Suicide: An Overview

**What is suicide?**

"Death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior" (Crosby, Ortega, Melanson, 2011).

**Who is at risk of suicide?**

Suicide is a public health priority and occurs across all demographic groups. It is one of the leading causes of death across characteristics such as age, sex, and race.

According to the CDC, there are groups of people who are at higher risk of dying by suicide (meaning that the rate of suicide in these groups is higher than the U.S. general population):

- Men, especially those who are white or American Indian/Alaska Native
- Middle Aged Adults
- LGBTQ Individuals
- Veterans
- People living in rural areas
- Adults aged 75 years and older

**How common are suicidal thoughts, plans, and attempts?**

According to the 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health:

- Among adults aged 18 or older:
  - 4.9% had serious thoughts of suicide
  - 1.3% made a suicide plan
  - 0.5% attempted suicide in the past year

- Among adolescents aged 12 to 17:
  - 12.0% had serious thoughts of suicide,
  - 5.3% made a suicide plan
  - 2.5% attempted suicide in the past year

**What is the rate of suicide?**

2019 Deaths Attributable to Suicide

America's Health Rankings, 2021

- Delaware: 11.4 per 100,000
- United States: 14.5 per 100,000

**What are the warning signs?**

Not all people who die by suicide will display all of the warning signs or even the same ones, but some indications of risk are...

- Talking about wanting to kill themselves
- Hopelessness
- Withdrawal
- Looking for access to lethal means
- Increasingly impulsive or reckless behavior
# Suicide Prevention: Resources

*Interactive PDF: select underlined words for more information / resources.

## To Learn More:

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center
- American Association of Suicidology
- CDC: Suicide Prevention
- Crisis Text Line: Trends
- The Trevor Project: Talking About Suicide
- NCOA: Suicide and Older Adults
- Seize the Awkward

## Prevention is Possible:

- Create intentional communities of hope and support
- Promote access to quality mental health resources and care
- Encourage the development of healthy coping skills
- Intervene Early, Consistently, and Appropriately
- Create Safe Spaces - Online & In Person
- Start the conversation
- Work to reduce stigma
- Identify social drivers of health that put people at disproportionate risk

## If you, or someone you know, is in need of immediate help:

- Call or Text: 988
  - https://988lifeline.org/talk-to-someone-now/
- Línea de Prevención del Suicidio y Crisis
  - 1-888-628-9454
- For TTY Users:
  - Use your preferred relay service or dial 711 then 988.

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