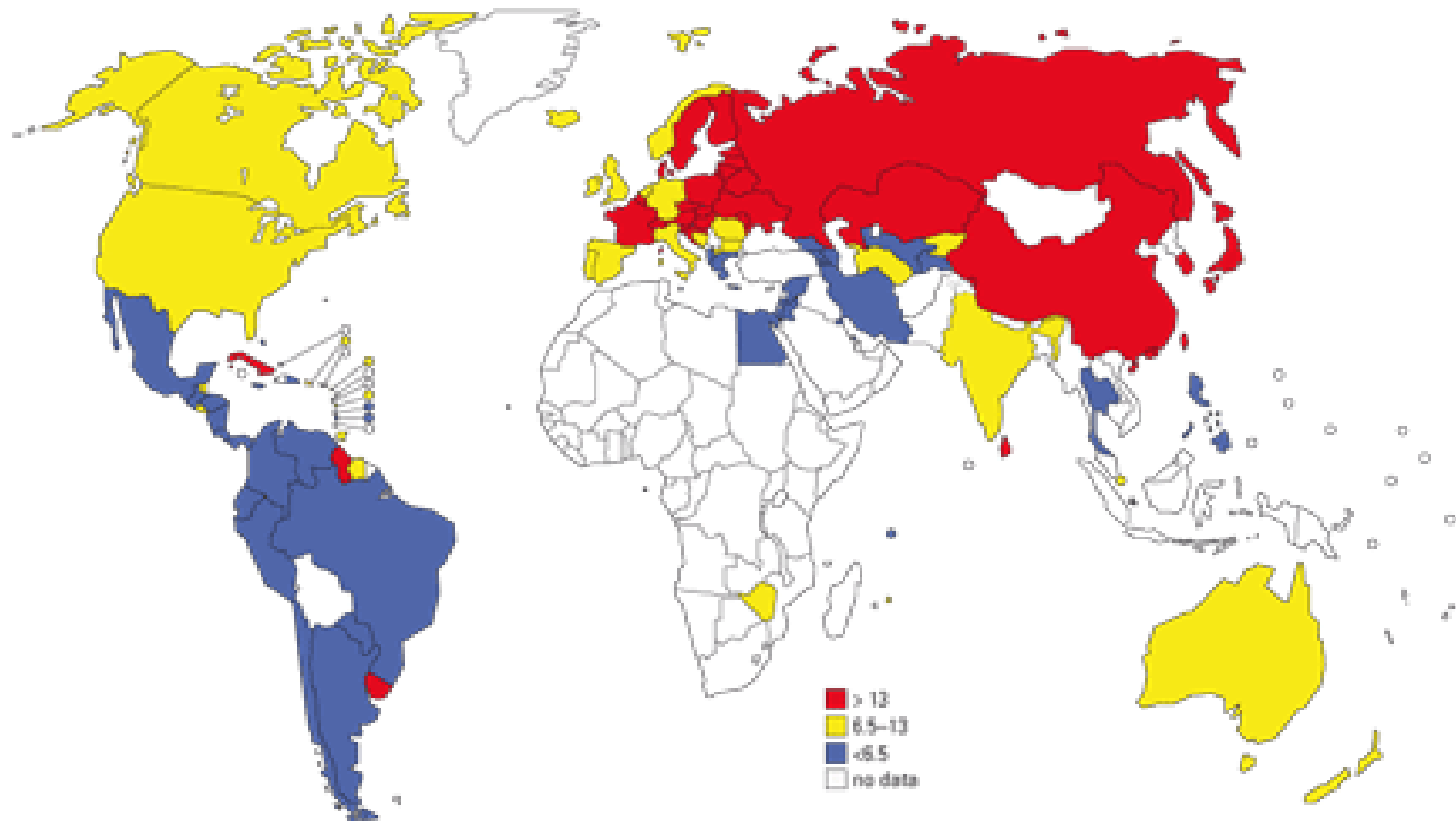
17 November 2011

## ***Social Isolation and Suicide***

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**Map of suicide rates**  
(per 100 000; most recent year available as of 2007)



The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its borders or frontiers. Dashed lines represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

WHO/CDS/08.002

資料來源:世界衛生組織: [http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/prevention/suicide/suicideprevent/en/](http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/suicideprevent/en/)

# Hong Kong



Source: Google Maps

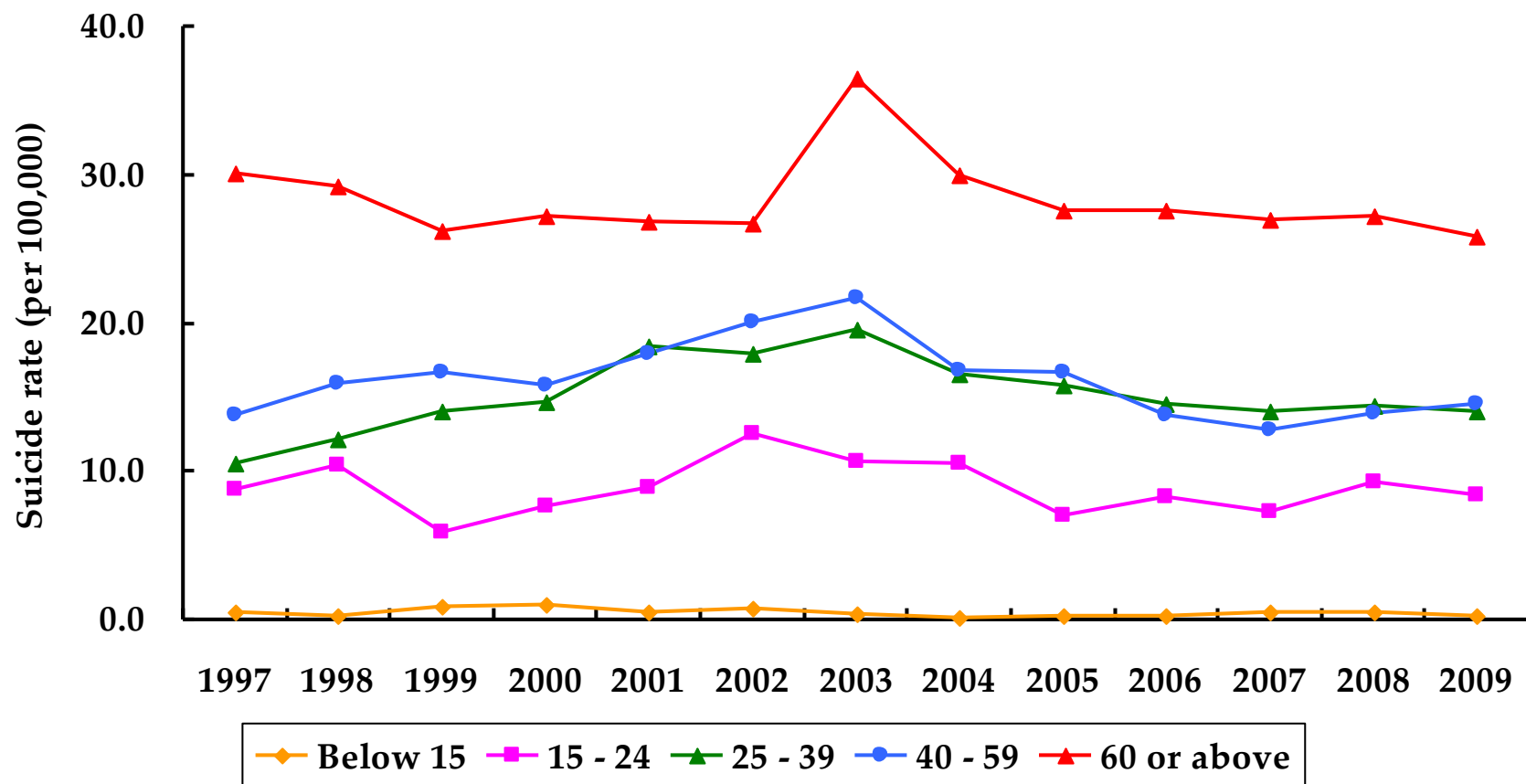


# Statistics

- Suicide rate is about 13.5 per 100,000 with about 970 people died each year out of 7 million.
- In comparing to Australia, 12.0; USA: 11.0  
UK : 8.0 per 100,000
- **Cost:** HK\$1.6 billions in potential economic lost
- And another **HK\$100 million** in the medical cost for the deliberate self harm,



# Hong Kong





## Ten Leading Causes of Death

Rank	1981
1	Diseases of the circulatory system
2	Neoplasm
3	Diseases of the respiratory system
4	Injury & poisoning (excludes suicide)
5	Symptoms, signs & ill-defined conditions
6	Diseases of the digestive system
7	Diseases of the genitourinary system
8	Infectious & parasitic diseases
<b>9</b>	<b>Suicide death</b>
10	Certain conditions originating in the prenatal period

Rank	1991
1	Neoplasm
2	Diseases of the circulatory system
3	Diseases of the respiratory system
4	Diseases of the genitourinary system
5	Diseases of the digestive system
6	Infectious & parasitic diseases
7	Injury & poisoning (excludes suicide)
<b>8</b>	<b>Suicide death</b>
9	Symptoms, signs & ill-defined conditions
10	Endocrine nutritional & metabolic diseases & immunity disorders

Rank	2001
1	Neoplasm
2	Diseases of the circulatory system
3	Diseases of the respiratory system
4	Diseases of the genitourinary system
5	Diseases of the digestive system
<b>6</b>	<b>Suicide death</b>
7	Infectious and parasitic diseases
8	Diseases of blood & blood-forming organs
9	Injury & poisoning (excludes suicide)
10	Diseases of the nervous system and sense organs



# Ten Leading Causes of YLL, HKSAR, 1981, 1991 and 2001

Rank	1981
1	Neoplasm
2	Diseases of the circulatory system
3	Diseases of the respiratory system
4	Injury and poisoning (excludes suicide)
5	Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period
6	Diseases of the digestive system
7	Diseases of the genitourinary system
8	<b>Suicide</b>
9	Infectious and parasitic diseases
10	Congenital anomalies

Rank	1991
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## Suicidal Risk/protective factors for the Older adults ( $\geq 60$ ) in HK (Yip et al., 2004)

- Current Psychiatric Illness
- Recent negative life events: Loss of significant others, loss of health in themselves or significant other
- Past attempts
- Chronic Physical Illnesses: Cancer, AIDS, chronic pain, constipation
- Lack of social support



# Risk and protective factors of suicide for **20-59**

1. Presence of psychiatric disorder (OR=28.67;  $p<0.001$ )
  2. Past suicidal attempt (OR=24.78;  $p<0.01$ )
  3. Indebtedness (OR=10.08;  $p<0.01$ )
  4. Unemployment (OR=8.65;  $p<0.01$ )
  5. Never married (OR=7.29;  $p<0.01$ )
  6. Social support (OR=0.27;  $p<0.001$ )
- Ref** (Liu, Yip et al 2006; Chen et al., 2006)

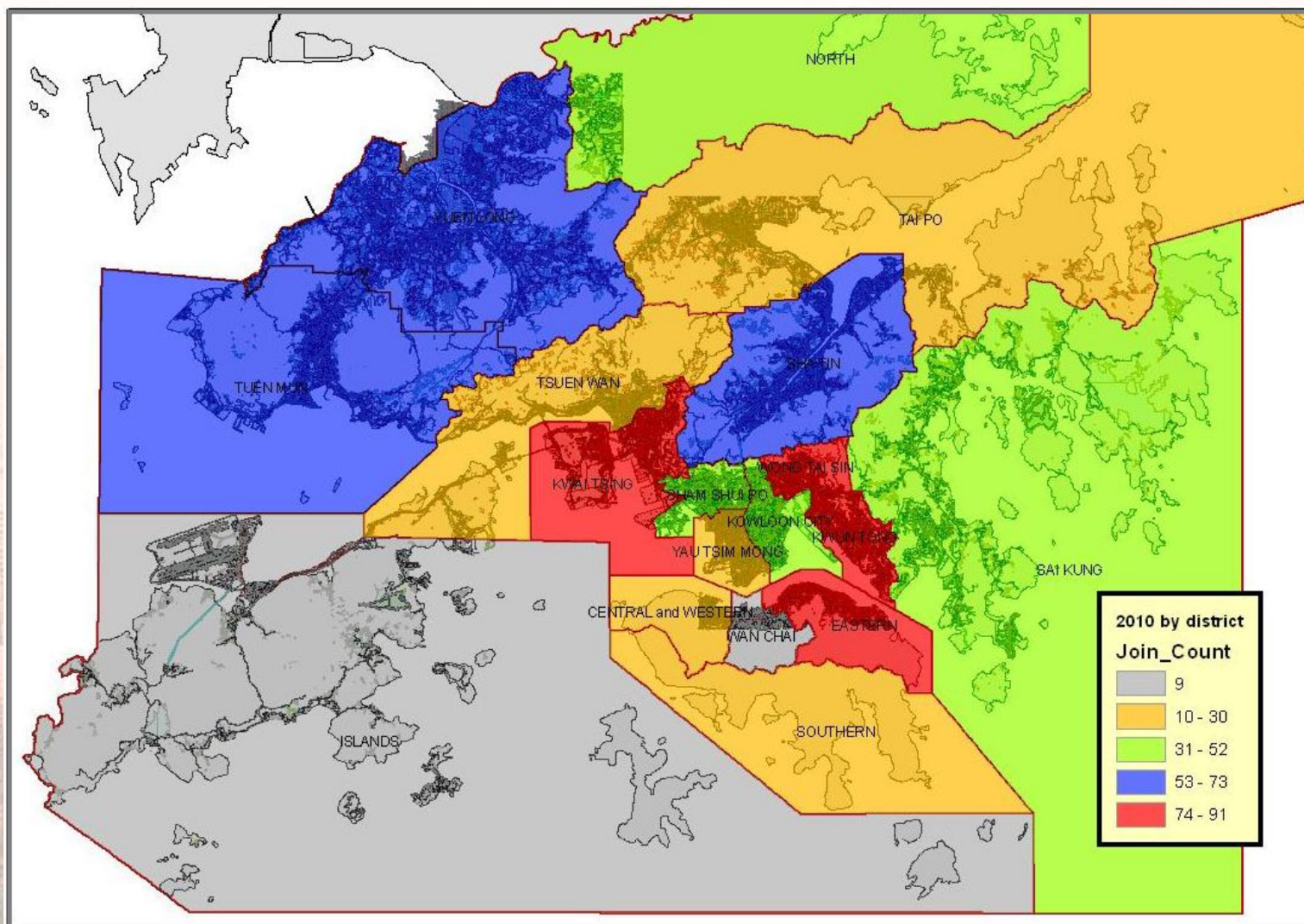
# Youth Suicides (< 24)

- Suicide deaths, aged 24 or below,
  - Family disputes (43.5%)
  - Financial difficulties (35.8%)
  - Relationship problems (31.6%)
  - School-related issues (29.5%)
  - Mental health (28.4%)
  - Work-related issues (16.8%)
  - Substance use problems (11.6%)
  - Physical health (2.1%)
  - Abuse (1.1%)

2008

2009

2010



Suicide data source: HKJC Centre for Suicide Research & Prevention, The University of Hong Kong

HKICG Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention



# SMR and suicide rates in 2008 – 2010\* for aged 15+

District of residence	SMR				Suicide rate (per 100,000)			
	15 – 24	25 – 59	60+	15+	15 – 24	25 – 59	60+	15+
Central and Western	0.2	0.9	0.7	0.8	1.2	12.1	19.3	12.2
Wan Chai	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.6	6.6	8.9	13.1	9.6
Eastern	1.2	1.0	1.2	1.1	9.5	14.3	31.4	17.5
Southern	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.8	4.0	12.1	18.8	12.3
Yau Tsim Mong	0.0	1.0	0.5	0.8	0.0	14.0	13.7	12.3
Sham Shui Po	0.9	1.2	1.0	1.1	7.4	16.3	26.9	17.6
Kowloon City	0.9	1.0	1.3	1.1	7.3	13.9	34.2	17.6
Wong Tai Sin	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	8.4	17.9	35.6	20.8
Kwun Tong	1.5	1.1	1.0	1.1	11.9	15.0	27.2	17.5
Kwai Tsing	0.9	1.1	1.2	1.1	7.1	15.3	33.1	17.7
Tsuen Wan	0.4	0.9	0.8	0.8	3.1	12.9	21.4	13.2
Tuen Mun	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.1	8.4	15.8	32.4	17.0
Yuen Long	1.0	1.2	0.9	1.0	8.0	16.2	24.4	15.8
North	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.9	8.4	13.2	25.6	14.3
Tai Po	1.3	0.9	1.2	1.0	10.4	13.1	31.4	15.4
Shatin	1.2	0.9	0.9	0.9	9.6	12.9	25.7	14.7
Sai Kung	1.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	9.4	10.1	23.2	11.8
Islands	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.7	5.4	8.1	26.0	10.5
Overall					7.8	14.0	27.1	15.6



# District profiles to highlight

- Wong Tai Sin
- Kwun Tong
- Tuen Mun
- Sham Shui Po
- Kwai Tsing

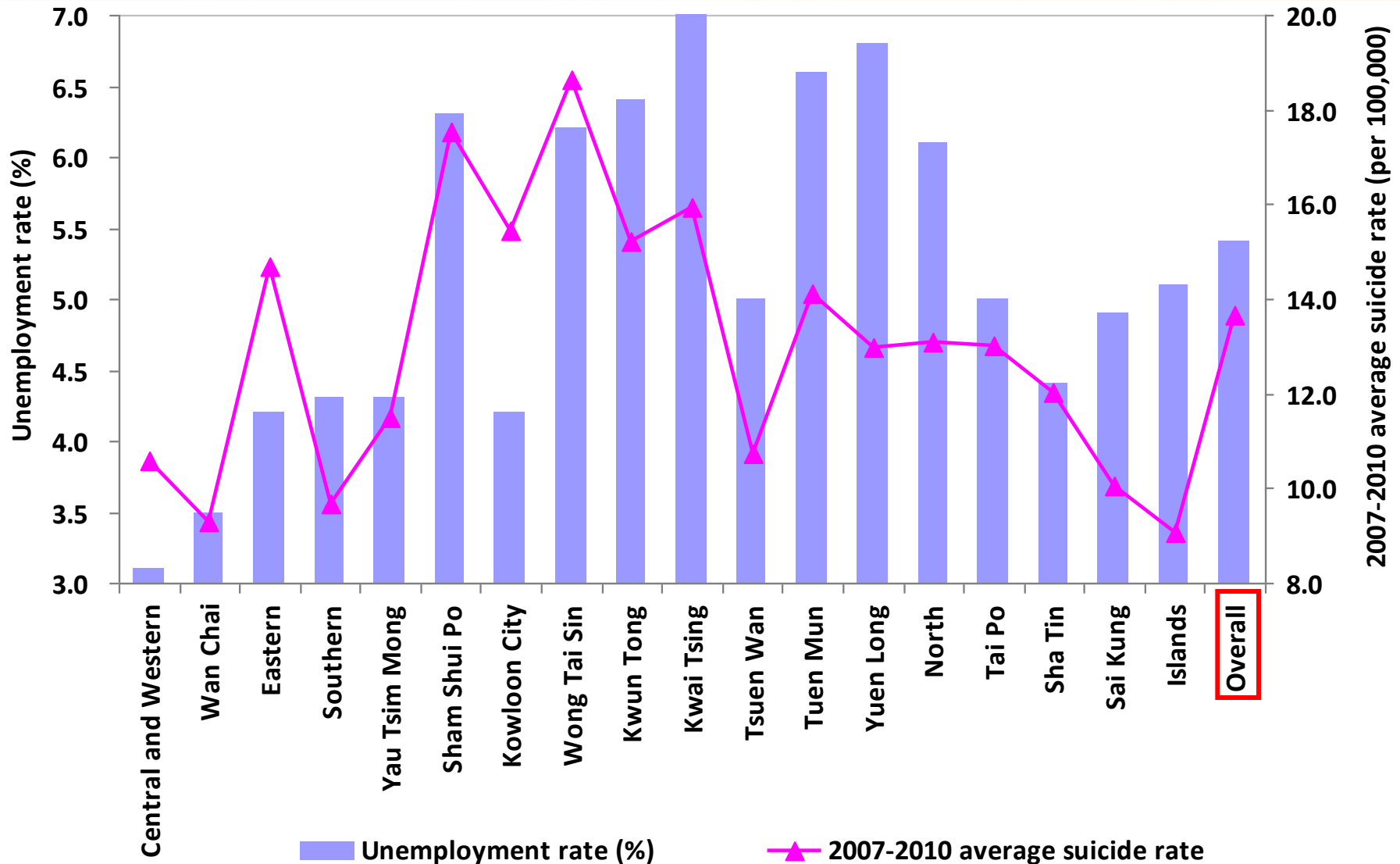


# Regional profiles summary

	Wong Tai Sin	Kwun Tong	Tuen Mun	Sham Shui Po	Kwai Tsing		Overall
Average household size (2010)	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8	3.0		2.9
Median monthly household income (HKD) (2010)	15,000	14,000	16,000	14,000	14,500		18,000
Unemployment rate (%) (2009)	6.2	6.4	6.6	6.3	7.0		5.4
Median age (2010)	43	42	39	42	40		40
Elderly population (60+) (2010)	88,600	122,800	63,300	75,400	93,400		1,169,300
Students studying full-time as percentage of population in district (2010)	17.4	18.3	18.1	18.1	18.1		18.1
Dependency ratio (2010)	388	404	258	412	342		339

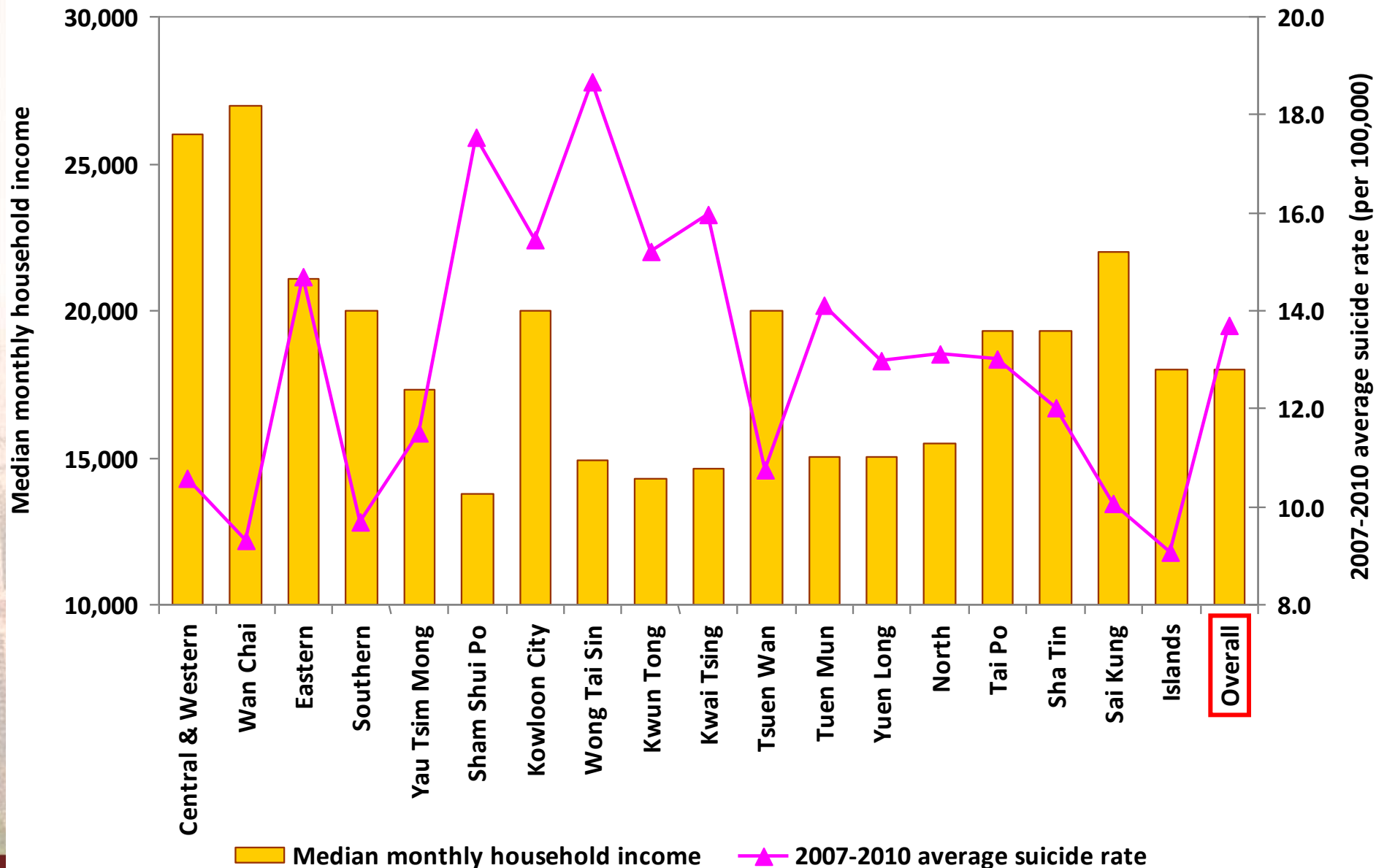


# 2009 Unemployment rate (%)



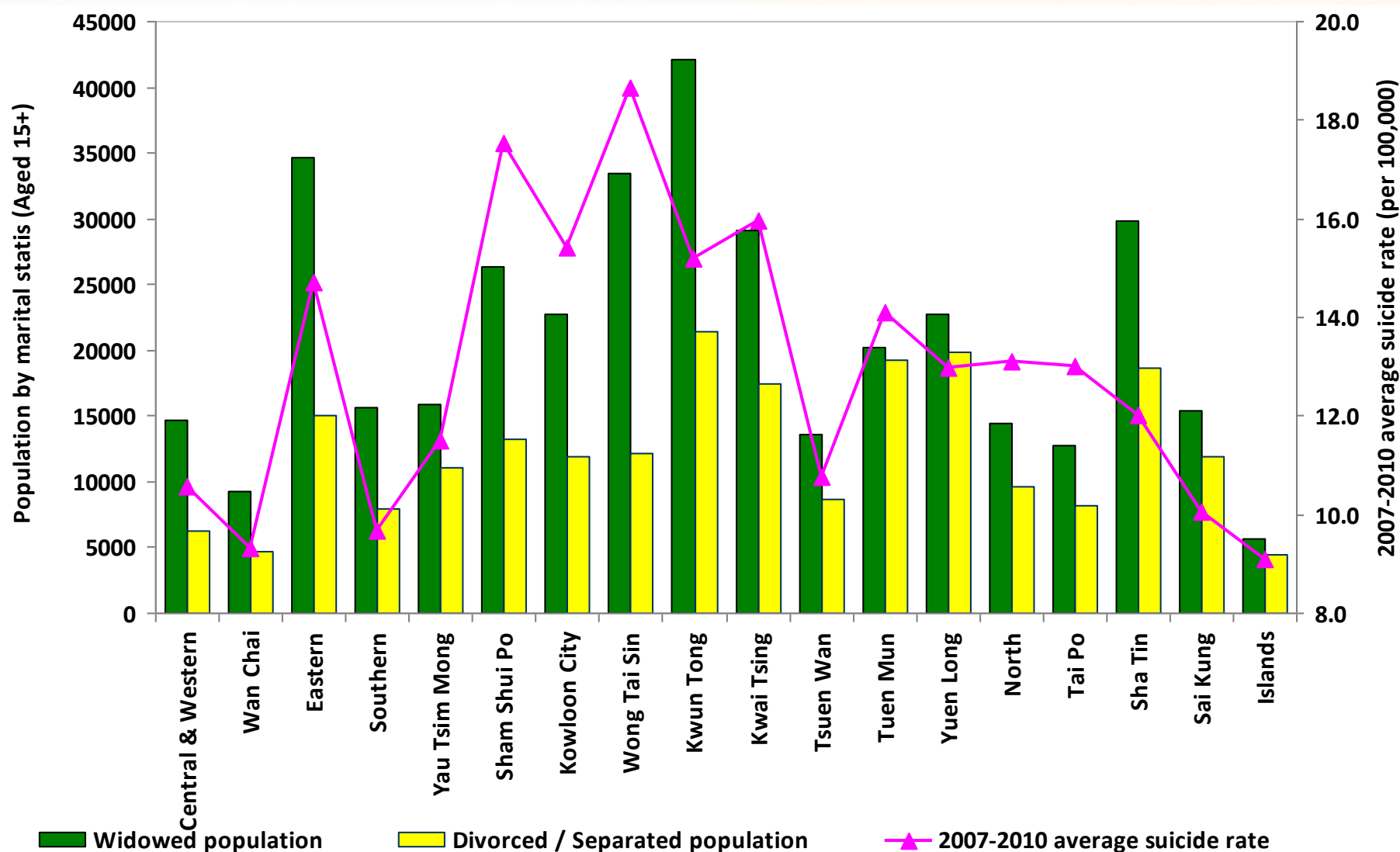


# 2009 Median Monthly Household Income (HKD)





# 2009 Population Aged 15 and over by Marital Status



# Correlations between regional suicide rates and social isolation indicators in Hong Kong 18 districts, 2009

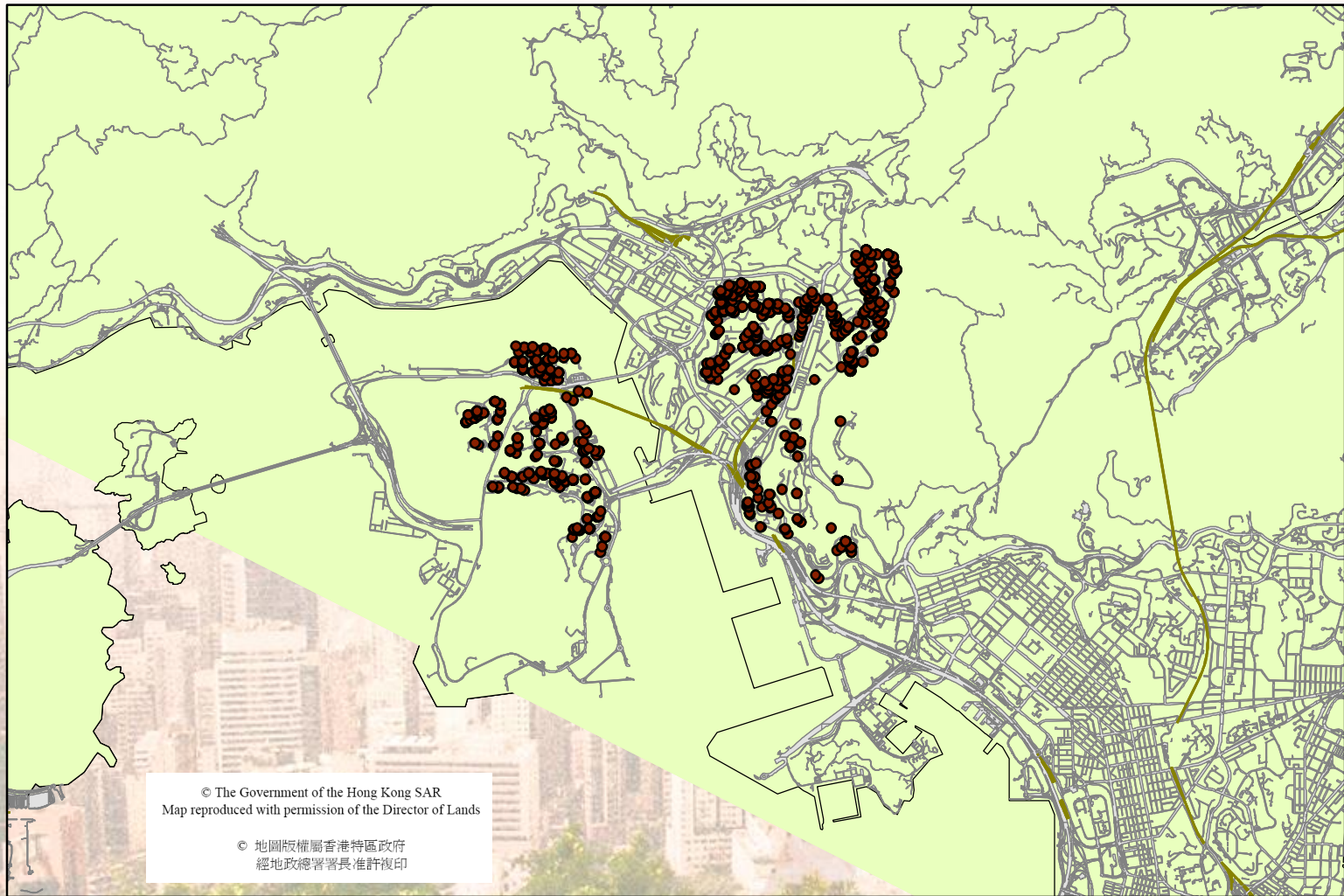
	Unemployment Rate (%)	Elderly Population	Median Monthly Household Income	Widowed Population	Divorced / Separated Population
<b>Overall suicide rate</b>	0.436 (0.071)	0.482* (0.043)	– 0.532* (0.023)	0.511* (0.030)	0.452 (0.060)
<b>Aged 15 – 24 suicide rate</b>	0.457 (0.057)	0.494* (0.037)	– 0.325 (0.188)	0.525* (0.025)	0.536* (0.022)
<b>Aged 25 – 59 suicide rate</b>	0.622** (0.006)	0.655** (0.003)	– 0.699** (0.001)	0.709** (0.001)	0.673** (0.002)
<b>Aged 60+ suicide rate</b>	0.532* (0.023)	0.493* (0.038)	– 0.518* (0.027)	0.529* (0.024)	0.449 (0.062)

Pearson Correlation (*p*-value)

\* *p* < 0.05

\*\* *p* < 0.01

# Deliberate self harm (2004-2008)



0 1,500 3,000 6,000 Meters



# Social Isolation Indicators

- Unemployed
- Elderly people
- Less household income
- Divorced / separated, widowed
- Single parents families
- Recent immigrants
- Ethnic Minorities
- Living alone



There are disconnection in our community, the challenge is to identify ways to connect the disconnected:

- Physical isolation leads to social isolation

Reconnect the disconnected by the followings:

- Destigmatization of the district, A very sad city\_ Tin Shui Wai.- How to destigmatize
- Enhance understanding of the need of the vulnerables and disadvantageous in the community and remove myths and prejudice



# Sustainable Mental Health Wellbeing

- Creating **SPACE**- living space, public space
- Hong Kong people are very resilience and accomodative, **but there must be a limit**  
convenience vs comfort  
split flat with 120 sq feet but 30 minutes  
a flat with 500 sq feet but 1. hour travelling
- Longest working hour. Over 50% working more than between 8-10 hours.



- Opening the school playground ground during the weekend and holiday
- A correction in page 28,
- Half of the household with less than 500 square feet (not 1636 sq feet) (average 3.1 people in one household)



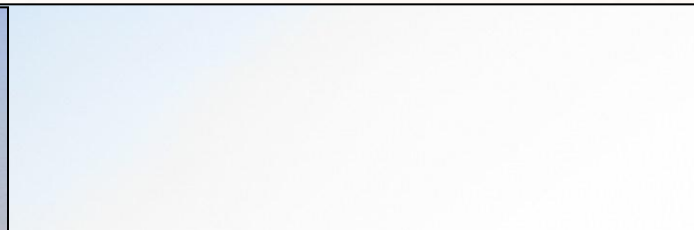
# Youth Mentorship Programme for Primary School Students in Tin Shui Wai

「友伴同行」學習計劃

Enlarging Living space



# New Town in Tuen Mun





# Orientation at School 27.5.2011









# Community based programs

1. strengthening social support, by enhancing their coping or problem solving skills

- 2. Partnership with family and community



# A Community-based Approach

- Make use of the community resources
- GIS makes the prevention work more focused
- Community ownership is important
- Not every suicide is preventable
- certainly can make a difference!



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Which helping hand will prevent a suicide?

**THEY ALL MIGHT.**

In the United States, someone dies by suicide every 17 minutes.  
In many cases, these deaths are preventable.

As an individual, speaking openly about suicide, knowing the warning signs and offering a helping hand could, quite literally, make the difference between life and death.

As a nation, fully implementing the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention and establishing mental health parity could help save lives.

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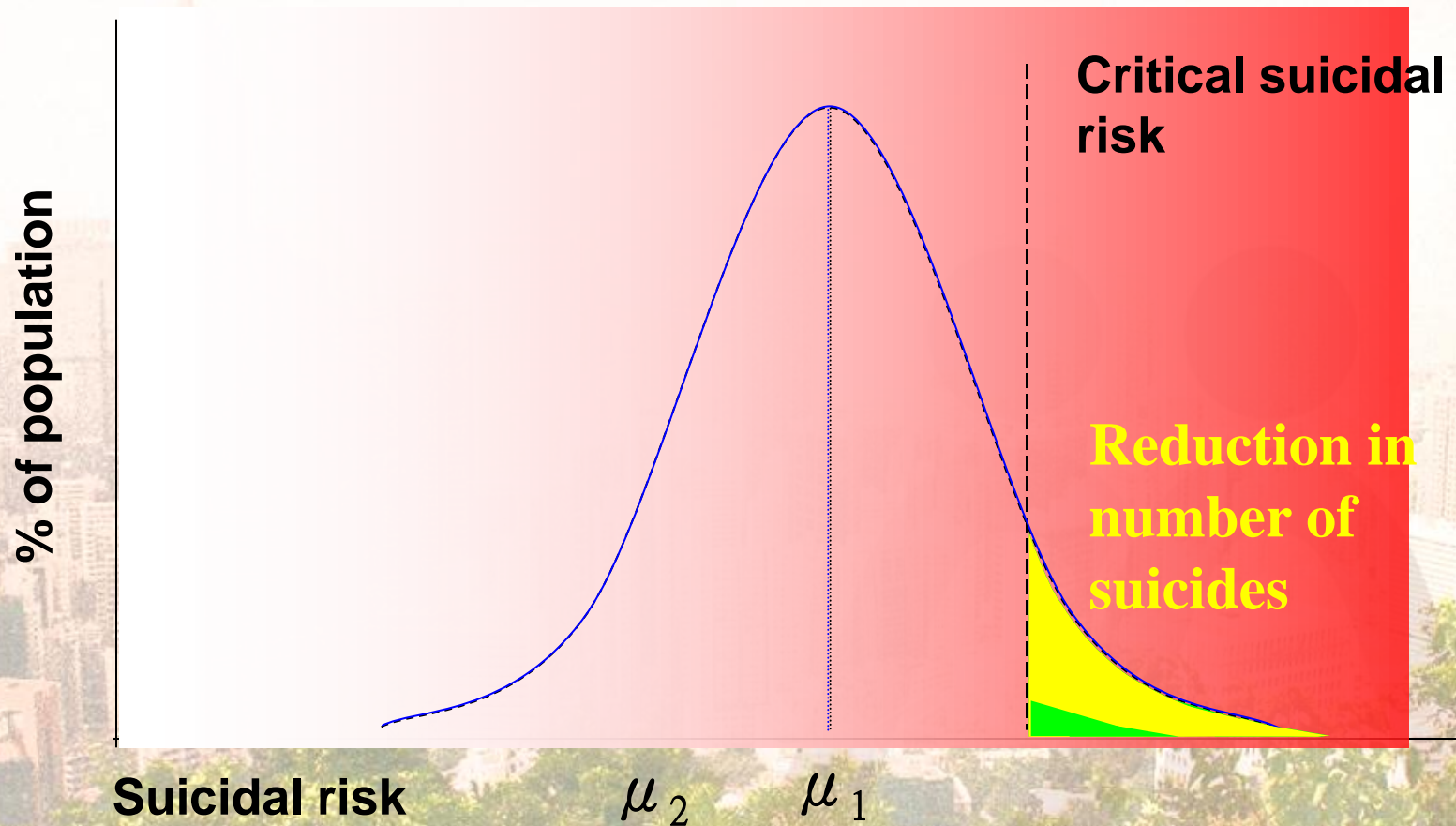
OPENING MINDS. CHANGING POLICY. SAVING LIVES.



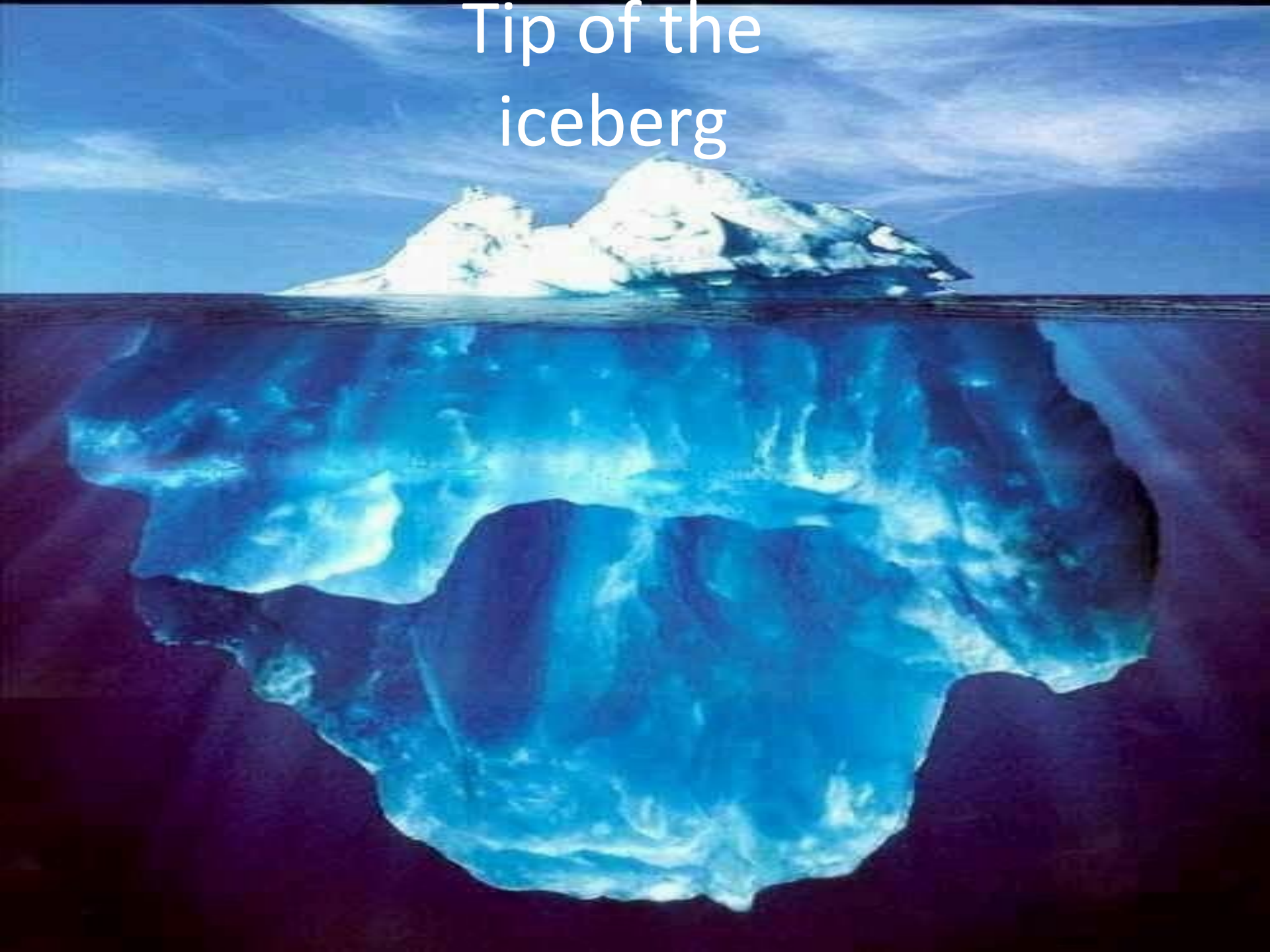
SUICIDE PREVENTION ACTION NETWORK USA



# A Public Health Approach for Suicide Prevention

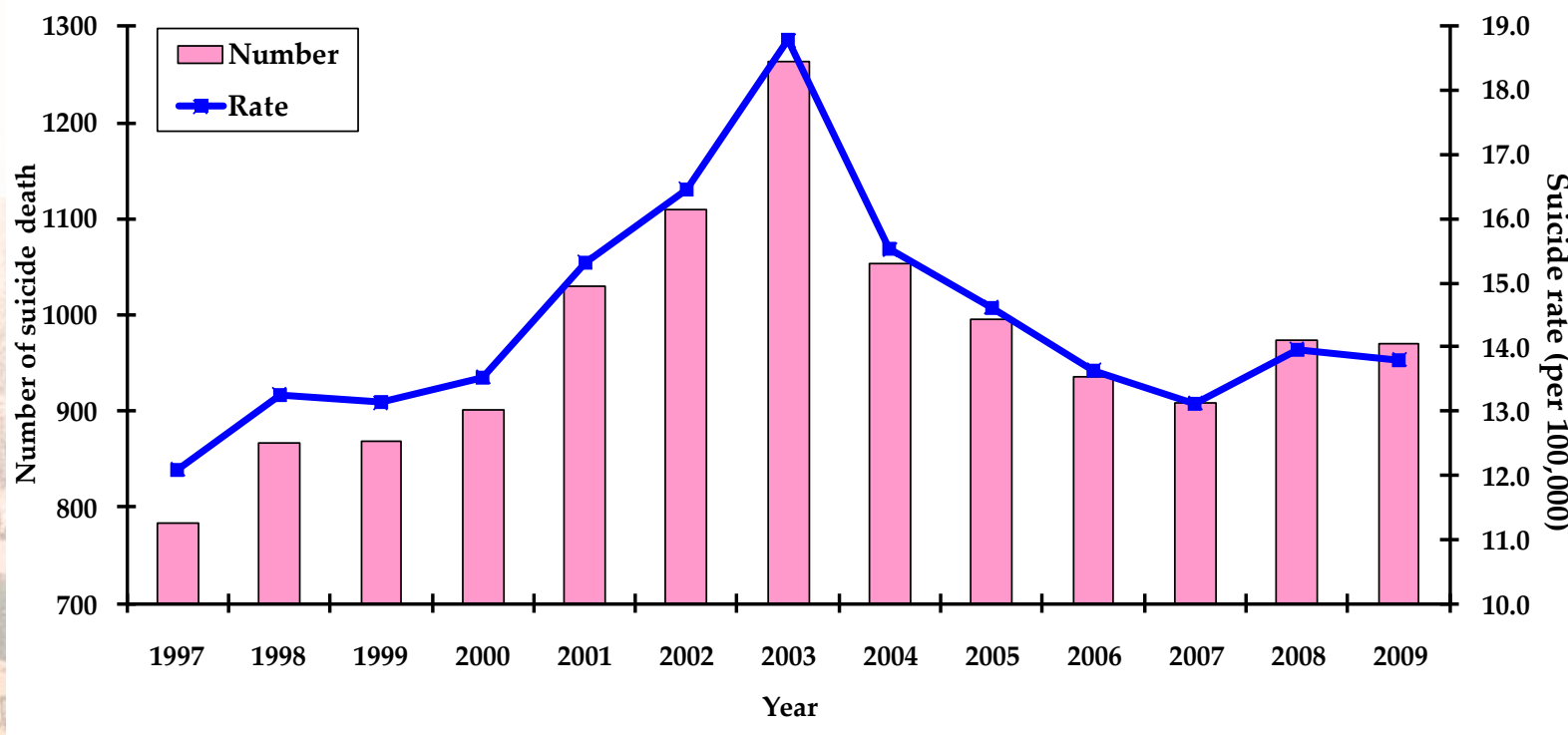


Tip of the  
iceberg





- HONG KONG (1997-2009) has reduced by more than 30% which is substantial!

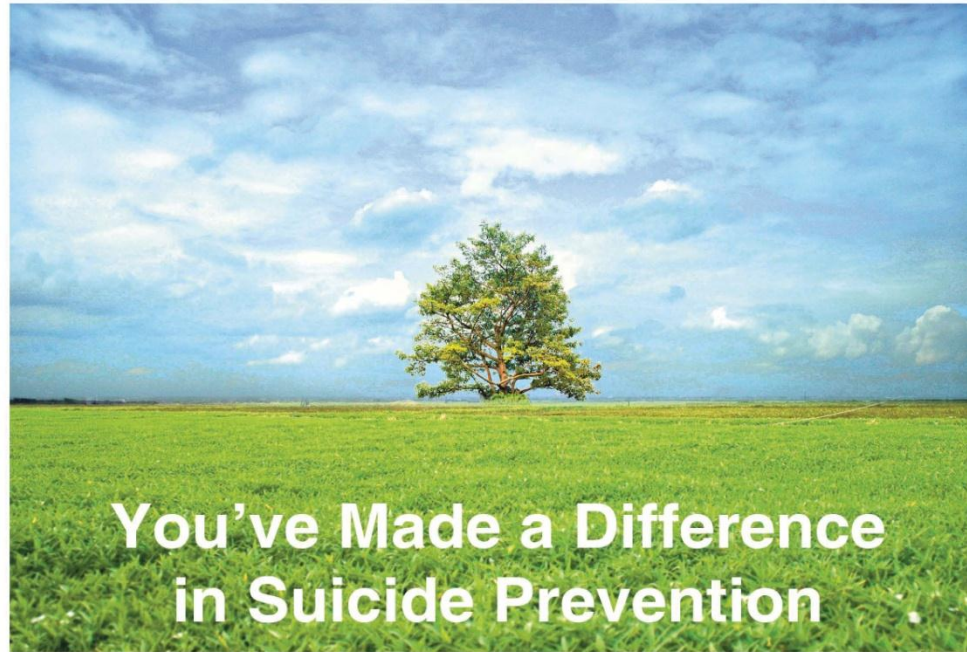




Newsletter FALL 2006



THE HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB  
Centre for Suicide Research  
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FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG



## You've Made a Difference in Suicide Prevention

預防自殺 因您不再一樣

18% Decline in HK's Suicide Rate	p.3
International Workshop on National Strategies in HK	p.4
Bereavement of Suicide Survivors	p.6
Little Prince is Depressed Appears in Print	p.15



# You've Made a Difference

預防自殺 因您  
不再一樣



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**THANK YOU !**

