

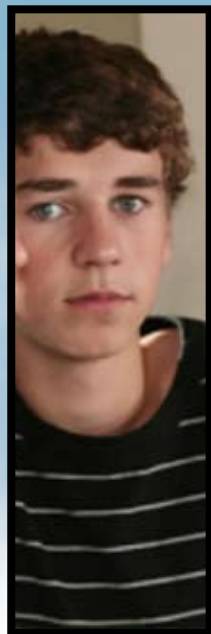
TEEN SUICIDE



RESOURCE TOOLKIT

STATISTICS

In **2009**, in Canada, there were **145** male suicides (and a **12.6** per **100,000** suicide rate) in the **15-19** age range. For females, there were a total of **57** deaths (and a corresponding suicide rate of **5.2** per **100,000**). These numbers rise sharply (especially for males) when they reach their twenties and beyond. Males reach a peak rate of **27** per **100,000** in the **40-44** age range with a recorded number of **337** deaths in **2009**. See Statistics Canada for recent figures: <http://bit.ly/LgmTuO>.



In Canada, suicide accounts for **24 percent** of all deaths among **15-24** year olds.

Boys die by suicide **two to three** times more often than girls.



Teens are admitted to hospital for suicide attempts more than any other age group; Some accounts suggest as many as **one quarter** of all admissions are for teens (<http://bit.ly/JnVjG3>).



HISTORICAL

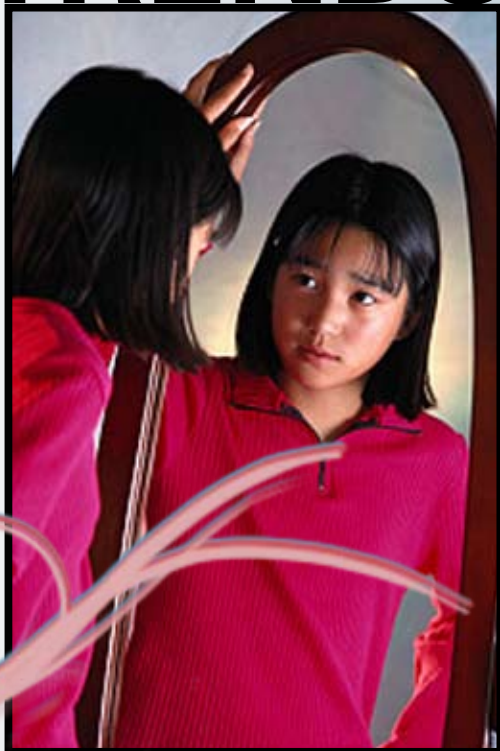
According to a longitudinal study published by the Canadian Medical Association Journal (<http://bit.ly/H4nQzW>) which looks at suicides by boys and girls over a thirty year period (1980-2008), there has been a modest decline in suicide for boys aged 10-19 and a slight rise for girls in the same age range.

Girls have always attempted suicide more frequently than boys. But there is reason to believe that girls are increasingly using more lethal means, like hanging, when attempting suicide, which could account for the increase in suicidal deaths.

TRENDS

However, the number of suicides for both boys and girls in Canada has been relatively consistent in the last **ten years** and

suicide remains the **second leading cause of death** for young people in Canada.



RISK FACTORS

- **Mental illness**
- **Substance abuse**
- **Physical or sexual abuse**
- **Exposure to a friend or family member's suicidal behaviour**
- **Ambivalence of sexual orientation**
- **Feelings of hopelessness**
- **Access to lethal means of suicide**
- **Homelessness**
- **Non-lethal self-injury or previous suicide attempts**



PROTECTIVE FACTORS



Positive school environment

Family connectedness

Self-esteem

Peer support


Centre for Suicide Prevention, <http://bit.ly/L5qR36>

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SUICIDE

IDEATION

Suicidal ideation
(thoughts of suicide)
can occur in children
as early as age 8 or 9.



It surfaces more often in the teenage years. Ideation is a principal warning sign for future suicidal behaviour, especially suicide attempts. It is imperative that youth-at-risk get the attention and help they need as early as possible. Strategies proven effective in reducing suicide rates, such as early intervention for youth with mental health disorders, are often not available (<http://bit.ly/JnVjG3>)

A priority at both the national and provincial levels should be to get vulnerable youth the medical and psychological attention they need.

CYBERBULLYING

A NEW THREAT FOR YOUTH AT RISK

(Excerpt from Cyber bullying by Suzanne McLeod)

Social media sites, such as Facebook, mySpace, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Tumblr, Messenger and cell phone texting, have become a large part of the way in which youth today communicate and socialize (Brown, Cassidy, Jackson, 2006).

From this, cyber-bullying has become an increasing reality among adolescents. Research shows that youth who have been bullied are at a higher risk for suicide ideation and thoughts, attempts and completed suicides. Bullying contributes to depression, decreased self-worth, hopelessness and loneliness (Hinduja, Patchin, n.d.).

Those who become “cyber-bullies” feel that they are able to remain anonymous, giving them a sense of power and control that allows them to do and say things they would not normally say in the “real world.” In cyberspace, literally hundreds of perpetrators can get involved in the abuse (Hinduja, Patchin, n.d.). Youth who are the victims experience the same feelings of powerlessness and hopelessness as if they were being bullied face-to-face. Because of the pervasive nature of the internet and cell phones, it is harder than ever for victims to escape their tormentors. It can happen anywhere—at home, at school, at any time of the day or night (Brown, Cassidy, Jackson, 2006). In extreme cases, victims have been known to become aggressive and fight back, or to become depressed and attempt suicide. Youth who have experienced cyber-bullying were almost twice as likely to attempt suicide compared to those who had not (Hinduja, Patchin, n.d.).

<http://bit.ly/M3Wlq5>



RECOMMENDED READING

Adolescent suicide: An integrated approach to the assessment of risk and protective factors

Guitierrez, P. and Osman, A.(2008). Dekalb, IL.: Northern Illinois University Press.

Suicide in children and adolescents

King, R. and Apter, A. (Eds.). (2003).Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Suicidal behavior in adolescence: An international perspective

Merrick, J. and Zalsman, G.(Eds.).(2005). Tel Aviv, Israel: Freund Publishing House.

Suicidal behavior in children & adolescents

Wagner, B.(2009). New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press.



LINKS

Alberta Government

Suicide Fact Sheet

<http://bit.ly/LzRXCc>

American Association of Suicidology:

Youth Suicidal Behavior — Fact Sheet

<http://bit.ly/Ld8EH2>

American Association of Suicidology

Selecting a Suicide Prevention Curriculum for Youth

<http://bit.ly/L2aJPN>

Canadian Red Cross

Youth suicide prevention website

<http://bit.ly/KiHLeM>

National Adolescent Health Information Center

Fact Sheet on Suicide: Adolescents & Young Adults

<http://bit.ly/M1f5Kg>



REFERENCES

Centre for Suicide Prevention. (2009). Youth at Risk: Warning signs, risk factors, protective factors. *About Suicide*. Retrieved from <http://suicideinfo.ca/Library/AboutSuicide/YouthatRisk/InformationforParents.aspx>

Kutcher, S. and Szumilas, M. (2008). Youth suicide prevention. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 178(3), 2

McLeod, Suzanne. (2011). Cyber-bullying. *Special Features*. Retrieved from <https://suicideinfo.ca/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=U9Oo1Hz3LCs%3d&tabid=516>

Skinner, R. and McFaul, S. (2012). Suicide among children and adolescents in Canada: trends and sex differences, 1980–2008. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, doi: 10.1503/cmaj.111867. Retrieved from <http://www.cmaj.ca/content/early/2012/04/02/cmaj.111867.full.pdf+html82-285>

Statistics Canada. (2012). Suicides and suicide rate, by sex and by age group. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tab-leaux/sum-som/I01/cst01/hlth66b-eng.htm>

A man in a black t-shirt and jeans is crouching on the ground, holding his head in his hands in a gesture of despair or exhaustion. The background is a bright blue sky with white clouds. A large, semi-transparent pink circle is positioned on the left side of the image, containing three lines of text. The words 'SCARED', 'DEPRESSED', and 'WORTHLESS' are written in large, bold, black capital letters, arranged diagonally across the image from top-left to bottom-right.

**SCARED
DEPRESSED
WORTHLESS**

You're precious to us

There is help

Your life is important

WORTHLESS

WWW.SUICIDEINFO.CA



CANADIAN MENTAL
HEALTH ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
POUR LA SANTÉ MENTALE



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