

<http://www.teensuicide.us/articles2.html>

Teen Suicide Statistics

When it comes to teen suicide, the statistics make it clear that attempted suicide is a big deal as it relates to the youth. Additionally, suicide is one of the leading causes of death for teenagers - its the third leading cause. Keep reading for more on teen suicide statistics.

So, even though we do not hear a great deal about teen suicide, it is a very real problem, causing the deaths of thousands of teenagers across the country each year. Teen suicide statistics shed light on the problem, and offer insights as to who might need help, and how to help them.

Teen suicide attempts are calls for help

Many teenagers have thoughts of death. These can stem from a variety of causes, and can result in actual attempts on their own lives. It is important to take suicide attempts seriously. While there is no way to reliably figure the exact ratio of attempted suicides to completed suicides, the National Institute of Mental Health believes that as many as 25 suicides are attempted for each one that is completed. That means that for every teen suicide that you hear of, there are probably at least 25 suicide attempts made. And this does not even cover the teenage suicide attempts and completed suicides that are never heard about. Understanding that a teen suicide attempt is a call for help is essential in preventing a completed attempt later.

Teen suicide statistics and gender

Teen suicide statistics draw a correlation between gender and suicide. It is interesting to note that there are some very clear indications that suicide is different for males and females, attempted and completed suicides alike. For example, males are four times more likely to die from suicide than females. However, teen girls are more likely than teen boys to attempt suicide. So, even though teenage girls make more attempts on their own lives than teenage boys, the boys are more likely to actually complete a suicide attempt. They do not allow for intervention, and are less likely to "call for help" through a suicide attempt, since there is often little opportunity to get males into treatment since their suicide completion rate is higher than that of females.

Risk factors for teenage suicide

Teen suicide statistics offer a look at the most likely causes of teen suicide. Some of the strongest teenage suicide risk factors include the following:

- [Aggressive behavior](#)
- Disruptive behavior
- [Substance abuse](#)
- Depression

These are risk factors that play on the often tumultuous feelings experienced by teenagers. Intense feelings can contribute to a teen's sense of helplessness and to a general feeling that life is not worth living. Taking these feelings seriously is an important part of preventing teen suicide.

Another risk factor to consider is the presence of firearms. Because firearms are used in more than half of teen suicides, it is important to realize that easy access to a firearm and ammunition can contribute to a teenage death by suicide. Teenagers who express suicidal thoughts and feelings should not have ready access to firearms.

[Teen Suicide Statistics](#) Main Source Material: "Teen Suicide." Ohio State University Medical Center. Ohio State University. [Online.]

Teen Suicide Warning Signs

Studies show that 4 out of 5 teen suicide attempts have been preceded by clear warning signs, make sure you know them. Keep reading to learn what teen suicide warning signs to look for, including warning signs or indications of a suicide plan.

Teen suicide is a very real problem in the United States. With many pressures and a variety emotional, social and family issues to confront, many teenagers find themselves having suicidal thoughts. Part of averting a teen suicide is being involved in your teen's life and watching for teen suicide warning signs. It is also important to note that many of the teen suicide warning signs are also indications of depression.

Teen suicide warning signs

It is important to take the warning signs of teen suicide seriously and to seek help if you think that you know a teenager who might be suicidal. Here are some of the things to look for:

- Disinterest in favorite extracurricular activities
- Problems at work and losing interest in a job
- Substance abuse, including alcohol and drug (illegal and legal drugs) use
- Behavioral problems
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Sleep changes
- Changes in eating habits

- Begins to neglect hygiene and other matters of personal appearance
- Emotional distress brings on physical complaints (aches, fatigues, migraines)
- Hard time concentrating and paying attention
- Declining grades in school
- Loss of interest in schoolwork
- Risk taking behaviors
- Complains more frequently of boredom
- Does not respond as before to praise

Not all of these teen suicide warning signs will be present in cases of possible teen suicide. There are many cases in which a good student commits suicide. It is important to watch for two or three signs as indications of depression, or even teen suicidal thoughts.

Teen suicide warning signs: indications of a suicide plan

There are some things that teens might do that could indicate that they are contemplating, or even planning, suicide. It is important that you make yourself aware of these actions, and use them as starting points to draw your teenager out and perhaps express what is bothering him or her. Here are some of the indications of a suicide plan:

- Actually says, "I'm thinking of committing suicide" or "I want to kill myself" or "I wish I could die."
- There are also verbal hints that could indicate suicidal thoughts or plans. These include such phrases as: "I want you to know something, in case something happens to me" or "I won't trouble you anymore."
- Teenager begins giving away favorite belongings, or promising them to friends and family members.
- Throws away important possessions.
- Shows signs of extreme cheerfulness following periods of depression.
- Creates suicide notes.
- Expresses bizarre or unsettling thoughts on occasion.

Understanding that teen suicide warning signs are serious calls for help is important. Many teenagers share their thoughts and feelings in a desperate attempt to be acknowledged. In many cases, they don't know how to deal with their feelings and problems and are looking for someone to help them find assistance. Acknowledging these warning signs and seeking help for the problem, and offering support to a teenager who is working through his or her issues is very important, and can help prevent suicide. Teen suicide is a very real danger, and heeding the warning signs can truly save a life.

Teen Suicide Warning Signs Main Source Material: "Teen Suicide." Ohio State University Medical Center. Ohio State University. [Online.]

Suicidal behavior in teens can lead to tragic consequences. And, with teen suicide as the third leading cause of adolescent death, it is important to realize

the stakes in preventing teen suicide. Keep reading for more information on teenage suicide prevention.

Teenage Suicide Prevention

Part of preventing teen suicide also includes recognizing the issues that can trigger feelings of teen depression leading to suicidal thoughts and feelings. Teen suicide prevention requires diligence on the part of guardians, as well as a willingness to seek professional help when it is needed.

Recognizing teen suicidal behavior

One of the first steps to teen suicide prevention is to recognize suicidal behaviors in teenagers. It is important to be involved in a teenager's life, so that you can recognize when behavior seems a little abnormal and prone to teen depression and/or teen suicide. Realizing that teenagers have a lot of stress on them today can help you understand that it may seem difficult for teens to cope with all of the life and hormonal changes they are going to. Be on the lookout for behavior that indicates a pattern of suicidal thoughts and feelings, including the following:

- Expresses thoughts of death, dying and a desire to leave this life
- Changes in normal habits, such as eating and sleeping, and spending time with friends and family
- Dramatic weight fluctuations, in any direction
- Evidence of [substance abuse](#) (alcohol and drugs, both legal and illegal)
- Dramatic mood swings (becomes very happy after feeling very depressed)
- Lost interest in schoolwork and extracurricular activities (including declining grades)

While all of these things are not necessarily indications of suicidal thoughts and feelings when taken separately, or happening rarely, a pattern can exhibit a serious problem, as can a combination of factors. Make sure that you take note of how often the above symptoms appear.

Teen suicide prevention

One of the most important aspects of teen suicide prevention is support. The teenager needs to know that you support and love him or her, and that you are willing to help him or her find hope in life again. One of the most effective ways to prevent teen suicide is to recognize the signs of suicidal thoughts and feelings, and seek professional help. Some of the most effective teen suicide prevention programs consist of identifying and treating the following problems:

- Mental and learning disorders
- Substance abuse problems
- Problems dealing with stress
- [Behavior problems](#) (such as controlling aggressive and impulsive behavior)

All of the above issues can be difficult for a teenager to cope with, leading to

helplessness and discouragement, which in turn can turn to self-destructive thoughts in order to make an escape from the seemingly insurmountable pressures of life. Getting help for underlying problems, which almost always include teen depression can lead to more effective teen suicide prevention. Your support as a teenager you know enters therapy can help him or her more effectively recover and know that there are people who want to help him or her deal with the issues of life.

Teenage Suicide Prevention Main Source Material: "Teen Suicide." Ohio State University Medical Center. Ohio State University. [Online.]

Suicide Attempts

Attempted suicide by troubled teenagers is something that happens every year. In fact, for every completed suicide, estimates assert that there are right around 25 suicide attempts. Keep reading to learn the risk factors for suicide attempts and what to do about suicide attempts.

This means that even though most suicides are not completed, that attempts are made. Nearly every troubled teenager has suicidal thoughts at some point. And teens who take that farther, in an attempt to actually kill themselves, are also crying out for help. Even though they might feel like they want to die, at the same time many of them are happy when they discover that there are people who want to help them overcome their issues.

Risk factors for attempted suicide

There are some risk factors that go along with attempting suicide. And, while suicide is not confined to any age, gender, social or economic group, it is important to note that there are some factors that can make suicide seem a more desirable option for some teens. Here are some of the risk factors for attempted teen suicide:

- Family history. This can include a family history of suicide, mental disorders, and/or substance (drug or alcohol) abuse.
- [Substance abuse](#) - drug abuse - alcohol abuse. The use of legal or illegal drugs, alcohol and other substances can create feelings of dependency, illness and depression. Feeling out of control and powerless due to drug or alcohol addiction orders can be a major risk factor in attempted teen suicide.
- [Abuse and violence](#). Abuse - mental, emotional, physical or sexual - can increase the likelihood of attempted suicide.
- Mental, emotional or physical disorders. There are some disorders that

teenagers find difficult to deal with. In these cases, it is important to realize that the stress caused by these disorders can actually trigger suicidal thoughts.

What to do when a teenager attempts suicide

First of all, it is important to realize that an attempted suicide is a cry for help. Troubled teenagers who make suicide attempts are signaling that they feel overwhelmed with life and the stresses that come with it. An attempted suicide is usually also an indication of depression. This can mean that a teenager has feelings, thoughts and stressors that he or she cannot handle any more. They try to solve the problem by killing themselves. You can help a troubled teenager by showing support and helping him or her get the help needed to learn to deal with issues.

A physical and mental evaluation is needed after a teenage suicide attempt. Taking the struggling teen to see a physician is the first step; the doctor can then recommend other steps to take, and make recommendations as to who the teen can see to help with the problems that triggered the suicide attempt. Entering therapy can be a good idea for many teenagers. In some cases, family therapy might be a good idea. This can help the family members of the suicidal teen receive the support they need, and it can show the teenager that the family cares about him or her and is willing to receive counseling as well. Showing support and unconditional love is a necessary part of helping a suicidal teen.

Attempted Suicides Main Source Material: "Teen Suicide." Ohio State University Medical Center. Ohio State University. [Online.]

Treatment for Suicidal Teens

Treatment for suicidal teens is possible to come by, if you look in the right places and take the proper steps. Learn what to consider when seeking treatment for a suicidal teen, what is involved in suicidal treatment for teens, and options for treating a suicidal teenager.

The teen years are a confusing time, fraught with questions, problems and intense feeling. Sometimes, and often through a combination of factors, feelings arise that include teen suicide. It is not unusual for teens to have some thoughts of dying. However, such thoughts can be problematic if a teenager begins to feel and express them frequently. Addressing these feelings as early as possible is important in preventing an actual teen suicide.

Factors taken into account when developing treatment for suicidal teens

When a teen feels suicidal, there are certain factors that a physician and/or

mental health professional will take into account when helping to develop a suicide treatment plan. Here are some of things to be taken into consideration when developing treatment for suicidal teens:

- The extent of a teenager's suicidal symptoms
 - The overall medical history and health of a suicidal teen
 - Tolerance the teenager has with regard to procedures, medications and therapies
 - The seriousness of any suicide attempt or warnings by a teen
 - Impressions of the risk for teen suicide at a later time
 - The opinion of the parent, as well as the teen, regarding treatment preferences
- Treatment for suicidal teens is created on an individual basis. Each teenager requires his or her own evaluation and a tailored treatment plan designed to specifically work with his or her needs.

What goes into treatment for suicidal teens that have attempted suicide

There are several things that go into treatment for suicidal teens. Initially, after a suicide attempt has been made, a physical examination and evaluation is necessary. Physical treatment is a necessary part of suicide treatment for a teenager because he or she is in danger of harming him or herself until stability is achieved. The mental health portion of treatment for suicidal teens includes an evaluation of the teenager's life leading up to the suicide attempt, as well as an evaluation of the family and home situation. These factors are important parts of determining the teen's individual needs, as well as figuring out which treatment options would work best with the teenager's situation.

Possible options regarding treatment for suicidal teens

When a teen needs treatment for suicidal thoughts or a suicide attempt, there are a few options that can be incorporated into the treatment. Here are three of the more common options:

Individual therapy. This is suicide treatment that involves therapy just for the teenager to help him or her work through feelings and suicidal thoughts.

Family therapy. Sometimes family therapy works best in instances of teen suicide treatment. This can provide a supportive environment for the teenager, as well as help the family learn how to cope with the problem and work together.

Hospitalization. In some cases, it is necessary to provide a teenager with a secure, safe and constantly supervised environment. Most in-patient suicide treatment includes therapeutic aspects, and offers the kind of supervision that might be necessary in extreme cases.

Treatment for Teens Main Source Material: "Teen Suicide." Ohio State University Medical Center. Ohio State University. [Online.]

Some Things You Should Know About Preventing Teen Suicide

- *In a recent study on the long-term impact of child abuse, adult women who said they were physically or emotionally abused as children were more likely to have mental problems, suffer from depression and to have attempted suicide.(1)*
- *Suicide is the eighth leading cause of death for all persons regardless of age, sex or race; the third leading cause of death for young people aged 15 to 24; and the fourth leading cause of death for persons between the ages of 10 and 14.(2)*

It is important to take the subject of suicide seriously. It doesn't seem right that a teenager - who has lived for such a short time - would choose to die. But adolescents who can't get over their depression sometimes do kill themselves.

Boys commit suicide more often than girls, but no one is immune. In one recent survey of high school students, 60 percent said they had thought about killing themselves. About 9 percent said they had tried at least once.

Why has the youth suicide rate gone so high in recent years?

- It's easier to get the tools for suicide (Boys often use firearms to kill themselves; girls usually use pills);
- the pressures of modern life are greater;
- competition for good grades and college admission is stiff; and
- there's more violence in the newspapers and on television.

Lack of parental interest may be another problem. Many children grow up in divorced households; for others, both of their parents work and their families spend limited time together. According to one study 90 percent of suicidal teen-agers believed their families did not understand them. (However, this is such a common teen-age complaint that other factors are playing a role, too.) Young people also reported that when they tried to tell their parents about their feelings of unhappiness or failure, their mother and father denied or ignored their point of view.

If your teen-ager has been depressed, you should look closely for signs that he or she might be thinking of suicide:

- Has his personality changed dramatically?
- Is he having trouble with a girlfriend (or, for girls, with a boyfriend)? Or is he having trouble getting along with other friends or with parents? Has he withdrawn from people he used to feel close to?
- Is the quality of his schoolwork going down? Has he failed to live up to his own or

- someone else's standards (when it comes to school grades, for example)?
- Does he always seem bored, and is he having trouble concentrating?
 - Is he acting like a rebel in an unexplained and severe way?
 - Is she pregnant and finding it hard to cope with this major life change?
 - Has he run away from home?
 - Is your teen-ager abusing drugs and/or alcohol?
 - Is she complaining of headaches, stomachaches, etc., that may or may not be real?
 - Have his eating or sleeping habits changed?
 - Has his or her appearance changed for the worse?
 - Is he giving away some of his most prized possessions?
 - Is he writing notes or poems about death?
 - Does he talk about suicide, even jokingly? Has he said things such as, "That's the last straw," "I can't take it anymore," or "Nobody cares about me?" (Threatening to kill oneself precedes four out of five suicidal deaths.)
 - Has he tried to commit suicide before?

If you suspect that your teen-ager might be thinking about suicide, do not remain silent. **Suicide is preventable**, but you must act quickly.

- Ask your teen-ager about it. Don't be afraid to say the word "suicide." Getting the word out in the open may help your teen-ager think someone has heard his cries for help.
- Reassure him that you love him. Remind him that no matter how awful his problems seem, they can be worked out, and you are willing to help.
- Ask her to talk about her feelings. Listen carefully. Do not dismiss her problems or get angry at her.
- Remove all lethal weapons from your home, including guns, pills, kitchen utensils and ropes.
- Seek professional help. Ask your teen-ager's pediatrician to guide you. A variety of outpatient and hospital-based treatment programs are available.