


National Suicide Prevention & Awareness Month



September 2021

Comprehensive Guide
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Introduction

Overview and Guide

National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month is recognized annually by mental health organizations, advocates, survivors, and communities to bring awareness to the prevalence and effects of suicide in the U.S. This resource guide, created by 4Teen24, includes information gathered from various organizations, efforts, and studies. You will find accessible resources, information to help inform and encourage discussion about suicide prevention, and more. Below, you can navigate the table of contents to browse the guide! We encourage you to share this information with your friends and community members and be a part of working towards a world without suicide.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death in people ages 10 to 34, with someone dying by suicide roughly every 11 minutes in the U.S. The statistics of suicide are alarming, and the prominence in our society is even more terrifying. Roughly 50% of people will know someone who died by suicide in their lifetime. For these reasons and many more, it is so important to know the signs and how to help someone who might be struggling.

By reading and sharing this guide, you are actively helping to educate yourself and others about suicide prevention and awareness. Thank you for being a part of our mission, recognizing its' value, and helping to create a world without suicide.

About Suicide Prevention & Awareness Month

September is recognized annually as National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. Throughout the month, organizations and advocates across the U.S. use their platforms to educate their communities and those around them about the prevalence and effects that suicide has on our world. This education includes how to recognize signs of suicidal behaviors and ideation, the ways our world is impacted by suicide, and how to intervene in important and time-sensitive situations. Furthermore, September is a time for people to share their own experiences, helping to break the stigma surrounding this tough conversation.

In the Past...

In 2008, September was officially declared National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month for the first time.

However, National Suicide Prevention Week and National Suicide Prevention Day have been recognized for close to 50 years.

The theme for this year is “Together for Mental Health”, focusing on coming together to advocate for improved mental health care for all communities in our country, but especially for those with serious mental illnesses and in underprivileged communities.



The Suicide Prevention colors are teal and purple.



The Suicide Prevention symbol is a semicolon.



The yellow ribbon represents teen suicide prevention.



Understanding Suicide

KNOW THE NUMBERS

Suicide and Prevention Statistics

4teen24.org



For every completed suicide, there are 25 attempts.



Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for people aged 15-24 in the US.



93% of adults surveyed by the AFSP believe that suicide is preventable.



There is one suicide every 11 minutes in the US.



Only half of all Americans experiencing an episode of depression will receive treatment.

Sources: CDC, AFSP, NAMI

More Numbers and Information



The overall suicide rate has increased 35% since 1999.



46% of people who die by suicide were previously diagnosed with a mental health condition.



On average, there are 132 suicides per day in the U.S. This would be similar to one commercial airplane crashing daily, killing everyone on board.



LGBTQ+ youth are 4x more likely to attempt suicide than straight youth. Transgender people are 12x more likely to attempt suicide than the general population.



18.8% of high school students in the U.S. experience serious thoughts of suicide.



Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death overall in the U.S.

Warning Signs

Factors such as depression, substance abuse, or other untreated mental illnesses may leave someone more predisposed to suicidal thoughts. However, there is no single cause or precursor to suicide, making it extremely important to understand what different warning signs may look like. Below is a list of some examples.

Indicators that the person may be in danger should not be taken lightly. It is important to take all warning signs seriously. If you believe someone is immediately thinking about attempting suicide, it is vital to call 911.

Verbal:

- Talking about wanting to end their life
- Expressing a feeling of hopelessness or believing they have no purpose
- Talking about feeling trapped, wanting to escape the pain they are feeling

Emotional:

- Severe sadness
- Extreme mood swings
- Hopelessness
- Unexpected rage
- Sudden calmness

Behavioral:

- Increased use of drugs and/or alcohol
- Giving away personal belongings
- Acting anxious, agitated, or reckless
- Withdrawing from activities they previously were interested in
- Sleeping too much or too little



Call 911 immediately if you witness any of the following:

- Someone threatening suicide, talking about wanting to die especially if they have a weapon
- Searching for ways to kill themselves, either by searching online or physically trying to obtain lethal tools
- Posting about suicide online or on social media, communicating their intent to end their life
- Saying goodbye to family and friends

If you do not believe the person is in urgent danger, reach out to a local mental healthcare provider or doctor to ensure the proper steps are taken to get the person the help they need.

Risk Factors

Though these risks do not fully predict a suicide, they are factors that can leave someone more susceptible to suicidal thoughts, ideations, and attempts.

- Mental disorder diagnosis, particularly mood disorders, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, and some personality disorders
- History of alcohol and/or substance abuse disorders
- History of trauma or abuse
- Previous suicide attempt(s)
- Impulsiveness or aggressive tendencies
- Family history of suicide
- Being exposed to another person's suicide (in real life or in media)
- Recent job loss or financial struggle
- Recent breakup or loss of relationship
- Sudden stressful or traumatic situation
- Local clusters of suicides
- Major physical or chronic illness
- Lack of social support, sense of isolation
- Lack of access to affordable and accessible mental healthcare
- Easy access to lethal means
- Stigma associated with asking for help
- Cultural or religious beliefs



Resources

If you, or anyone, is in immediate danger, dial 911.

Crisis Hotlines

National Alliance on Mental Illness- 1-800-950-6264 or text 'NAMI' to
741-741

National Suicide Prevention Hotline- 1-800-273-8255

Trevor Project- 1-866-488-7386

Dallas Crisis Hotline- 1-214-828-1000

Online Resources

NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness

<https://www.nami.org/>

NIMH, National Institute of Mental Health

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health>

Help Yourself, Help Others- Online Screening Tools

<https://www.helpyourselfhelpothers.org/>

Grant Halliburton Foundation, Resources for Teens

<https://www.granthalliburton.org/forteens>

The Trevor Project for LGBTQ+ Youth

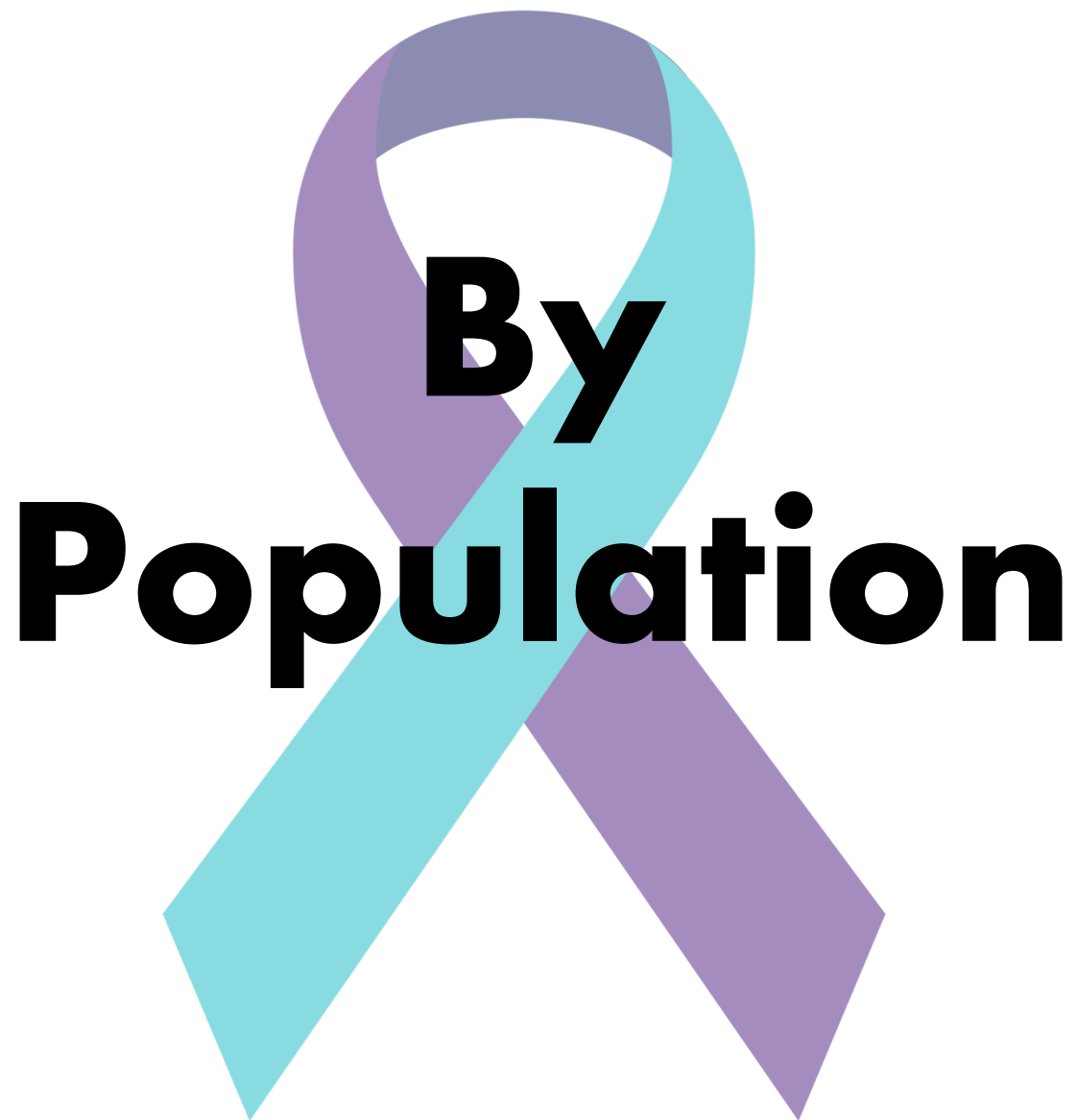
<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

Minority Mental Health, Mental Health America

<https://www.mhanational.org/minority-mental-health>

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

<https://www.afsp.org>



Male Suicide

Men are less likely to seek out therapy or help for topics such as depression, substance abuse, stressful events, and suicidal thoughts. This is largely believed to be due to the stigma around men's mental health created and perpetuated by social and gender norms. However, men experience mental illness and suicide attempts at an alarming rate. It is important that men have access to helpful resources and know that help is readily available.



3 out of every 4 suicides are by men.

- The highest rate of suicide is in middle-aged white men.
- White males accounted for 69.38% of all deaths by suicide in 2019.
- Men make up just 31% of talk therapy referrals.
- While women are more likely to experience suicidal thoughts, men are more likely to take their own lives.

Suicide Prevention Resources for Males

Suicide Prevention Resource Center- Men
<https://www.sprc.org/populations/men>

Man Therapy
<https://mantherapy.org>

Men's Mental Health Graphic- Mental Health America
<https://www.mhanational.org/infographic-mental-health-men>

Informative Articles on Gender Disparities and Male Suicide

Differences in Suicide Among Men and Women

<https://www.verywellmind.com/gender-differences-in-suicide-methods-1067508>

Suicide Statistics from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

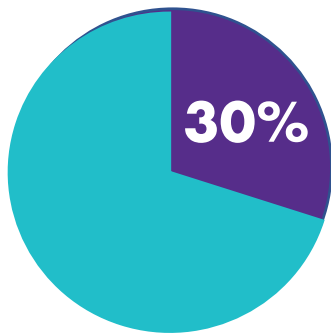
<https://afsp.org/suicide-statistics/>

Understanding Male Suicide

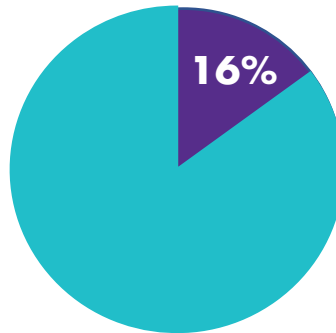
<https://www.verywellmind.com/men-and-suicide-2328492>

Understanding the Role of Race and Ethnicity in Suicide

Though the overall suicide rate may be going down in the U.S., there are various subgroups who are experiencing sharp increases in their rates of suicide. Understanding how race and ethnicity play a role in risk of suicide is key to understanding the impact of suicide overall.



Black
Individuals



Asian or Pacific
Islander Individuals

Percentage increase in suicide rate between 2014 and 2019

Youth + Suicide

Black male youth

⇒ **47%** increased suicide rate

Asian or Pacific Islander male youth

⇒ **40%** increased suicide rate

More Informative Articles About the Role of Race and Ethnicity in Suicide:

How Inequality Endangers Our Mental Health

<https://inequality.org/research/inequality-endangers-mental-health/>

What Can Be Learned from Differing Rates of Suicide Among Groups

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/upshot/suicide-demographic-differences.html>

Black Youth Suicide Epidemic

- ⇒ **2nd** leading cause of death for in Black children (10-14 years old).
- ⇒ **3rd** leading cause of death in Black adolescents (15-19 years old).

Suicide attempts for Black high-school aged youth rose **73%** from 1991-2017.

Suicide rate among Black youth is increasing faster than any other racial/ethnic group

Studies suggest that disparities in mental healthcare accessibility between Black and White youth may be an increased risk factor for suicide.

BIPOC Mental Health Resources by The Mental Health Coalition

This PDF download has links to over 30 resources for the BIPOC community including organizations with an intersectional focus, therapy networks, age-specific groups, and more. Click the link to access this PDF.

<https://www.thementalhealthcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/BIPOC-Mental-Health-Resources.pdf>

LGBTQ+ Community

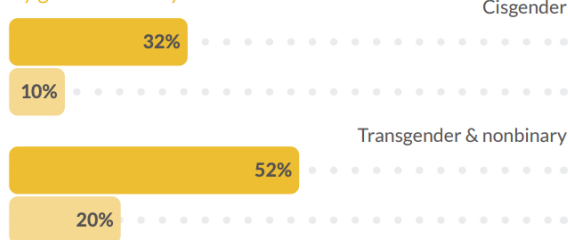
By The Numbers...

- **42%** of LGBTQ youth reported seriously considering attempting suicide in the past 12 months
- **More than 50%** of transgender and nonbinary youth surveyed reported seriously considering attempting suicide in the past 12 months
- Transgender and nonbinary youth who reported having their correct pronouns used and respected by at least one person they lived with reported **half the rate** of suicides
- LGBTQ youth who had access too gender identity affirming spaces reported **lower rates** of suicide
- **62%** of LGBTQ youth reported symptoms consistent with major depressive disorder in the past two week

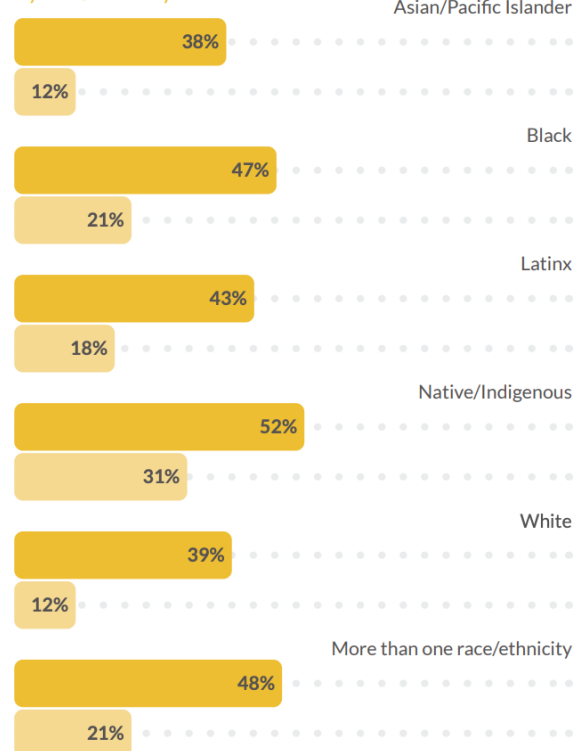
LGBTQ youth who:

● Considered suicide ● Attempted suicide

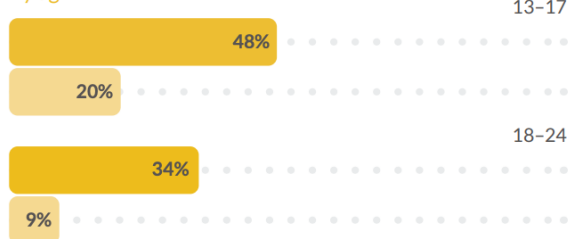
By gender identity



By race/ethnicity



By age



Information and chart via The Trevor Project- National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health 2021

LGBTQ+ Community

Specific Resources for the LGBTQ+ Community

The Trevor Project

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/resources/category/talking-about-suicide/>

Trans Lifeline

877-565-8860

<https://translifeline.org/>

Reach a Counselor- The Trevor Project

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help/>

THE **TREVOR** PROJECT

SELF-CARE GUIDE

 SELF-CARE AT HOME	 SELF-CARE AT SCHOOL	 SELF-CARE IN PUBLIC
 Call the TrevorLifeline at 866-488-7386	 Write down 5 things you're grateful for	 Text "Trevor" to 202-304-1200 Mon-Fri 3pm-10pm EST / Noon-7pm PST
Connect with a safe, supportive community of LGBTQ folks on TrevorSpace.org 	Reach out to a counselor or adult you admire 	Spend time next to nature 
 Login to TrevorChat.org 3pm-10pm EST / Noon-7pm PST	 Identify your feelings; journal what you're going through	 Pick up 2 or 3 natural materials and feel them between your fingers
Do an activity that soothes you 	Share trvr.org/lifeguard with an adult you trust 	Practice repeating kind words to yourself 
 Make an appointment with a therapist	 If you're in class, breathe in and out slowly	 Ask for a glass of water and sip it slowly
Create a self-care box; collect items that relax you 	Observe what's positive around you 	Snack on something mindfully 

For those who do not identify as LGBTQ+ but want to educate themselves further on LGBTQ+ mental health and how you can be supportive...

A Guide to Being an Ally to Transgender and Nonbinary Youth

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/07/Guide-to-Being-an-Ally-to-Transgender-and-Nonbinary-Youth.pdf>

Supporting Black LGBTQ Youth Mental Health

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/resources/article/supporting-black-lgbtq-youth-mental-health/>

References

2021 Partner Guide

<https://www.nami.org/NAMI/media/NAMI-Media/downloads/2021-Partner-Guide.pdf>

QPR Institute

<https://qprinstitute.com/>

How Inequality Endangers Our Mental Health

<https://inequality.org/research/inequality-endangers-mental-health/>

NAMI Suicide

https://www.nami.org/NAMI/media/NAMI-Media/Infographics/NAMI_Suicide_2020_FINAL.pdf

The Trevor Project- National Survey Results 2021

<https://qprinstitute.com/uploads/instructor/The-Trevor-Project-National-Survey-Results-2021.pdf>

Trends in Suicide Rates by Race and Ethnicity in the United States

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2780380>

Suicide Rates for Females and Males by Race and Ethnicity: United States, 1999 and 2017

https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/suicide/rates_1999_2017.htm

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

<https://www.nami.org>

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

<https://www.afsp.org>

Black Mental Health Matters

<https://www.springhealth.com/black-mental-health-matters/>

Understanding Suicide Among Men

<https://www.verywellmind.com/men-and-suicide-2328492>

Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)

<https://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/suicide-prevention-resources-teens>