



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

HUMAN SERVICE CENTER - FSUS LOCATION

MENTAL HEALTH INFO FOR PARENTS:

SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

How it affects your child and how you can help

About Teen Suicide

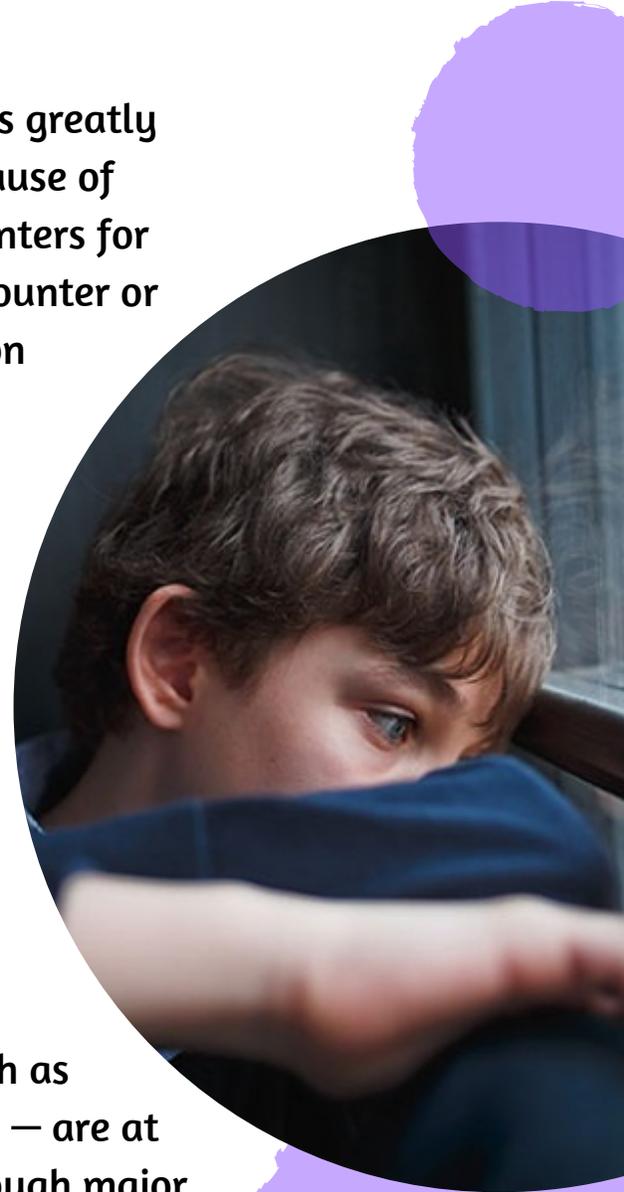
The rate of suicides and suicide attempts increases greatly during adolescence. Suicide is the third-leading cause of death for 15- to 24-year-olds, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Over the counter or prescription drugs and use of firearms are common methods used in suicide attempts.

Boys vs. Girls

Suicide rates differ between boys and girls. Girls think about and attempt suicide about twice as often as boys and tend to attempt suicide by overdosing on drugs or cutting themselves. Yet boys die by suicide about four times as often girls, perhaps because they tend to use more lethal methods, such as firearms, hanging, or jumping from heights.

Which teens are at-risk?

Young people with mental health problems — such as anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, or insomnia — are at higher risk for suicidal thoughts. Teens going through major life changes (parents' divorce, moving, a parent leaving home due to military service or parental separation, financial changes) and those who are victims of bullying are at greater risk of suicidal thoughts.



Factors that increase the risk of suicide include:

- a psychological disorder like depression, bipolar disorder, substance use
- feelings of distress, irritability, or agitation
- feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness
- a previous suicide attempt
- a family history of depression or suicide
- emotional, physical, or sexual abuse
- lack of a support network or feelings of social isolation
- dealing with bisexuality or homosexuality in an unsupportive family or community or hostile school environment

Warning Signs

- talking about death
- feeling hopeless or guilty
- social isolation
- writing about death
- giving away possessions
- loss of interest in school
- loss of interest in favorite things
- trouble concentrating
- eating or sleeping changes
- risk-taking behaviors

What can parents do?



Learn about and pay attention to warning signs



See warning signs as serious, not as "attention-seeking". If children are ignored when seeking attention, it may increase the chance of them harming themselves (or worse).

For more information, visit:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/suicide.html?ref=search>

<https://www.mentalhealth.gov/what-to-look-for/suicidal-behavior>

<https://afsp.org/campaigns/talk-about-mental-health-awareness/teens-and-suicide-what-parents-should-know/>

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/emotional-problems/Pages/Ten-Things-Parents-Can-Do-to-Prevent-Suicide.aspx>

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/mental-health-resources/preventing-youth-suicide/preventing-youth-suicide-tips-for-parents-and-educators>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24-7): 1-800-273-8255