



DEPRESSION & SUICIDE

Snohomish County Facts

- Over the last eight years, more and more of our 8th grade students feel they could go to their mother or father to talk about a personal problem. 10th and 12th graders are reporting six year highs as well
- Every year since 2008, our 10th graders have shown an increase in the amount who have planned how they were going to attempt suicide
- Compared to 8th graders in the rest of the state, ours were more likely to say they have been unable to control or stop worrying at all in the last two weeks

SUICIDE	6 TH GRADERS	8 TH GRADERS	10 TH GRADERS	12 TH GRADERS
Seriously considered attempting suicide	16.2	17.2	21.2	18.7
Planned how you would attempt suicide	~	14.2	17.5	15.6
Attempted suicide	4.8	8.8	9.7	8.2
DEPRESSION	6 TH GRADERS	8 TH GRADERS	10 TH GRADERS	12 TH GRADERS
Have been severely depressed *	~	28.2	36.3	35.8
Feel satisfied with their lives, ratings of 8-10, 10 is "completely true"	~	56.0	47.7	44.7
Feel alone in life, ratings of 9-10, 10 is "completely true"	~	9.5	9.0	7.8
Feels good about themselves, ratings of 8-10, 10 is "completely true"	~	57.3	47.6	49.8
Look forward to the future, ratings of 8-10 "completely true"	~	68.2	67.1	66.0
*Depressed --Student self report of being so sad or hopeless they stopped doing usual activities for two or more weeks in a row.				
SOCIAL SUPPORT	6 TH GRADERS	8 TH GRADERS	10 TH GRADERS	12 TH GRADERS
Do not feel they can ask a parent for help with a personal problem	13.5	16.7	21.4	19.3
Do not have (or are not sure) they have an adult to turn to when feeling sad or hopeless	20.0	25.8	30.2	25.1
~ Not asked of students in this grade				
Participation by all of the Snohomish County school districts in the Healthy Youth Survey is extremely appreciated. School participation allows us to report on the current health status of our youth and track trends over time.				
For more information about the Healthy Youth Survey, check out http://www.askhys.net/ or to see Snohomish County Healthy Youth Survey Fact Sheets go to www.snohd.org .				

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DEPRESSION & SUICIDE: WHAT WE CAN DO

Washington State Healthy Youth Survey Facts

- Students participate across the state representing all 39 counties
- All 14 school districts in Snohomish County take part in the survey
- 75% of students across the four grades took the survey—that's 11,852 students!
- Questions ask about risk for injury, health outcomes, alcohol and drug use
- Results are used by communities to support youth and reduce risks

More info available at: www.askhys.net

PARENTS

- Look for the signs of depression or suicide. These can be broad, such as changes in eating and sleeping habits, consistent sadness and anxiety, and loss of interest in enjoyed hobbies.
- Never tell your child to “cheer up.” Depression is complicated and much more than simply feeling sad or down.
- Treat every mention of suicidal thoughts seriously. Never pass it off as a joke or a ploy for attention.
- Remove all guns, no matter how well secured, from the home at the first warning of suicidal thoughts. Lock up medications, even OTC, and knives or other sharp objects as well.
- Link your child with a therapist or counselor that *they* like and can connect with. It is important that teens feel they have someone they can talk to.
- Consider taking a youth mental health first aid class (for more information, visit <http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org>)

SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

- Ensure students are aware of their resources at school and ensure they feel comfortable going to your guidance counselor.
- Offer youth mental-health first aid training to all staff and volunteers who interact with students.
- The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention has a free online toolkit for schools in the wake of a student suicide and other resources.

GOVERNMENT

The Snohomish Health District has identified suicide as a target for their community health improvement plan. In addition to social marketing campaigns, we are hoping to get citizens trained in mental health first aid. If you are interested in this or being an advocate for this topic, please contact Carrie McLachlan, MPA, Program Manager, Healthy Communities and Assessment at: cmclachlan@snohd.org or 425-339-8650.