



Rural Suicide Prevention

Suicide deaths are a major public health problem for adolescents. Associated suicide behaviors include ideation and attempt. The risk for suicide for adolescents living in rural states and communities may be higher. Risk and protective factors identification and specific interventions for rural adolescents are limited at this time.



Rural Suicide Prevention



What is the annual suicide injury experience of adolescents?

- One in five adolescents seriously consider suicide
- One in twelve adolescents attempt suicide
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death for all adolescents
- Recent increases in suicides have been attributed to the use of firearms

What is the suicide experience of rural adolescents?

Suicide is the second leading cause of death in states with primarily rural populations, especially states in the rural mountain west and Alaska.

Adolescent males in rural areas have higher suicide rates than their urban counterparts.

Official death records of adolescent suicide are underreported in rural areas. Research indicates they may be three times below the actual number of suicides.

Suicide rates for American Indian and Alaskan Native adolescents and young adults are approximately 1.5 times the rates for the overall U.S. population.

What are some of the selected factors associated with the risk of adolescent suicide in rural states and communities?

- Undiagnosed, unrecognized, or untreated mood disorders/mental illness
- Access to lethal means
- Family violence
- Acquaintance or a friend who committed suicide
- Social isolation
- Community disorganization

What strategies may prevent suicidal behaviors of rural adolescents?

- Limiting access to lethal means
- Reducing the stigma of mental health problems
- Enhancing tolerance and coping practices related to social and economic trends
- Providing opportunities for gainful employment, education, and community involvement
- Incorporating multiple intervention approaches

What services can state health departments, maternal and child health agencies, and local health departments provide to support adolescent suicide prevention?

- Provide multiple opportunities for screening and early identification
- Ensure local prevention and intervention services include paraprofessionals, support networks, and mental health services
- Monitor on-going suicide behavior, trends, and data
- Provide rapid and effective post-suicide community support
- Evaluate effectiveness of prevention and intervention services
- Advocate for policies that promote a continuum of prevention services

Where can I go to learn more about rural adolescent suicide prevention?

Additional information and links to adolescent suicide prevention can be found on the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety Web site <http://research.marshfieldclinic.org/children/Resources/>. Information includes a listing of resources and other organizations, website links, and fact sheet. Call 1-800-662-6900 for assistance or additional information.

The National Children's Center strives to enhance the health and safety of all children involved in agricultural work and living in rural settings. The center is a program of the Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation.



National **Children's** Center
for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety

1000 North Oak Avenue • Marshfield, WI 54449
1-800-662-6900 • email: ncrahs@mcrf.mfldclin.edu
<http://research.marshfieldclinic.org/children/>

This publication was produced by CSN under its contract with the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration, Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



MARSHFIELD CLINIC[®]
Research Foundation