

CDC Releases Results of the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)

Sponsored by the CDC and state and local education and health agencies, the YRBS measures the prevalence of behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death, disease, and injury among youth. The YRBS has been conducted every two years since 1991. This report summarizes the results of the 2009 national survey, 42 state surveys, and 20 local surveys conducted among students in grades 9-12. Since 1991, the percentage of students who felt sad or hopeless, seriously considered attempting suicide, made a suicide plan, or attempted suicide has decreased. Although students reporting medically treated suicide attempts decreased between 2003 and 2009, the percentage has not substantially changed since 1991.

For the full report visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/ss/ss5905.pdf>

Felt Sad or Hopeless

During the 12 months before the survey, 26.1% of students nationwide had felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities (Table 20). Overall, the prevalence of having felt sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row was higher among female (33.9%) than male (19.1%) students; higher among white female (31.1%), black female (37.5%), and Hispanic female (39.7%) than white male (17.2%), black male (17.9%), and Hispanic male (23.6%) students, respectively; and higher among 9th-grade female (35.8%), 10th-grade female (34.7%), 11th-grade female (35.5%), and 12th-grade female (28.9%) than 9th-grade male (18.6%), 10th-grade male (18.2%), 11th-grade male (19.6%), and 12th-grade male (19.8%) students, respectively. Overall, the prevalence of having felt sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row was higher among black (27.7%) and Hispanic (31.6%) than white (23.7%) students; higher among Hispanic (31.6%) than black (27.7%) students; higher among black female (37.5%) and Hispanic female (39.7%) than white female (31.1%) students; and higher among Hispanic male (23.6%) than white male (17.2%) and black male (17.9%) students. Overall, the prevalence of having felt sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row was higher among 11th-grade (27.3%) than 12th-grade (24.3%) students; and higher among 9th-grade female (35.8%), 10th-grade female (34.7%), and 11th-grade female (35.5%) than 12th-grade female (28.9%) students. Prevalence of having felt sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row ranged from 20.8% to 34.9% across state surveys (median: 27.0%) and from 20.6% to 33.8% across local surveys (median: 28.5%) (Table 21).

Seriously Considered Attempting Suicide

Nationwide, 13.8% of students had seriously considered attempting suicide during the 12 months before the survey (Table 22). Overall, the prevalence of having seriously considered attempting suicide was higher among female (17.4%) than male (10.5%) students; higher among white female (16.1%), black female (18.1%), and Hispanic female (20.2%) than white male (10.5%), black male (7.8%), and Hispanic male (10.7%) students, respectively; and higher among 9th-grade female (20.3%), 10th-grade female (17.2%), 11th-grade female (17.8%), and 12th-grade female (13.6%) than 9th-grade male (10.0%), 10th-grade male (10.0%), 11th-grade male (11.4%), and 12th-grade male (10.5%) students, respectively. Overall, the prevalence of having seriously considered attempting suicide was higher among Hispanic (15.4%) than white (13.1%) and black (13.0%) students; higher among Hispanic female (20.2%) than white female (16.1%) students; and higher among white male (10.5%) than black male (7.8%) students. Overall, the prevalence of having seriously considered attempting suicide was higher among 9th-grade (14.8%) and 11th-

grade (14.5%) than 12th-grade (12.1%) students; higher among 9th-grade female (20.3%) than 10th-grade female (17.2%) and 12th-grade female (13.6%) students; and higher among 10th-grade female (17.2%) and 11th-grade female (17.8%) than 12th-grade female (13.6%) students. Prevalence of having seriously considered attempting suicide ranged from 11.6% to 18.9% across state surveys (median: 14.3%) and from 10.5% to 18.2% across local surveys (median: 13.1%) (Table 23).

Made a Suicide Plan

During the 12 months before the survey, 10.9% of students nationwide had made a plan about how they would attempt suicide (Table 22). Overall, the prevalence of having made a suicide plan was higher among female (13.2%) than male (8.6%) students; higher among white female (12.3%), black female (13.3%), and Hispanic female (15.4%) than white male (8.5%), black male (6.2%), and Hispanic male (9.0%) students, respectively; and higher among 9th-grade female (14.9%), 10th-grade female (14.3%), and 11th-grade female (13.4%) than 9th-grade male (7.3%), 10th-grade male (9.3%), and 11th-grade male (9.4%) students, respectively. Overall, the prevalence of having made a suicide plan was higher among Hispanic (12.2%) than white (10.3%) and black (9.8%) students; higher among Hispanic female (15.4%) than white female (12.3%) students; and higher among white male (8.5%) and Hispanic male (9.0%) than black male (6.2%) students. Overall, the prevalence of having made a suicide plan was higher among 10th-grade (11.7%) than 12th-grade (9.2%) students and higher among 9th-grade female (14.9%), 10th-grade female (14.3%), and 11th-grade female (13.4%) than 12th-grade female (9.6%) students. Prevalence of having made a suicide plan ranged 8.7% to 16.0% across state surveys (median: 11.4%) and from 8.3% to 14.4% across local surveys (median: 10.7%) (Table 23).

Attempted Suicide

Nationwide, 6.3% of students had attempted suicide one or more times during the 12 months before the survey (Table 24). Overall, the prevalence of having attempted suicide was higher among female (8.1%) than male (4.6%) students; higher among white female (6.5%), black female (10.4%), and Hispanic female (11.1%) than white male (3.8%), black male (5.4%), and Hispanic male (5.1%) students, respectively; and higher among 9th-grade female (10.3%), 10th-grade female (8.8%), and 11th-grade female (7.8%) than 9th-grade male (4.5%), 10th-grade male (5.2%), and 11th-grade male (4.7%) students, respectively. Overall, the prevalence of having attempted suicide was higher among black (7.9%) and Hispanic (8.1%) than white (5.0%) students and higher among black female (10.4%) and Hispanic female (11.1%) than white female (6.5%) students. Overall, the prevalence of having attempted suicide was higher among 9th-grade (7.3%), 10th-grade (6.9%), and 11th-grade (6.3%) than 12th-grade (4.2%) students; higher among 9th-grade female (10.3%) than 11th-grade female (7.8%) and 12th-grade female (4.6%) students; and higher among 10th-grade female (8.8%) and 11th-grade female (7.8%) than 12th-grade female (4.6%) students. Prevalence of having attempted suicide ranged from 4.3% to 12.8% across state surveys (median: 7.9%) and from 6.0% to 14.3% across local surveys (median: 9.6%) (Table 25).

Suicide Attempt Treated by a Doctor or Nurse

During the 12 months before the survey, 1.9% of students nationwide had made a suicide attempt that resulted in an injury, poisoning, or an overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse (Table 24). Overall, the prevalence of having made a suicide attempt that resulted in an injury, poisoning, or an overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse was higher among female (2.3%) than male (1.6%) students; higher among white female (2.0%) than white male (1.2%) students; and higher among 9th-grade female (2.8%) than 9th-grade male (1.4%) students. Overall, the prevalence of having made a suicide attempt that resulted in an injury, poisoning, or an overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse was higher among 9th-grade (2.1%),

10th-grade (2.2%), and 11th-grade (2.1%) than 12th-grade (1.2%) students and higher among 9th-grade female (2.8%), 10th-grade female (2.3%), and 11th-grade female (2.6%) than 12th-grade female (1.0%) students. Prevalence of having made a suicide attempt that resulted in an injury, poisoning, or an overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse ranged from 1.6% to 4.9% across state surveys (median: 2.8%) and from 1.6% to 5.9% across local surveys (median: 3.4%) (Table 25).

Bullied on School Property

Nationwide, 19.9% of students had been bullied on school property during the 12 months before the survey (Table 16). Overall, the prevalence of having been bullied on school property was higher among female (21.2%) than male (18.7%) students; higher among white female (23.5%) than white male (19.9%) students; and higher among 11th-grade female (20.5%) and 12th-grade female (15.3%) than 11th-grade male (17.1%) and 12th-grade male (11.8%) students, respectively. Overall, the prevalence of having been bullied on school property was higher among white (21.6%) than black (13.7%) and Hispanic (18.5%) students; higher among Hispanic (18.5%) than black (13.7%) students; higher among white female (23.5%) than black female (15.5%) and Hispanic female (18.9%) students; and higher among white male (19.9%) and Hispanic male (18.0%) than black male (11.9%) students. Overall, the prevalence of having been bullied on school property was higher among 9th-grade (24.5%) than 10th-grade (21.5%), 11th-grade (18.7%), and 12th-grade (13.5%) students; higher among 10th-grade (21.5%) than 11th-grade (18.7%) and 12th-grade (13.5%) students; higher among 11th-grade (18.7%) than 12th-grade (13.5%) students; higher among 9th-grade female (26.0%) than 10th-grade female (22.2%), 11th-grade female (20.5%), and 12th-grade female (15.3%) students; higher among 10th-grade female (22.2%) and 11th-grade female (20.5%) than 12th-grade female (15.3%) students; higher among 9th-grade male (23.3%) and 10th-grade male (20.8%) than 11th-grade male (17.1%) and 12th-grade male (11.8%) students; and higher among 11th-grade male (17.1%) than 12th-grade male (11.8%) students. Prevalence of having been bullied on school property ranged from 13.4% to 24.4% across state surveys (median: 19.4%) and from 9.3% to 20.1% across local surveys (median: 13.0%) (Table 17).

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The percentage of students who felt sad or hopeless did not change significantly during 1999–2007 (28.3%–28.5%) and then decreased during 2007–2009 (28.5%–26.1%). The percentage of students who seriously considered attempting suicide decreased rapidly during 1991–1993 (29.0%–24.1%) and then decreased less rapidly during 1993–2009 (24.1%–13.8%). During 1991–2009, a significant linear decrease occurred in the percentage of students who made a suicide plan (18.6%–10.9%). The percentage of students who attempted suicide did not change significantly during 1991–2001 (7.3%–8.8%) and then decreased during 2001–2009 (8.8%–6.3%). The percentage of students who made a suicide attempt that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse did not change significantly during 1991–2003 (1.7%–2.9%) and then decreased during 2003–2009 (2.9%–1.9%).