

INTRODUCTION

- Self-injurious thoughts and behaviors (SITBs) are major public health concerns among youth.
- Extant research provides compelling evidence to suggest a robust association between negative affect and SITBs.
- Findings from recent daily diary and ecological momentary assessment (EMA) studies revealed that higher negative affect intensity predicted future SITBs¹, however much of this research has been conducted in adult samples, and far less is known about this proximal relation in youth.
- The current study utilizes a real-time monitoring approach in a clinically high-risk sample of youth to examine the short-term link between negative affect and self-injurious thoughts.

METHOD

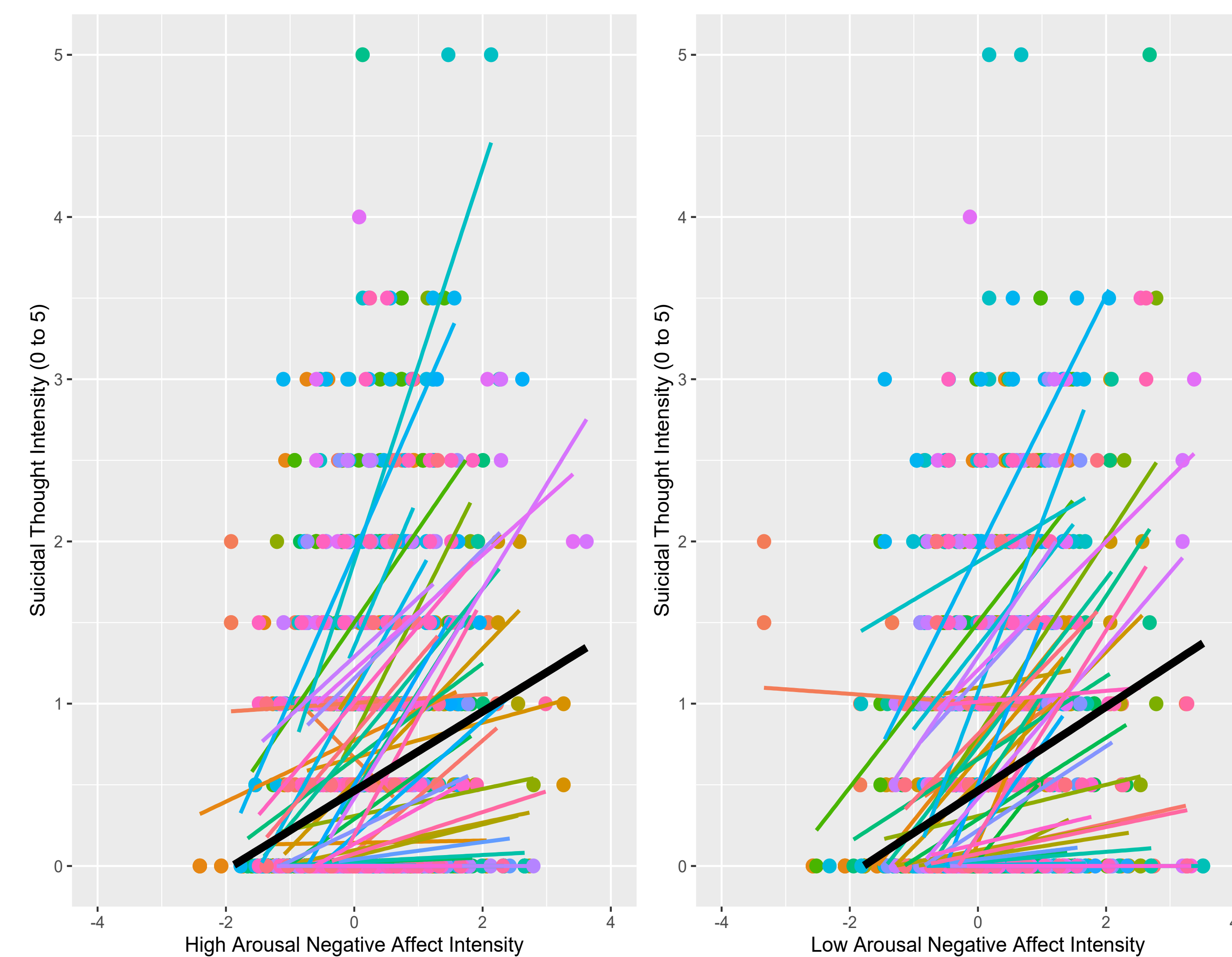
- Participants:**
 - 48 adolescents, ages 12-18 ($M_{age}=14.96$), recently discharged from acute psychiatric care for suicide risk who completed EMA for up to 28 days
- EMA measures:**
 - Signal contingent survey (3-6 per day):
 - Negative affect (NA) intensity (0=*not at all* to 4=*extremely*)
 - High arousal (average of agitated, angry, nervous)²
 - Low arousal (average of sad, guilty)²
 - Suicidal thought intensity (0=*absent* to 5=*extremely intense*)
 - Nonsuicidal self-injury (NSSI) thought intensity (0=*absent* to 5=*extremely intense*)

ANALYSES

- Multilevel analyses were conducted using the lme4 package³ in R examining the contemporaneous and lagged effect relation between negative affect intensity and self-injurious thoughts.
- Predictors were person-mean centered prior to conducting analyses and models included random intercepts and slopes.
- All predictors and outcomes were examined in separate models.

RESULTS

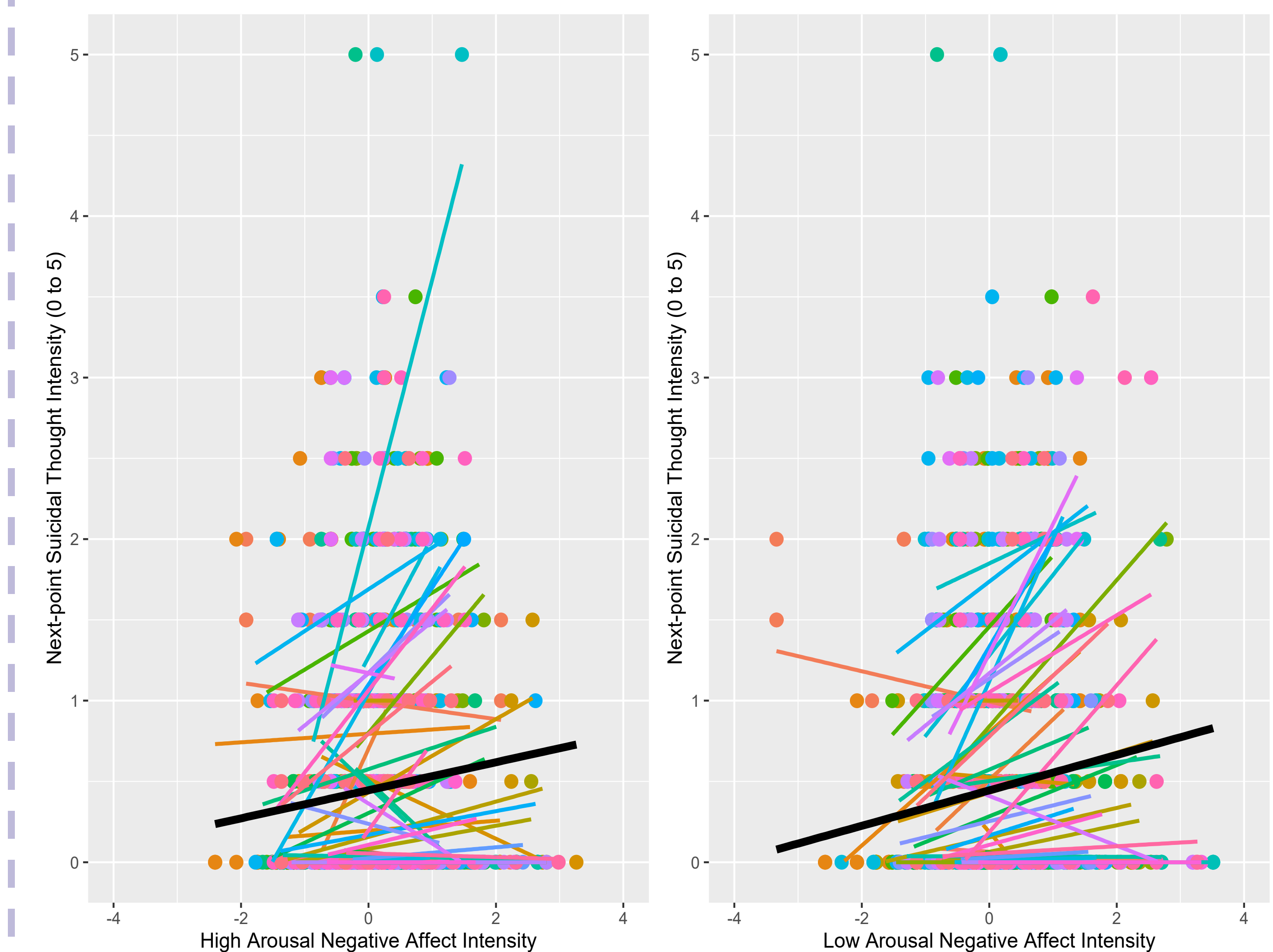
Contemporaneous analyses



	Suicidal Thought Intensity		NSSI Thought Intensity	
	Estimate	p	Estimate	p
High arousal	.28	<.001	.18	<.001
Low arousal	.28	<.001	.18	<.001

Note. Age included as a covariate in all models. Black lines on graphs represent between-person effect.

Lagged effect analyses



	Next-point Suicidal Thought Intensity		Next-point NSSI Thought Intensity	
	Estimate	p	Estimate	p
High arousal	.13	.003	.03	.23
Low arousal	.16	<.001	.09	.02

Note. Age included as a covariate in all models. Black lines on graphs represent between-person effect.

DISCUSSION

- High arousal and low arousal negative affect intensity similarly predicted higher suicidal thought intensity both contemporaneously and at the next time point (lagged effect).
- Low arousal negative affect intensity predicted higher NSSI thought intensity both contemporaneously and at the next time point, whereas high arousal negative affect intensity was only associated contemporaneously with NSSI thought intensity.
- It may be that low arousal negative affective states (ex: guilt) may lead to higher NSSI thought intensity, but high arousal negative affective states (ex: agitated) may be more strongly tied to NSSI behavior.
- Future research should replicate analyses in larger samples to further understand the relation between negative affect intensity and self-injurious thoughts and behaviors in high-risk youth.

REFERENCES

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