

You are kindly invited to the public defense to obtain the degree of

## DOCTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

of drs. Long Wang

Which will take place on

**September 29, 2026 at 09:30 AM** (Brussels Time)

Promotiezaal - D.2.01 ([Building D,](#)) – [VUB Main Campus Brussels](#)

Pleinlaan 2 – 1050 Brussel

Or if you wish to attend online, click [here](#) to join the meeting.

## THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN OVER-PARENTING AND INTRAPERSONAL RISK FACTORS IN RELATION TO NON-SUICIDAL SELF-INJURY (NSSI) AMONG CHINESE AND BELGIAN ADOLESCENTS

### JURY

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#### INTERN:

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(Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

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#### EXTERN:

**Prof. Dr. Penelope Hasking** (Curtin University)

**Prof. Dr. Tinne Buelens** (Universiteit van Amsterdam)

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You are also invited to the reception afterwards.

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## SUMMARY

Nonsuicidal self-injury (NSSI) is a relatively common behaviour during adolescence and is associated with substantial psychological distress and an increased risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviours. Although many individual and family-related risk factors for NSSI have been identified, less is known about how these factors unfold together over time and how adolescent NSSI may, in turn, shape parental responses. This PhD dissertation examines the longitudinal interplay between intrapersonal and contextual risk factors, parental responses, and adolescent NSSI, with particular attention to hostile self-criticism, academic stress, over-parenting, and perceived parental criticism in Chinese and Belgian adolescents.

Across four complementary studies, the dissertation approaches these processes from a longitudinal and cross-cultural perspective. The studies examined the temporal associations between academic stress, hostile self-criticism, and NSSI (Chapter 2); evaluated whether over-parenting could be measured comparably across countries and over time (Chapter 3); investigated reciprocal associations between over-parenting and NSSI (Chapter 4); explored the longitudinal relationship between perceived parental criticism and NSSI (Chapter 5); and further examined whether parents' discovery of NSSI helped explain subsequent parental responses (i.e., over-parenting and perceived parental criticism; Chapters 4 and 5).

The findings show that hostile self-criticism plays a particularly important role in the development of NSSI over time. When adolescents reported higher levels of hostile self-criticism than was typical for them, this prospectively predicted subsequent increases in NSSI, whereas academic stress did not predict changes in NSSI over time. Over-parenting was associated with higher levels of NSSI at the between-person level in the Chinese sample but not in the Belgian sample; however, no reciprocal within-person effects between over-parenting and NSSI were found in either sample. Similarly, perceived parental criticism and NSSI were positively related at their initial levels, but neither showed evidence of systematic change across the three-month intervals. Although adolescents with more persistent NSSI were more likely to have their NSSI discovered, this discovery did not explain subsequent increases in over-parenting or perceived parental criticism. Overall, the longitudinal patterns were broadly comparable across the Chinese and Belgian samples.

The dissertation highlights the importance of distinguishing relatively stable differences between adolescents from dynamic changes occurring within adolescents over time. The findings identify hostile self-criticism as a meaningful dynamic risk factor for NSSI, while suggesting that academic stress may operate more as a stable contextual factor. Rather than viewing adolescent NSSI and parenting as a simple escalating feedback loop, the findings point to a more nuanced interplay between individual vulnerability, family processes, and cultural context.

## CURRICULUM VITAE

Long Wang obtained his Master's degree in Applied Psychology from Fujian Normal University (Fuzhou, China) in 2021. His master's thesis aimed to develop an academic parenting scale in the Chinese context, while using this new scale to examine their unique influence on students' academic outcomes, such as academic performance and motivation. In 2022, he began his PhD studies with funding from the China Scholarship Council. His doctoral research primarily investigated how intrapersonal risk factors and different parental responses to NSSI interact with NSSI behaviors among Chinese and Belgian adolescents.