

Report: Prevalence of suicidal thoughts, behaviors up in young females

April 28 2023, by Elana Gotkine



The prevalence of suicidal thoughts and behaviors increased among

female high school students from 2019 to 2021, according to research published in the April 28 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *MMWR Supplements*.

Elizabeth M. Gaylor, M.P.H., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues used 2019 and 2021 data to examine high school students' reports of suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Prevalence differences were calculated comparing 2019 and 2021, and prevalence ratios were assessed comparing behaviors between subgroups.

The researchers observed increases in the prevalence of seriously considering attempting suicide (from 24.1 to 30 percent), making a suicide plan (from 19.9 to 23.6 percent), and [suicide attempts](#) (from 11.0 to 13.3 percent) for female students from 2019 to 2021. In addition, the prevalence of seriously considering attempting suicide was increased for Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, and White female students from 2019 to 2021.

Compared with white female students, Black female students had an increased prevalence of suicide attempts and Hispanic female students had an increased prevalence of suicide attempts that required medical treatment in 2021. For [male students](#), the prevalence of suicidal thoughts and behaviors remained stable from 2019 to 2021.

"A comprehensive approach to [suicide prevention](#), which reduces risk and supports youths at increased risk, provides support to those at risk and can ultimately save lives," the authors write.

More information: Elizabeth M. Gaylor et al, Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors Among High School Students—Youth Risk Behavior Survey, United States, 2021, *MMWR Supplements* (2023). [DOI: 10.15585/mmwr.su7201a6](#)

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