

Mental Health

(Depression, Suicide)

Good mental health is an important component of overall physical health and well-being. It is a critical component in an adolescent's ability to establish relationships and reinforce positive feelings about who they are and how they are perceived by others.

Adolescence is a time of life characterized by emotional ups and downs and vulnerability to mood swings and depression. Because mood disorders such as depression increase the risk of suicide, suicidal behavior is a matter of serious concern for families, school staff and mental health specialists.

- Among persons aged 15 to 19 years, firearm-related suicides accounted for 96 percent of the increase in the overall rate of suicide from 1980 to 1995. In 2000, more teenagers and young adults died from suicide than died from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia and influenza and chronic lung disease combined.¹⁴
- There has been an increase in suicide rates for persons 15-24 years of age in the last 50 years (4.5 per 100,000 in 1950 to 10.3 per 100,000 in 1999).¹⁵

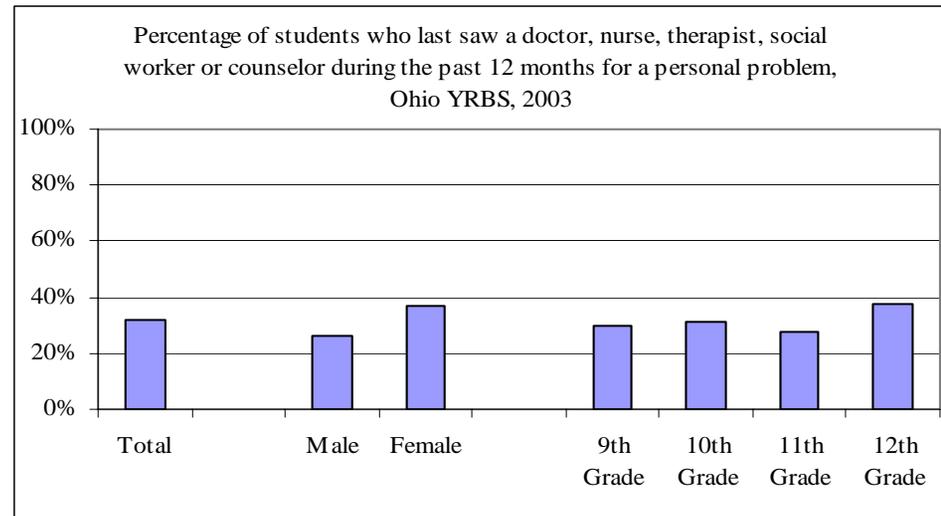
HP 2010 Objectives:

- 18-01: Reduce the suicide rate to no more than five people per 100,000.
- 18-02: Reduce the rate of suicide attempts by adolescents to no more than 1 percent over 12 months.
- 18-07: Increase the proportion of children with mental health problems who receive treatment.
- 06-02: Reduce the proportion of children and adolescents with disabilities which are reported to be sad, unhappy or depressed to no more than 17 percent.

- **Mental Health: Counseling**

Q98 When was the last time you saw a doctor, nurse, therapist, social worker or counselor for a personal problem?

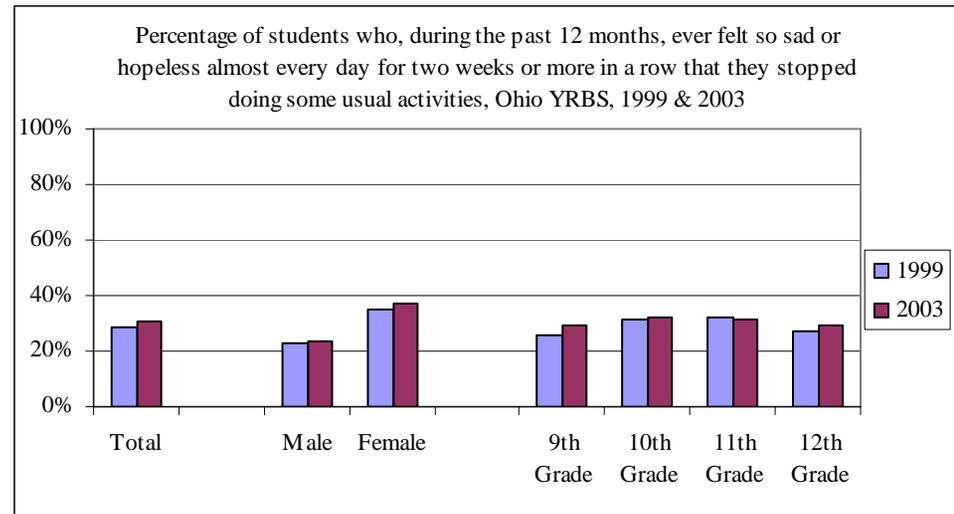
- **Approximately one-third of students see a health professional or counselor for personal problems.**
 - In 2003, 32 percent of students reported seeing a doctor, nurse, therapist, social worker or counselor during the last 12 months for a personal problem.
 - There are no significant differences in seeing a doctor, nurse, therapist, social worker or counselor during the last 12 months for a personal problem between males and females or by grade level.
- **This question was not asked in 1999.**



• Mental Health: Depression

Q25 During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?

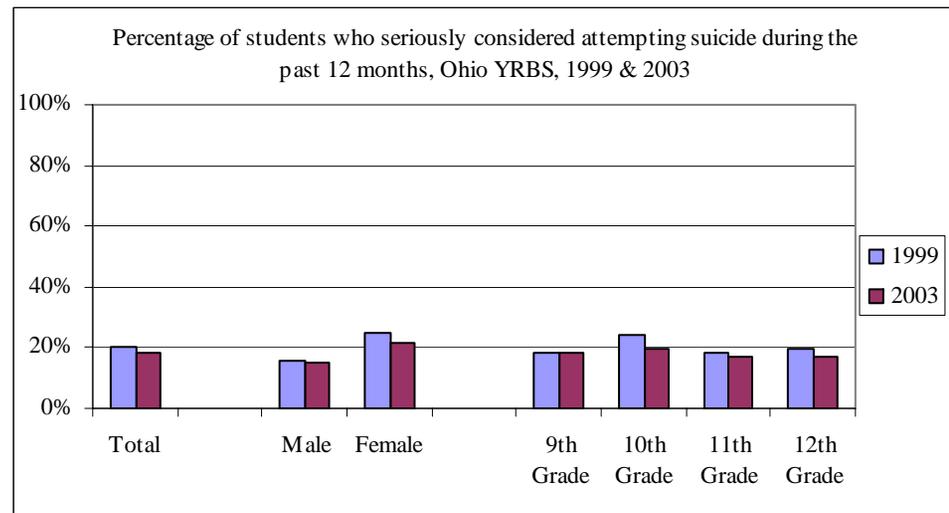
- **Approximately one-third of students feel so sad or hopeless that they stop doing usual activities.**
 - In 2003, 31 percent of students report feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row in the past 12 months that they stopped doing some usual activities.
 - Significantly more females (37 percent) than males (24 percent) report feeling so sad or hopeless that they stopped doing usual activities.
 - There are no significant differences in feeling so sad or hopeless that students stopped doing usual activities by grade level.
- **There are no significant differences in feeling so sad or hopeless that students stopped doing some usual activities between 1999 and 2003.**



• **Mental Health: Suicide Consideration**

Q26 During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide?

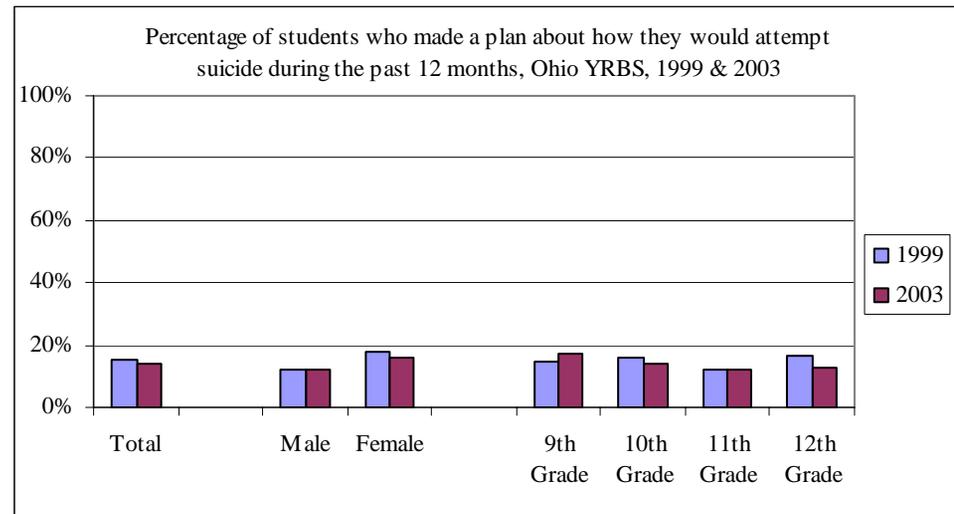
- **Most students do not seriously consider attempting suicide.**
 - In 2003, 18 percent of students report that they seriously considered attempting suicide in the past 12 months.
 - There are no significant differences in seriously considering attempting suicide between males and females or by grade level.
- **There are no significant differences in seriously considering attempting suicide between 1999 and 2003.**



- **Mental Health: Suicide Planned**

Q27 During the past 12 months, did you make a plan about how you would attempt suicide?

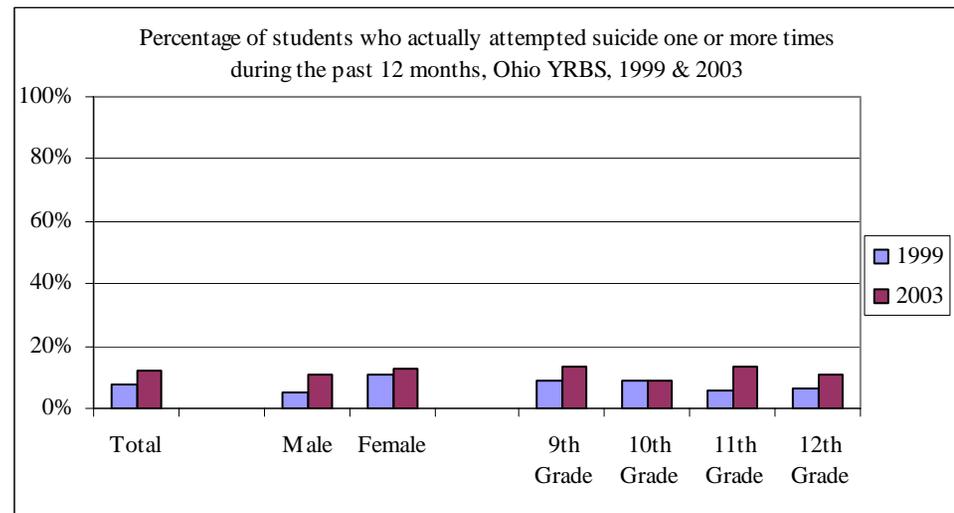
- **Most students do not make a plan about how they would attempt suicide.**
 - In 2003, 14 percent of students report having made a plan about how to attempt suicide in the past 12 months.
 - There are no significant differences in having made a plan about how to attempt suicide between males and females or by grade level.
- **There are no significant differences in having made a plan about how to attempt suicide between 1999 and 2003.**



• Mental Health: Suicide Attempted

Q28 During the past 12 months, how many times did you actually attempt suicide?

- **Few students attempt suicide.**
 - In 2003, 12 percent of students report actually attempting suicide in the past 12 months.
 - There are no significant differences in actually attempting suicide between males and females or by grade level.
- **Significantly more students report attempting suicide in 2003 (12 percent) than in 1999 (8 percent).**
 - This increase is significant for males and 11th graders.



• Mental Health: Injury Due to Suicide Attempt

Q29 If you attempted suicide during the past 12 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?

- **Few students who attempt suicide require treatment by a doctor or nurse.**
 - In 2003, 5 percent of students report that they have been treated by a doctor or nurse for an injury, poisoning or overdose as a result of a suicide attempt in the past 12 months.
 - There are no significant differences in having been treated by a doctor or nurse as a result of a suicide attempt between males and females or by grade level.
- **There are no significant differences overall in being treated for an injury, poisoning or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse due to a suicide attempt in 2003 than 1999; however, the difference for 11th graders is significant.**

