

Mental Health Among Adolescents

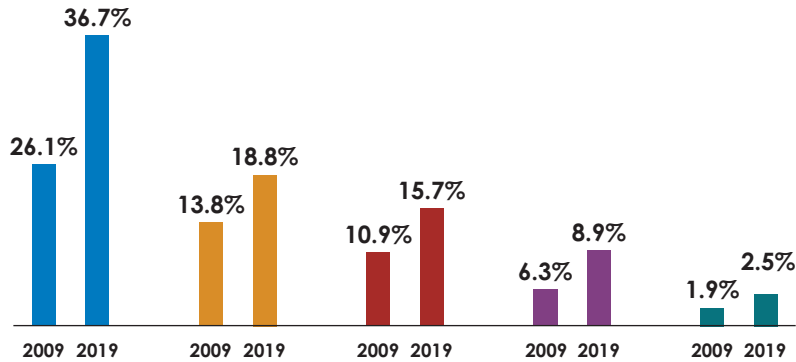


CDC's *Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2009–2019* provides the most recent surveillance and trend data on health behaviors and experiences among high school students across the country. It reports on the behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death, morbidity, and social problems among youth and young adults, including mental health and suicide.

Mental health and suicide ideation or actions among young people is a severe and growing problem in the United States. Poor mental health is associated with a host of health risks, both during adolescence and into adulthood. It can lead to risky sexual behavior, illicit substance use, unintended pregnancy, school absence and dropout, and other potentially life-long health problems.

POOR MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE BEHAVIORS AMONG U.S. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE INCREASING

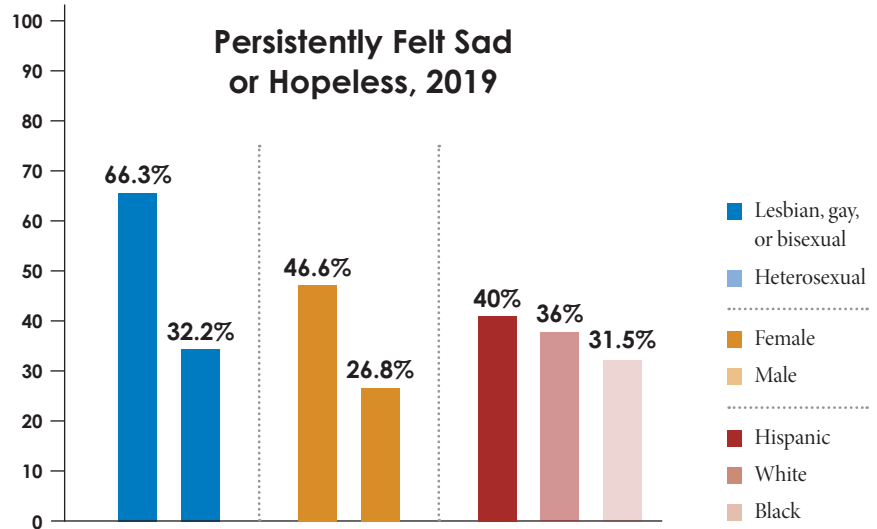
Persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness
INCREASED 40%
between 2009-2019 for U.S. high school students



Source: [CDC YRBS Data Summary & Trends Report: 2009 - 2019](#)
For complete 2009-2019 data on disparities in mental health and suicide-related behaviors among U.S. high school students, [click here](#)

SOME STUDENTS REPORT POORER MENTAL HEALTH AND MORE SUICIDE-RELATED BEHAVIORS THAN OTHERS

Two-thirds of lesbian, gay, and bisexual students and nearly half of female students report persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness.



Lesbian, gay, and bisexual students are about

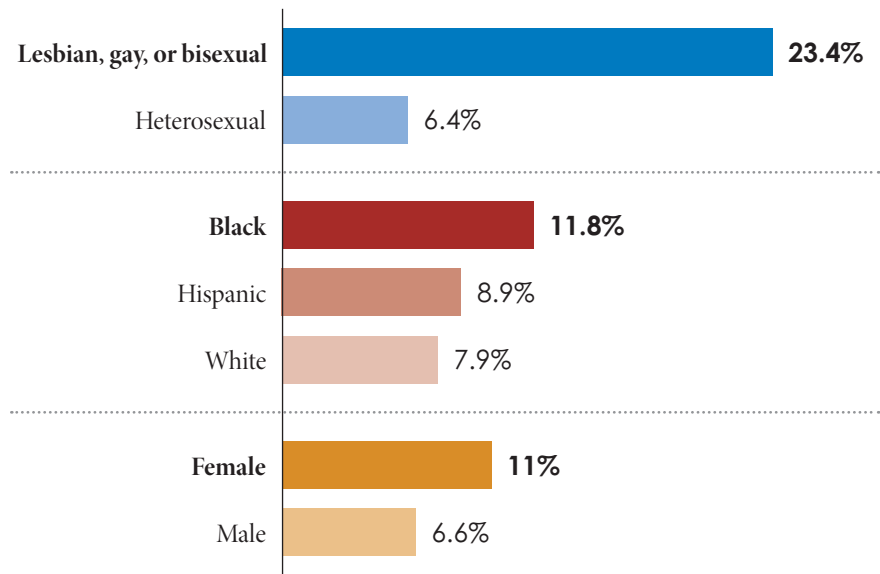
4x MORE LIKELY

to have attempted suicide than their heterosexual peers.

Black students are also more likely than their peers to have attempted suicide.

For complete 2009-2019 data on disparities in mental health and suicide-related behaviors among U.S. high school students, [click here](#)

Attempted Suicide, 2019



INCREASED CONNECTEDNESS AND SUPPORT ARE KEY TO ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE AMONG OUR NATION'S YOUTH

Connectedness is an important protective factor for youth that can reduce the likelihood of a variety of health risks, including those related to mental health.

Connectedness refers to a sense of being cared for, supported, and belonging, and can be centered on feeling connected to [school](#), family (e.g., parents and caregivers), or other important people and organizations in a person's life. Youth who feel connected at school and home are less likely to experience negative health outcomes related to sexual risk, substance use, violence, and mental health.

Recent CDC [research](#) has found that youth connectedness also has lasting effects. Youth who feel connected at school and at home were found to be as much as **66% less likely** to experience health risk behaviors related to sexual health, substance use, violence, and mental health in adulthood.

Today, as schools work to foster connectedness in-person or virtually, it is important that they provide access to programs and infrastructure known to support adolescents' mental health, including:

PROGRAMS THAT PROMOTE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) – particularly those that emphasize self-awareness, self-management (mediation/mindfulness), social awareness, and responsible decision-making, as well as focus on safe ways students can help others. For example, The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has an online group and other resources for providing SEL virtually.

TRAINED MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS – this includes adequate counselors and support staff available in-school and virtually who can conduct timely mental health screenings, identify students who are in crisis and who need intervention, and have established partnerships with youth-friendly mental health services for students needing intensive intervention.

