

GET INVOLVED!¹⁵

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Houston Department of Health and Human Services
<http://www.houstontx.gov/health/>

CDC—Suicide Prevention
<http://cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide>

Crisis Intervention of Houston
<http://www.crisishotline.org/>

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance Houston (DBSA)
<http://www.dbsahouston.org/>

It Gets Better Project
<http://www.itgetsbetter.org>

Mental Health of America Houston
<http://www.mhahouston.org/forms/contact-mental-health-america-houston/>

Mental Health & Mental Retardation of Harris County
<http://www.mhmraofharriscounty.org/>

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Greater Houston
<http://www.namigreaterhouston.org>

The Montrose Center
<http://www.montrosecounselingcenter.org/>

Texas Suicide Prevention
<http://www.texasuicideprevention.org/>

U.S Department of Health and Human Services Office of Adolescent Health
<http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/adolescent-health-topics/index.html>

Youth

- Try to separate your emotions from your actions.
- Understand that there are other available options.
- Tell a person that you are having suicidal thoughts.

Parent

- Never shrug off threats of suicide.
- Don't let your youth's mental health disorder snowball.
- Don't be afraid to seek professional help.
- If firearms are at home, they should be locked away and out of the youths access.

School Personnel

- Be alert to problems that increase suicide risk.
- Reach out to students who may be at risk for suicide.
- Consider becoming involved in a school wide suicide prevention program.

Community

- Participate in local efforts to create effective partnerships and implement evidence-based programs to address adolescent mental health and suicide health issues.

References and More!

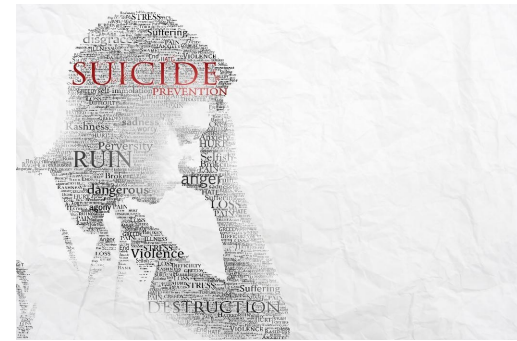
Please visit <http://www.houstontx.gov/health/hdhhs-profiles> for a full list of references.

Other Titles in this Series:

- Teen Pregnancy & Prevention
- Youth Sexual Health/STIs/HIV
- Youth Mental Health
- Youth Violence Prevention
- Teen Dating Violence Prevention
- Youth Immunizations
- Youth Obesity & Prevention
- Youth Homelessness
- Youth Substance Abuse & Prevention
- Youth Bullying & Prevention
- Overall Summary of Teen Health Issues

For more information, please contact Adolescent Health and Injury Prevention (AHIP) via the Houston Youth Voice, Health, Safety Coalition at: 4youthvoice@houstontx.gov
 Facebook: 4youthvoicehouston Twitter: @4youthvoice

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YOUTH IN HOUSTON & HARRIS COUNTY^{1,3}

Population*
 Houston: 601,918 (29%)
 Harris County: 1,263,889 (31%)

Poverty
 Children under 18 living below poverty level:
 Houston: 35.3%
 Harris County: 27.4%

Education
 High School Graduates (ages 18-24):
 Houston: 29.3%
 Harris County: 30.5%

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT OF YOUTH^{†14}

Below is a snapshot of the demographics for youth living in Houston and Harris County.

Gender
 Houston: Male: 51% Female: 49%
 Harris County: Male: 51% Female: 49%

Age
 Houston: Under 5 years: 28% 5 to 9 years: 25% 10 to 14 years: 23% 15 to 19 years: 24%
 Harris County: 27% 25% 24% 24%

Race/Ethnicity
 Harris County: Hispanic: 51% White: 23% Black: 19% Other: 7%

* Percentages (youth under the age of 19) are representative of the total Houston/Harris County population.
 † As of 2010, percentages are based on total population of Houston and/or Harris County under the age of 19.



Adolescent Health and Injury Prevention (AHIP)

YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION

Profile of the City of Houston & Harris County, Texas

From 2008 - 2010, the number of suicides in the U.S. has been more than twice that of homicides.³ Suicide is the third leading cause of death for people 15-24 years old in the U.S. and the second in the state of Texas for this same age group.⁶ In 2012 Harris County had 62 deaths by suicide in youth aged 15-24 years old, the largest number in the state.⁷ Suicide is everyone's problem and learning the warning signs of suicide and how to respond to them appropriately can save someone's life.

Among young adults ages 15 to 24 years old, there are approximately 100-200 attempts for every completed suicide.⁴

Suicide accounts for 20% of all deaths annually among 15-25 year olds.⁸

On average, females attempt suicide more than males. However, males die from suicide at a higher rate (4x).⁶

The estimated number of people hospitalized for self-inflicted injuries increased from 155,000 in 2009 to 224,000 in 2011.⁵

Nonfatal, self-inflicted injuries result in an estimated \$6.5 billion in combined medical and work loss costs.⁸

Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS): Houston Data⁹

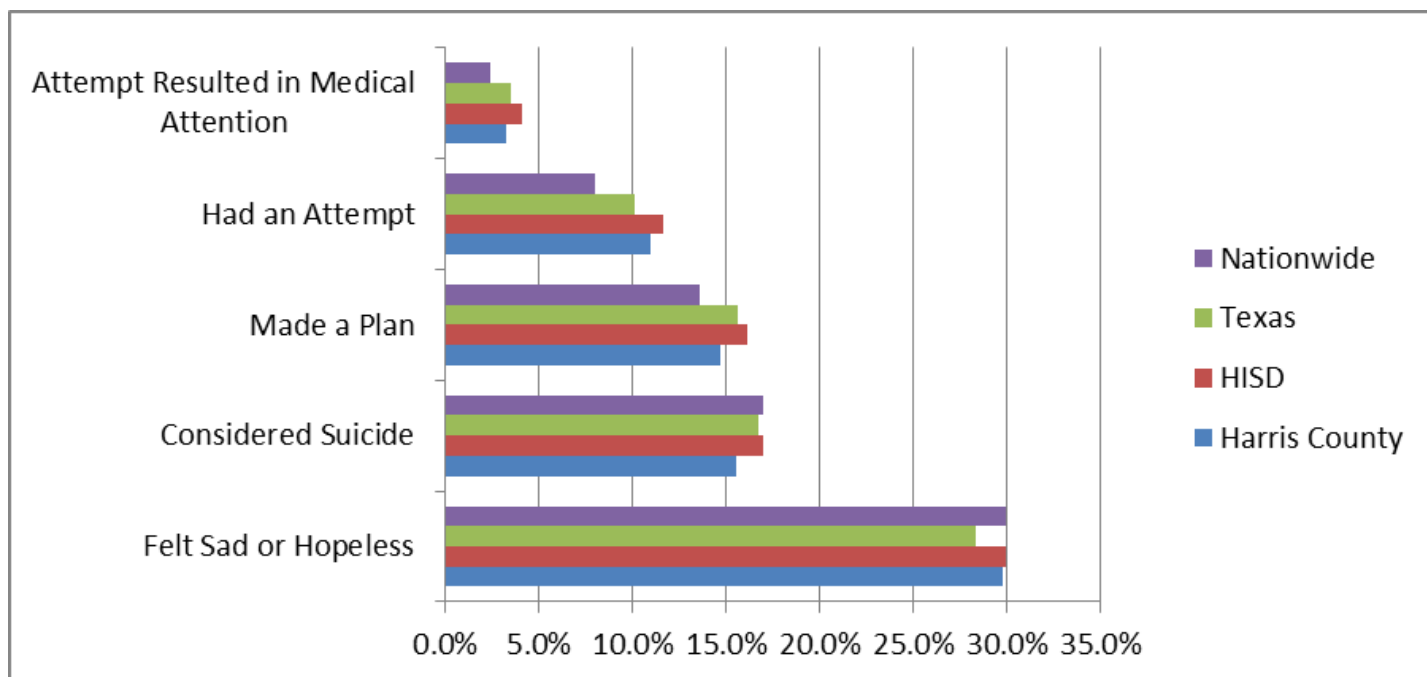
In 2013, **29.9%** of public high school students felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities.

17.0% of public high school students had seriously considered attempting suicide during the 12 months before the survey.

11.6% of public high school students had attempted suicide one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.

No complete or accurate count is kept of suicide attempts in the U.S.; however, the CDC gathers data each year from hospitals on non-fatal injuries resulting from self-harm behavior.¹⁰

SUICIDE RATES¹⁰



WHAT WORKS: EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS

Evidence-based programs have undergone rigorous evaluation and have the potential to be applied to various settings. Below are some examples of these types of programs for suicide and suicide attempts among youth.

Program	What Is It?	Website
SOS Signs of Suicide	SOS Signs of Suicide is a secondary school-based suicide prevention program that includes screening and education. Students are screened for depression and suicide risk and referred for professional help as indicated.	www.mentalhealthscreening.org/highschool/
Model Adolescent Suicide Prevention Program	The Model Adolescent Suicide Prevention Program (MASPP) is a public health-oriented suicidal-behavior prevention and intervention program. The goals of the program are to reduce the incidence of adolescent suicides and suicide attempts through community education about suicide and related behavioral issues, such as child abuse and neglect, family violence, trauma, and alcohol and substance abuse.	http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=251
Online Gatekeeper training for Texas School Faculty	An online, interactive gatekeeper training program that prepares professionals (educators, medical professionals etc.) to identify, approach, and refer youth who are exhibiting signs of psychological distress such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicidal ideation.	Kognito At-Risk Online Trainings ⁹ - http://www.kognito.com/products/ * Free for Texas Middle, High and College Educators www.texasuicideprevention.org/training/educators-and-schools-online-training/
Lifelines Curriculum	Lifelines is a comprehensive school-wide suicide prevention program for middle and high school students. The goal of Lifelines is to promote a caring, competent school community in which help seeking is encouraged and modeled and suicide behavior is recognized as an issue that cannot be kept secret.	http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=37

WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE¹¹

1. Preoccupation with death and dying
2. Drastic changes in behavior or personality
3. A recent severe loss (such as a relationship) or threat of a loss
4. Unexpected preparations for death such as making out a will
5. Giving away prized possessions
6. A previous suicide attempt
7. Uncharacteristic impulsiveness, recklessness, or risk-taking
8. Loss of interest in personal appearance
9. Increased use of alcohol or drugs
10. Sense of hopelessness about the future

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS¹²

What is the most frequent cause of suicide?

While there is no single cause that will lead to a suicide, **at least 90 percent of all people who died by suicide were suffering from a mental illness at the time, most often depression.**

People who are impulsive, or who use alcohol and drugs, are also at higher risk.⁶

If I suspect that someone I know is thinking about suicide, should I ask them?

Yes, asking someone directly if they ever think of suicide lets them know that you take the situation seriously and want to help. It may be a real relief to someone to know that it's all right to talk about it openly.⁷

SUICIDE IS PREVENTABLE!

Suicide is the single most preventable form of death. Reaching out to someone and offering hope to them in their time of seemingly hopeless state can save someone's life.

“Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of, but stigma and bias shame us all.” — Former President Bill Clinton

Recommendations:

- Encourage community wide training in suicide prevention and mental health treatment.
- Encourage organizations to become active in suicide prevention by participating in education and outreach efforts.
- Support events sponsored by local mental health agencies.
- If concerned about someone who you think might be suicidal don't wait ASK the QUESTION.

Policy Implications:^{13,14}

Expand youth awareness and access to mental health services and support.

Increase funding for youth-service professionals to receive training on recognizing suicide risk factors, and how to intervene when recognized.

Texas House Bill 1386 states each Texas school district shall have a district improvement plan developed, evaluated, and revised annually by the superintendent with the assistance of the district-level committee to describe methods for addressing the needs of students for special programs, including suicide prevention programs.¹⁰