

High Rates of Suicide in NM

New Mexico's suicide rates for youth ages 15 to 24 (19.7/100,000) have historically been nearly twice the national rate, ranking fourth highest among the states.¹ Suicide is the second leading cause of death among New Mexico youth.² In 2007, 14.3% of adolescents said they had attempted suicide, and almost 1 out of 5 said that they had seriously considered killing themselves in the previous 12 months.³

What to Do and the Role of School-Based Health Centers

People who consider suicide usually feel hopeless about problems and situations they believe are inescapable and over which they have no control. Those who become suicidal need your help to remain safe and receive therapeutic intervention, to realize their crisis is temporary, yet death is permanent. To help students through crises, SBHCs offer safety, crisis counseling, and urgent referrals for further help. This can prevent suicide and other harmful acts. School and SBHC behavioral health and health care providers often work together to help students in crisis, according to plans developed by SBHCs in conjunction with their school district's crisis plan.

Support Talk Lines

Agora **1-866-HELP-1-NM (1-866-435-7166)**
Crisis Assistance Listening Line (The Call) **1-866-314-6847**
Trevor LGBT Help Line **1-866-4-U-Trevor (866-488-7386)**

Crisis Line Numbers

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**
Santa Fe Crisis Response **505-820-6333**

At a young age, children know that when their clothes are on fire they are to stop, drop, and roll. They know to buckle their seat belts when getting into a car. They know not to talk to strangers. We have all learned how to say no to drugs, to practice safe sex, and not to drink and drive. But I have never learned what to do when I am feeling depressed. We know to call 911 in the event of an emergency, but I have never learned the number to call when I feel like my thoughts are my own worst enemy.

*Zach - age 23, who buried
two friends who died by suicide*

Warning Signs

- Feeling depressed/"blue" (purposelessness)
- Talking about death or the afterlife when feeling sad or bored
- Aggressive or disruptive behaviors - rage
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Not interested in or enjoying activities that were once enjoyed
- Feeling hopeless and rejected
- Giving away possessions
- Displaying sudden cheerfulness (resolved to committing suicide as a final solution to problems)
- Developing a plan

Risk Factors

- Drug and alcohol use
- Issues around sexual and gender identity (LGBT)
- Previous suicide attempt(s) or family history of suicide
- Family loss, abuse or major problems with parents
- Parents separating or divorced
- Victim of violence (including sexual assault, abuse by parent, or dating violence)
- Break-up with a boyfriend or girlfriend
- Unexpected/unplanned pregnancy

Resources

To Promote Healthy Resilient Youth

- 40 Developmental Assets: <http://www.search-institute.org/assets/>

To Implement Youth Suicide Prevention at Your School

- University of South Florida Youth Suicide Prevention School-Based Guide: <http://theguide.fmhi.usf.edu/>
- Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention Toolkit: <http://www.mhawisconsin.org/content/introductiontoolkit.asp>

For More Information

- New Mexico Suicide Prevention Coalition: 505-401-9382, <http://www.nmsuicideprevention.org>
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center: <http://www.sprc.org/>
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <http://www.afsp.org/>

References

1. Suicide Statistics at Suicide.org: <http://www.suicide.org/suicide-statistics.html>
2. State of NM 2006 Comprehensive Strategic Health Plan: <http://www.nmhealth.org/pdf/NMCSHP.pdf>
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/pdf/states/yrbs07_new_mexico_us_comparison.pdf