

## Prevalence and correlates of self-harm among a sample of repeat DUI offenders

Many of the risk factors for repeat impaired driving, such as experiencing mental health challenges and engaging in dangerous behaviors, are similar to risk factors for suicidal thoughts and behaviors (STBs) and non-suicidal self injury (NSSI).

According to Joiner's Interpersonal Theory of Suicide, NSSI can increase the capacity for suicide. In some cases, impaired driving might be considered NSSI, or even a direct suicide attempt.

### The Study

207 repeat Driving under the influence (DUI) offenders enrolled in a residential DUI program in Massachusetts were asked about lifetime STBs, known risk factors of STBs, and NSSI.

The researchers wanted to know:

Rates of STB and NSSI among repeat DUI offenders

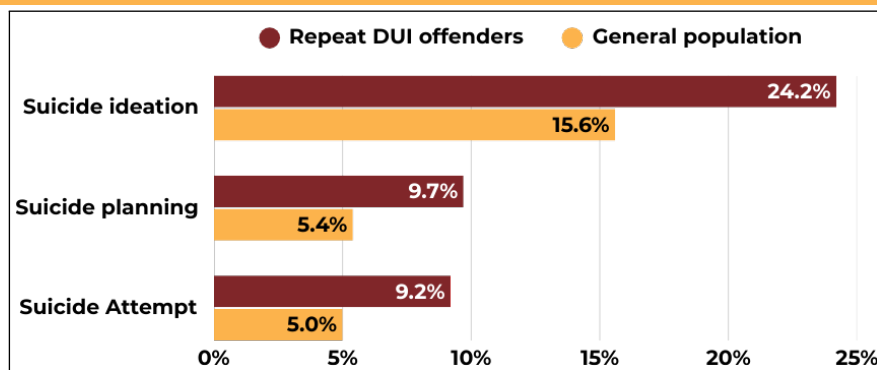
Risk factors for STB among repeat DUI offenders.

Whether some DUI behaviors were direct suicide attempts or expressions of NSSI.



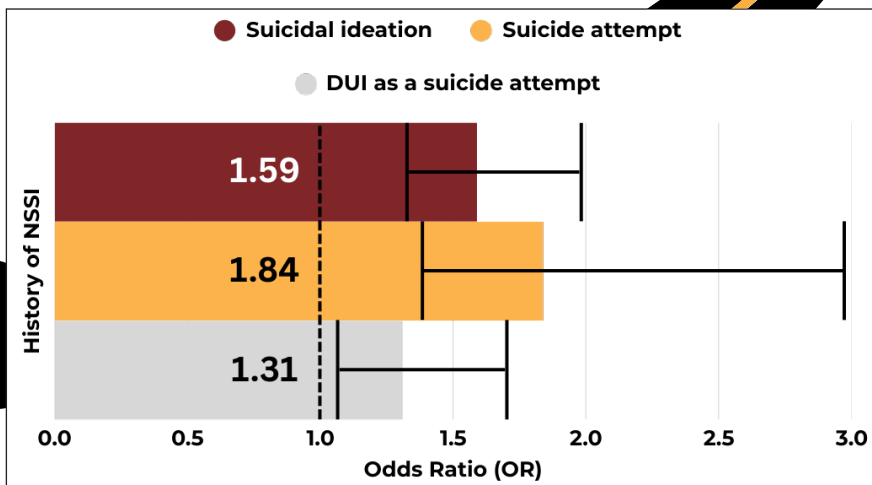
NSSI: A self-directed behavior that is meant to harm, where there is an absence of suicidal intent.

### Key Findings



1. Rates of lifetime STBs were all significantly higher among repeat DUI offenders than the general population.
2. 4% of DUI offenders reported an instance of DUI that was an attempt to take their own life.
3. An additional 3% reported DUI as a form of NSSI.

The extent of lifetime NSSI among repeat DUI offenders significantly predicted STBs and DUI as a suicide attempt, even in the presence of other risk factors for STBs.



An OR greater than 1 indicates higher odds of the outcome (in this case, STBs) at higher levels of the predictor (in this case, NSSI)

### Key Takeaways

Suicidal thoughts and behaviors, as well as non-suicidal self-injury, are concerns for DUI populations. In some cases, DUI behavior itself is a suicide attempt or self-injury attempt.

Providing screening for self-harm and suicide risk factors is important in this population.

