

National Suicide Prevention Month

September 2016

Child
& Family
Studies

To All Concerned Citizens,

Three thousand thirty-five (3,035) people! This could be the number of students in a high school or the year-round population of Provincetown, Massachusetts. However, this is the number of Floridian lives lost to suicide in 2014.

September 5th to 11th is National Suicide Prevention Week. While death by suicide is statistically a rare event, seriously considering suicide or attempting suicide occurs with greater frequency particularly among youth. The following info-graphic highlights the proportion of high school students in Florida and the United States who self-reported that in the year prior to the survey, he or she had seriously considered suicide, made a suicide plan, or were medically treated for a suicide attempt.

Warning signs may indicate someone is struggling and considering suicide. By knowing the warning signs, we can be better prepared to intervene when we see a friend, coworker, neighbor, or relative in distress. Don't be afraid to reach out; tell your friend you've noticed changes – something is not quite right and you're worried. This open dialogue can help individuals feel relief, know that someone cares and maybe seek professional help. Asking someone about suicide does not plant the idea in his/her mind. Asking someone directly if he or she is thinking about suicide in a caring manner can help a person realize it's okay to struggle and seek help.

But I'm not trained!! A young man is alive today because a colleague's husband got involved. He wasn't trained but he didn't think "it's not my problem," nor was he in too much of a rush to get involved. While my colleagues' husband was out for a hike he noticed a young man carrying a rope who seemed a little out of place. Without training, he recognized a young man potentially in distress, established rapport, provided the young man options (e.g., going home, phoning authorities), and ensured the young man's safety by escorting him to his house and connected him with his mother.

Let's all make a concerted effort to notice changes, reach out, and offer help. Anyone who is considering suicide, or knows someone who may be at risk for suicide, can call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) 24/7, the National Lifeline number, or contact a family physician, psychiatrist, medical emergency room, or community mental health center listed in the yellow pages. Individuals can also text the Crisis Text Line at 741-741 for help. Many suicides can be prevented and each of us can help by learning the warning signs and responding when concerned.

Thanks for your time,



Stephen Roggenbaum

Gubernatorial appointment to Florida's Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council
CFS/FMHI/CBCS/USF • 813-974-6149 • rogenba@usf.edu

Know the Signs

We should respond immediately if an individual shows the following warning signs:

- Talking or writing about suicide, death or dying
- Giving direct verbal cues, such as "I wish I were dead" or "I'm going to end it all" (suicidal threats)
- Looking for ways to kill him- or herself: seeking access to pills, weapons or other means

The following warning signs also warrant attention, especially if in the presence of any of the above signs or other known risk factors:

- Hopelessness
- Increasing alcohol or other drug abuse
- Global insomnia
- Isolating him/herself from friends and family
- Dramatic changes in mood
- Neglecting his or her appearance and hygiene
- Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities
- No reason for living; no sense of purpose in life

If observed, seek help as soon as possible by contacting a mental health professional or calling 1-800 273-8255 (TALK) for a referral.

Everyone can help by learning the warning signs, reaching out, encouraging help seeking, and being a friend.

USF
UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH FLORIDA
COLLEGE OF BEHAVIORAL
& COMMUNITY SCIENCES

2015 Suicide Risk Among High School Students

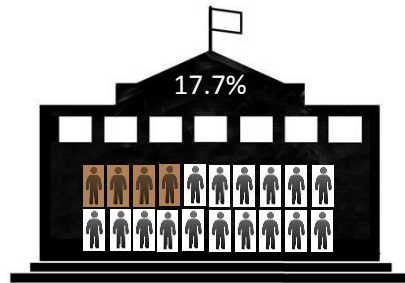
Anyone thinking about suicide or concerned about someone else can call the *National Suicide Prevention Lifeline* at **800-273-8255** or text the *Crisis Text Line* at **741-741**



Florida

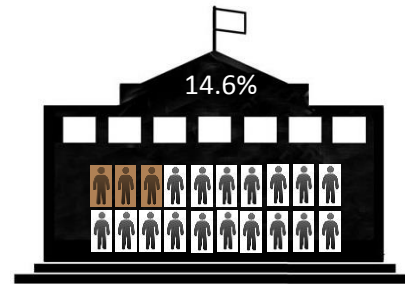
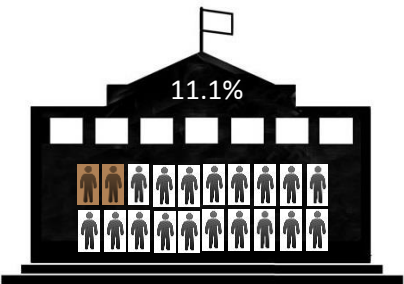
United States

2015

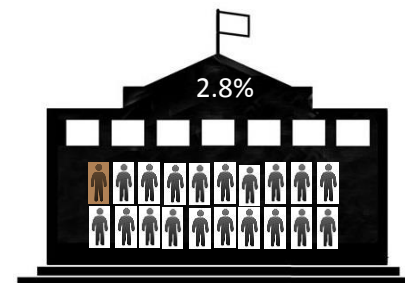
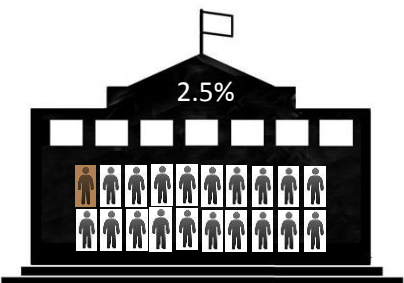


Within 12 months prior to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, the percent of high school students who . . .

Seriously considered suicide



Made a suicide plan



Attempted suicide and were medically treated

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
1991-2015 High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data.
Retrieved from <http://nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/>