



Suicide: A public health problem

Suicide occurs when a person ends their life. It is the 11th leading cause of death among Americans. But suicide deaths are only part of the problem. More people survive suicide attempts than actually die. They are often seriously injured and need medical care.

In Connecticut, suicide is a leading cause of death for people between the ages of 10 and 64, leading to 811 deaths between 2005 and 2007.

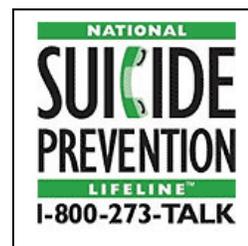
According to results from the 2009 Connecticut School Health Survey, a comprehensive survey of Connecticut middle and high school students administered by the Connecticut Department of Public Health, 14.1% of Connecticut high school students had seriously considered suicide and 25% reported being sad or hopeless every day for two weeks in the preceding twelve months.

Stressful events, situations, and/or conditions that can impact the potential for suicide include hopelessness, alcohol, and other substance abuse; impulsive and/or aggressive tendencies, mental health issues, history of trauma or abuse; job, financial, relational or social loss, and easy access to lethal means, particularly firearms.

People can be helped by reaching out for assistance to resources including providers, friends, family, communities of faith and agencies. Additional strategies include: seeking effective clinical care for mental, physical and substance abuse conditions, providing improved access to clinical interventions and support for help seeking; facilitating improved skills for problem solving, conflict resolution and nonviolent handling of disputes; restricting access to firearms when suicide is a concern, and connecting with cultural and religious beliefs that discourage suicide and support self-preservation.

Twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year resources include:

- Emergency mobile psychiatric services – Dial 2-1-1
- Behavioral Health Crisis for Children – Dial 2-1-1
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1-800- 273 –TALK (8255)



During National Public Health Week, April 4-10, 2011, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) is focusing attention on preventing injuries, a leading cause of death, disability and illness in Connecticut. The DPH Injury Prevention Program analyzes injury data, provides information and works with a variety of public and private partners on reducing and preventing injuries.

###