

Mental Health

Among Public High School Students in Oklahoma



What do the data say?

Data from the **2023 Oklahoma Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)** show that:

- **29.6%** of students felt that their mental health was not good most of the time or always¹
- **44.9%** reported signs or symptoms of depression^{2,3}
 - Females (58.8%) reported a **higher prevalence of depression** than males (30.9%)
- **23.3%** seriously considered attempting suicide²
- **18.4%** made a plan about how they would attempt suicide²
- **12.1%** actually attempted suicide²

Studies have shown that having social supports and positive childhood experiences may improve mental health and prevent suicidal ideation.^{4,5}

Resources

- Crisis Text Line | crisistextline.org | text HOME to 741741
- NAMI Oklahoma | namioklahoma.org | call 1-800-583-1264
- 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline | 988lifeline.org | call or text 988 | or chat online
- Youth Crisis Mobile Response | heartlineoklahoma.org/youth-crisis-mobile-response | call 833-885-CARE (2273)
- Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, School-Based Prevention & Intervention Services | <https://oklahoma.gov/odmhsas/prevention/schools.html>

How you can help

Individual/Communities

- Call or text 988 to talk with someone now about feeling hopeless, helpless or thinking of suicide, or if you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis.
- Support the development of relationships between youth and positive adults in their lives.
- Offer activities that bring people together so they feel connected and not alone.
- Attend Mental Health First Aid and Talk Saves Lives trainings.

In the home

- Safely store medications and firearms to reduce access among people at risk.
- Children's mental health is particularly influenced by their family environment, with stable and supportive parental partnerships leading to better emotional and social development.

In Schools

- Implement peer modeling programs
- Provide classroom instruction focused on building social skills and emotional development.
- Implement evidence-based strategies proven to address risk and protective factors such as PAX Good Behavior Game, Botvin LifeSkills Training, Gizmo's Guide to Mental Health, and Erika's Lighthouse.
- Provide evidence-based suicide prevention training to teachers and staff.

1. During the 30 days before the survey
2. During the 12 months before the survey
3. Felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities.
4. Darvishi N, Farhadi M, Poorolajal J. The Role of Social Support in Preventing Suicidal Ideations and Behaviors: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *J Res Health Sci.* 2024 Jun 1;24(2):e00609. doi: 10.34172/jrhs.2024.144. Epub 2024 Jun 1. PMID: 39072545; PMCID: PMC11264453.
5. Lisa Bunting, Claire McCartan, Gavin Davidson, Anne Grant, Ciaran Mulholland, Dirk Schubotz, Ryan Hamill, Orla McBride, Jamie Murphy, Emma Nolan, Mark Shevlin, The influence of adverse and positive childhood experiences on young people's mental health and experiences of self-harm and suicidal ideation, *Child Abuse & Neglect*, Volume 140, 2023, 106159, ISSN 0145-2134, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106159>.

For more information, contact the Family Support and Prevention Service, Assessment Division, at **(405) 426-8092** or visit oklahoma.gov/health/yrbs.



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