

# YOUTH SUICIDE FACT SHEET

## South Dakota State Statistics

In 2004, the South Dakota Department of Health released the most recent statistics available concerning the incidence of youth suicide in South Dakota. The following summarizes these findings.

- Among South Dakota residents, suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth age 15-24 years, in the five-year period 1999 through 2003. The only cause accounting for more deaths in this age group is unintentional injury, primarily motor vehicle deaths. (Source: South Dakota Department of Health)
- On the average, twenty-three (23) young people between the ages of 15-24 commit suicide in South Dakota each year, a rate of almost one youth suicide every two weeks, according to 1999-2003 statistics. (Source: South Dakota Department of Health)
- Among South Dakota resident youth age 15-24, in the five-year period 1999 through 2003, males committed eighty-three (83%) percent of the suicides. For the same time period and age group the suicide rate for males was more than 4 times higher than for females. Females have a much higher nonfatal suicide attempt rate than do their male counterparts. (Source: South Dakota Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- While the majority of South Dakota residents age 15-24 committing suicide were whites in the five years 1999-2003, the rates were highest among Native Americans in this age group. (Source: South Dakota Department of Health)
- Firearms, hanging and poisons were the most common methods of suicide among South Dakota resident youth age 15-24 in the five years 1999-2003. (Source: South Dakota Department of Health)
- The 2003 South Dakota Youth Risk Behavior Survey report shows that:
  - Nineteen (19%) percent have seriously considered attempting suicide.
  - Fifteen (15%) percent say they have made a plan about how they would attempt suicide.
  - Nine (9%) percent report they have actually attempted suicide.
  - Twenty five (25%) reported that during the past 12 months they felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities.
  - Sixty-one percent (61%) of students responded they would first recommend a school counselor, school nurse, school social worker or family, friends, peer helpers to a friend who wanted help with suicidal thoughts.

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