

District of Columbia 2010 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Mental Health

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? Untreated adolescent depression can affect many aspects of a young person's life including deterioration of academic performance, absenteeism, increase in smoking, alcohol, and drug use and increased chance of suicidal behavior.



The National Picture

National result from the 2009 YRBS¹ indicate:

In the 12 months before the survey

- 13.8% of students had seriously considered attempting suicide
- 6.3% of students had attempted suicide one or more times
- 19.9% students were bullied on school property

Key Indicators for DC YRBS Percentage of DC students who	2007 High School	2010 High School*	2007 Middle School	2010 Middle School*
Felt sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 weeks in a row	28.3	24.9	-	-
Seriously considered suicide/killing themselves... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the past 12 months (High School) • in their lifetime (Middle School) 	15.1	11.1	24.7	18.3
Made a plan of how they would attempt suicide... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the past 12 months (High School) • in their lifetime (Middle School) 	12.5	11.2	13.5	11.4
Actually attempted suicide in the past 12 months... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the past 12 months (High School) • in their lifetime (Middle School) 	12.7	11.5	13.3	8.7
Had been bullied on school property one or more times in the past 12 months	18.9	9.7	32.0	27.9
Had an adult outside of school they could talk to about important things	-	82.4	-	77.2

*2010 DC YRBS results are population estimates derived using only DCPS student data. The 2007 data includes both DCPS and Public Charter Schools.

Effective Strategies and Best Practices in DC

- The DC Department of Mental Health has received a Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant to create a citywide infrastructure of linked support for suicide prevention and to increase awareness. <http://dmh.dc.gov/dmh/cwp/view,A,3,Q,642799.asp>
- The DC Department of Mental Health has school-based mental health programs at 58 schools in the District. <http://dmh.dc.gov/dmh/cwp/view,a,3,q,516043.asp>
- The Student Support Center received Safe Schools/Healthy Student funding to implement evidence-based programs for schools, students, and parents that address school culture, emotion-management skills, and bullying in 6 public charter schools. http://www.studentsupportcenter.org/who_we_are/SSHS/

¹CDC. (2010). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance-United States, 2009. *MMWR*, 59 (5), 1-148.