



Teen Depression

A Webinar for Teachers
and Other School Personnel



American Foundation
for Suicide Prevention

www.afsp.org

An Overview of Suicide in Teens and Young Adults

Scope of the Problem (2006*)

U.S. population overall

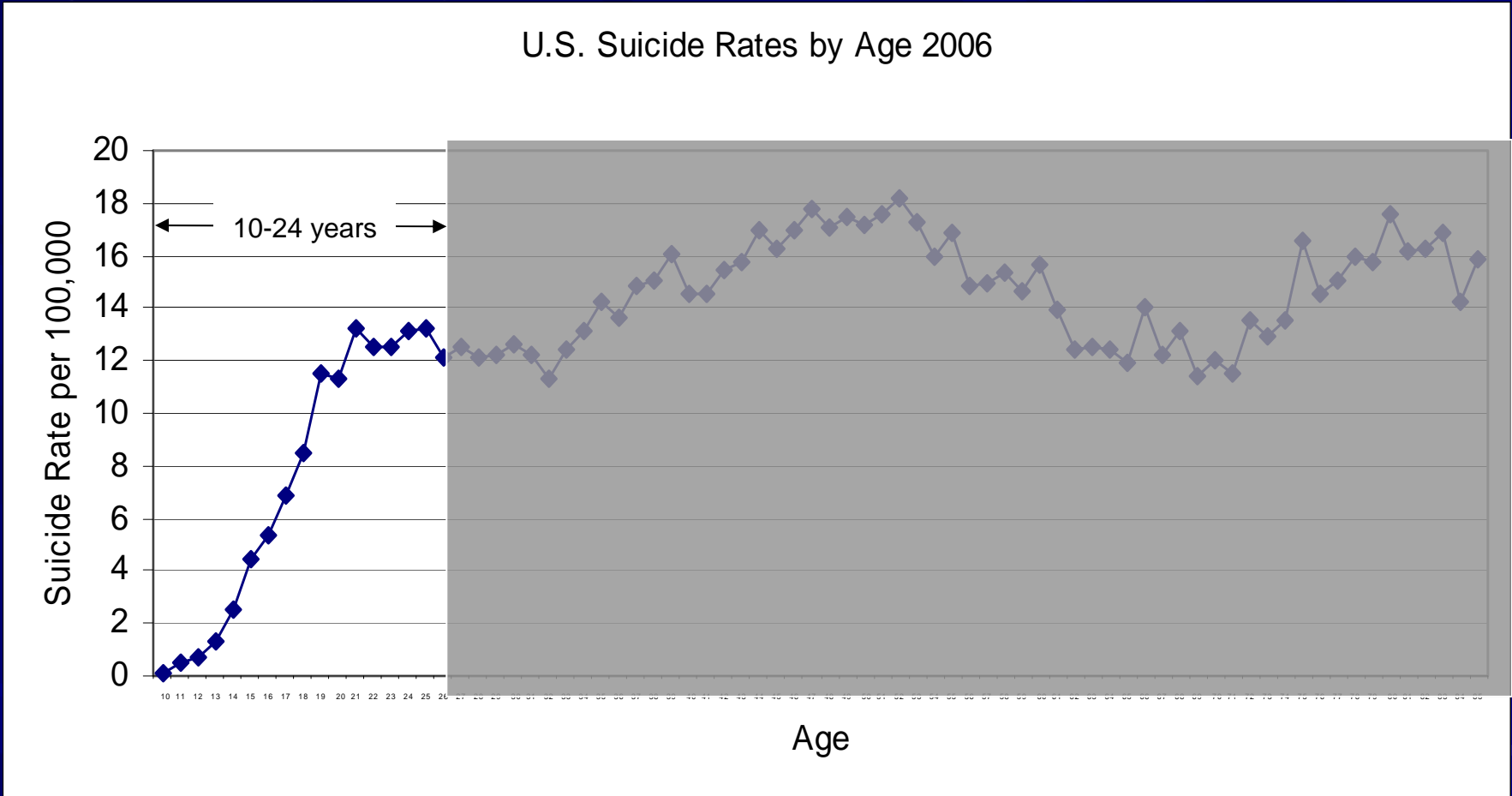
- 33,300 *reported* suicides
- 11 suicides per 100,000 population
- Suicide = 11th leading cause of death

Youth aged 10-24

- 4,405 *reported* suicides
- 14% of total suicides in U.S.
- 7 suicides per 100,000 youth
- Suicide = 3rd leading cause of death (after accidents and homicides)

*latest year for which suicide statistics are currently available

U.S. Suicide Rates, Ages 10-85, 2006

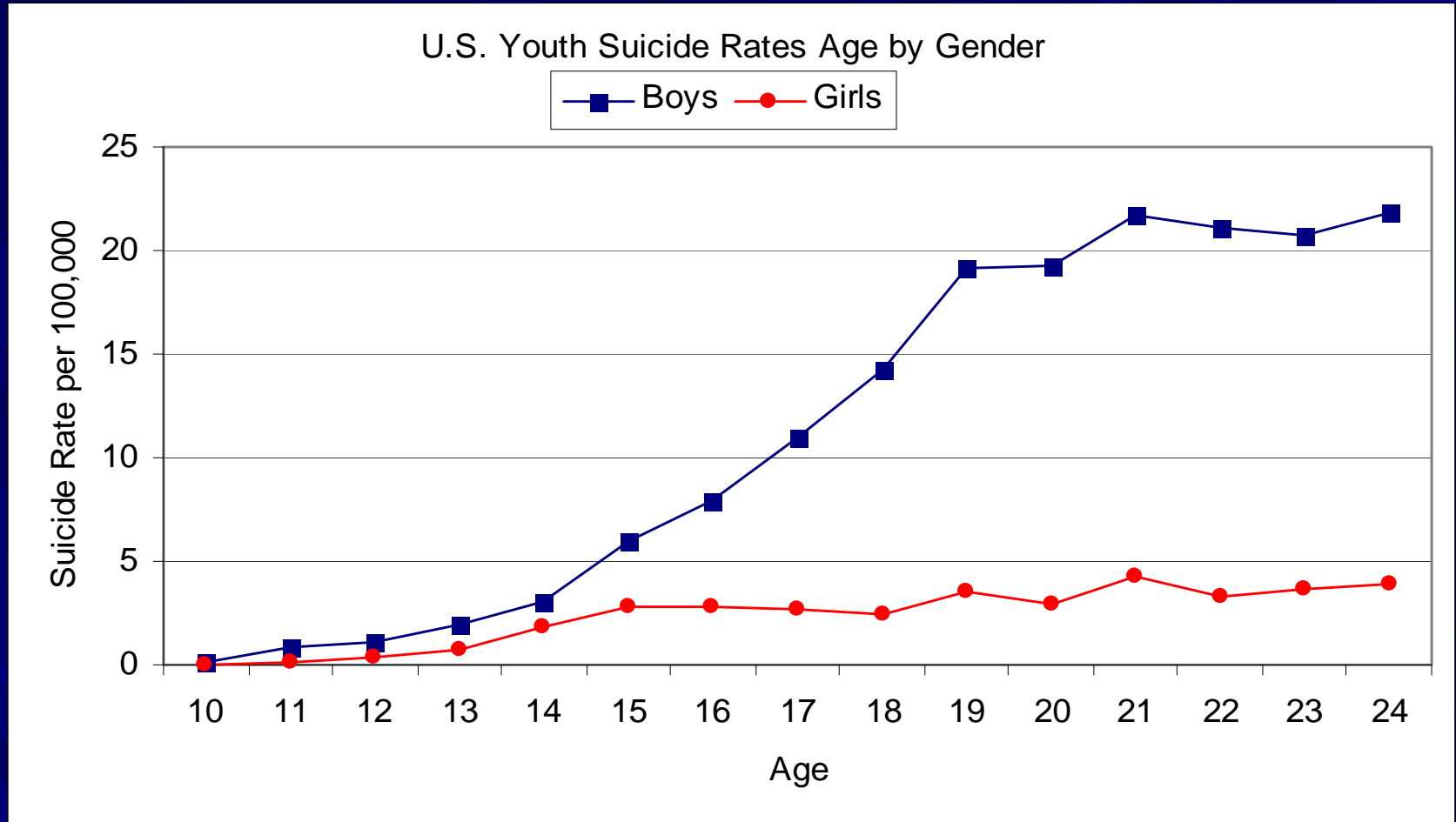


Suicide rates increase markedly during adolescence and young adulthood

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Suicide Rate (2006)</u>
10 to 14	1.1 per 100,000
15 to 19	7.3 per 100,000
20 to 24	12.6 per 100,000

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Youth Suicide Rates for Boys & Girls, 2006



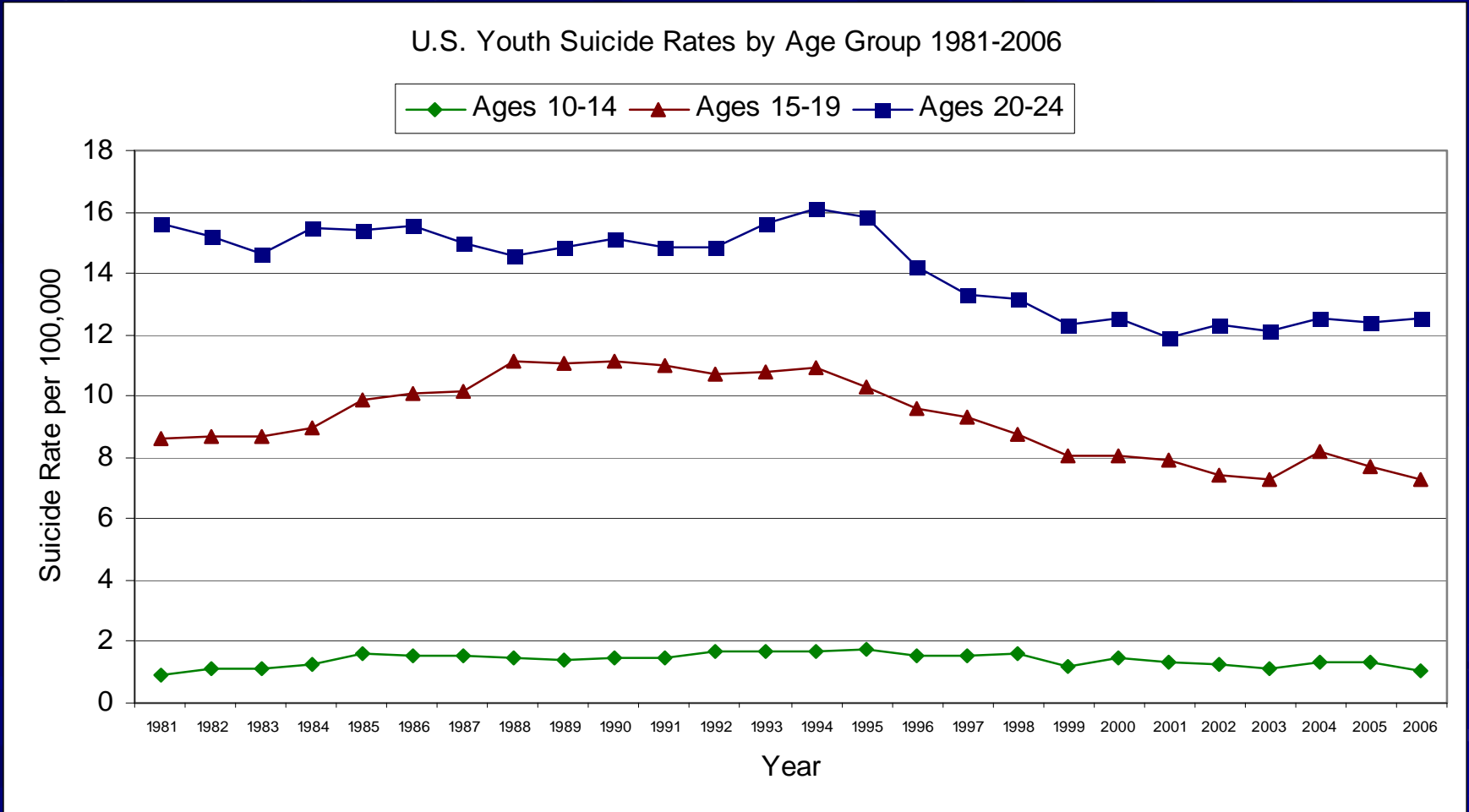


Racial-Ethnic Differences

<u>Group</u>	<u>Suicide Rate (ages 15-24)</u>
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	22.8 per 100,000
White	10.5 per 100,000
Asian/Pacific Islander	8.3 per 100,000
Hispanic	7.5 per 100,000
African American	6.3 per 100,000



Trends in Youth Suicide Rates, 1981-2006



Key Trends

- From the 1950s to 1990, the youth suicide rate increased from 5 per 100,000 youth to 12 per 100,000
- From 1990 to 2003, rate decreased to 6.8
- 2004 - rate increased to 7.3
- From 2004 to 2006, rate decreased slightly to about 7 per 100,000; still higher than 2003 rate
- 2007, 2008, 2009 ???



Suicide Attempts

- 150,000 youth aged 10-24 receive medical care for self-inflicted injuries every year
- This is more than 30x the number who die by suicide
- 9.3% of females and 4.6% of males in grades 9-12 report making a suicide attempt in last 12 months
- Reports of suicide *attempts* are 6x more frequent among youth who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual, than among heterosexual youth; no data on GLB suicide *deaths*

Risk Factors for Youth Suicide and Suicide Attempts

- **Mental disorders**, esp. depression, anxiety and alcohol or drug abuse – up to 90% of youth who die by suicide have one or more disorders, often unrecognized or untreated
- **Lack of mental health treatment**, due to non-availability or unwillingness to get help
- **Stressful situation or loss**, particularly when depression or another disorder is present
- **History of physical or sexual abuse**
- **Family history** of suicide, depression
- **Exposure to suicide**, esp. in other youth

Two Key Targets for Teen Suicide Prevention

- Depression and other mental disorders
 - Goals – de-stigmatize mental disorders; foster early recognition of symptoms and potential risks
- Lack of mental health treatment
 - Goals – increase understanding of treatment, willingness to seek treatment and referrals to treatment by families, schools, physicians



Barriers to Help-Seeking among Distressed Youth

Interviews with families of 49 adolescents who died by suicide consistently found negative beliefs and attitudes prevented the teens from seeking help for mental health problems:

- Believed nothing could help
- Considered help-seeking to be sign of weakness or failure
- Couldn't admit to having problems; denied that anything was wrong
- Was too embarrassed to get help

Source: Moskos, M., Olson, L., Halbern, S. & Gray, D. (2007). Utah Youth Suicide Study: Barriers to Mental Health Treatment for Adolescents. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 37(2), 179-186.



American Foundation
for Suicide Prevention



What Prevents Teens from Seeking Help: Findings from Another Study

- I wouldn't know what to say to parents about my problems
- I believe I can handle my problems on my own
- I'd be afraid of being hospitalized
- I wouldn't know what to say to school counselors or teachers about my problems
- I don't feel close to any adult at school
- I thought the problem would go away

Source: Cigularov, K., Chen, P. Y., Thurber, B. W., & Stallones, L. (2008). What prevents adolescents from seeking help after a suicide prevention program? *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 38(1), 74-86.



American Foundation
for Suicide Prevention



Barriers to Seeking Help for a Depressed or Suicidal Friend

- I'd be worried to make the wrong judgment about my friend
- It's difficult to approach an adult at school to talk about a friend's problems
- I'd be afraid my friend could get hospitalized
- My friend would be angry with me
- My friend most likely doesn't mean it when s/he talks about suicide

Source: Cigularov, K., Chen, P. Y., Thurber, B. W., & Stallones, L. (2008). What prevents adolescents from seeking help after a suicide prevention program? *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 38(1), 74-86.

AFSP's New Film,
More Than Sad: Teen Depression,
Addresses these Research Findings

Goals of the Film

- Educate teens to recognize the signs and symptoms of depression in themselves and others
- Convey that depression is an illness and, like other medical illnesses, responds to specific treatments
- Promote the importance and acceptability of seeking help for oneself or a friend
- Demystify the treatment process by showing how teens can get help, what treatment involves and what it can achieve

A Caveat: The Film is not a Documentary

- The film seeks to serve as a **model** for the effective recognition and treatment of depression in teens
- It depicts **ideal** help-seeking behaviors and **ideal** responses and interventions on the part of school personnel, physicians and mental health professionals
- This may contrast with the experiences of some families who have encountered less than ideal responses while seeking help for their teens

Our hope is that by showing how depression in teens CAN be effectively identified and treated, *More Than Sad* will encourage young people and their families to be persistent in seeking the help they need

We will now view *More Than Sad: Teen Depression*

We look forward to your comments and questions
following the film ...

Take-away Messages from *More Than Sad: Teen Depression*

- Depression is a common problem that can interfere with teens' ability to do well in school, enjoy activities or interact effectively with friends and family
- Depression is an **illness**. It is not a character weakness, or something people bring on themselves, or can change at will
- Depression may develop after a particularly upsetting event or situation, but it can also occur in teens who don't seem to have any reason to be depressed
- Depression usually doesn't go away on its own, and if left untreated, may lead to serious consequences, including suicide
- Treatment for depression is available, and treatment works. If you are depressed, ask for help. If someone you know is depressed, encourage them to get help



How Can Teachers and Other School Personnel use *More Than Sad*?

- Show the film to students in classes or other small groups
- Include a counselor, school nurse, psychologist or social worker for support, where possible
- Consider including someone who has had first-hand experience with depression (e.g., a parent of a depressed teen, a college student who has struggled with depression)
- Become familiar with your school's crisis management plan and procedures for referring students who need individual attention during or following the film
- Be prepared to provide information to students about how they can find help for depression, consistent with school policies

To Assist in Using *More than Sad: Teen Depression...*

- The DVD is packaged with a Facilitator Guide that includes:
 - Instructional material on teen depression and depression treatment
 - Students' Frequently Asked Questions, with detailed responses
 - Step-by-step lesson plan with lecture material, handouts, discussion questions and pre-post quiz
- All materials can also be downloaded from the DVD and from the film's website, MoreThanSad.org

Acknowledgements

More Than Sad: Teen Depression was produced with the generous support of:

- New York State Office of Mental Health
- Leon Lowenstein Foundation
- Rodd D. Brickell Foundation
- Scott R. Jackowitz Memorial Fund
- Keith Milano Memorial fund
- Foundation for Fairer Capitalism
- AFSP's *Out of the Darkness* walks
- Special event of the AFSP-Long Island, NY Chapter

AFSP is also grateful for the support of the Webinar on Teen Depression and Suicide Risk through an educational grant from Forest Laboratories, Inc.

The webinar is now open for your
comments and questions