

MEDIA STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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A media statement prepared by the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention's (Action Alliance) [Media Messaging Work Group](#) in response to newly released data.

Action Alliance Statement on the New CDC Data on Emergency Department Visits for Suicidal Self-Injury Among Young People During COVID-19

While provisional suicide death rates were down in 2020, new data underscores mental and emotional impact of pandemic on young people

WASHINGTON, DC (June 11, 2021) – “The [new data released today](#) by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics show emergency department visits for suspected suicide attempts among youth aged 12-17 years increased 39 percent during February and March 2021, when compared to the same time period in 2019. More specifically, there was a 51% increase among females aged 12-17 years and a 4% increase among males aged 12-17. And while [provisional CDC data](#) released earlier this year indicates that suicide death rates were down in 2020, these new findings underscore the enormous impact the COVID-19 pandemic is having on our country’s overall emotional wellbeing, especially among young people.

Just as we have taken steps to protect our physical health throughout the pandemic, we must also take steps to protect our mental and emotional health. This new data specifically speaks to the importance of improving suicide care both during and after emergency department visits by scaling up the adoption of best practices, such as the [Recommended Standard Care for People with Suicide Risk: Making Health Care Suicide Safe](#) and [Best Practices in Care Transitions for Individuals with Suicide Risk: Inpatient Care to Outpatient Care](#). These and other evidence-based best practices must be adopted by health care systems nationwide to ensure safe, effective suicide care for all.

However, health care systems cannot address this issue alone. Suicide is a complex public health issue that also requires a [comprehensive, community-based approach](#) to addressing it. We must ensure suicide prevention is infused into a variety of community-based settings—such as schools, workplaces, and places of worship—to ensure people are connected with prevention activities and resources before a crisis occurs.

Finally, we know that social connectedness is a key protective factor against suicide. Research indicates that a sense of belonging and social connectedness improves physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing.

Everyone can play a role in [being there](#) for each other and helping to build resiliency. Having real, honest conversations about our own mental health opens the door for connection and social support.

As the nation's only public-private partnership for suicide prevention advancing the [National Strategy for Suicide Prevention](#), we call on leaders from all sectors and industries to make suicide prevention a national priority by becoming engaged in the issue and bringing resources to bear. The time for action is now."

Crisis Resources

- If someone is experiencing an emotional crisis or thoughts of suicide, free 24/7, confidential services are available.
 - For emotional support specifically related to COVID-19, call the Disaster Distress Helpline (800-985-5990), or text TalkWithUs to 66746.
 - For those experiencing a suicidal crisis, call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) (800-273-8255), or text the [Crisis Text Line](#) (text HOME to 741741).
 - For those who identify as part of the LGBTQ community, call the [TrevorLifeline](#) (866-488-7386) or text START to 678-678.
 - For those who are military veterans, call the [Veterans Crisis Line](#) (800-273-8255 + Press 1) or Text 838255

Other Resources for Students, Youth, Young Adults

- Active Minds:
 - [Mental Health Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) – provides resources for young adults, schools, parents, communities, and remote workers
 - [Offering Help](#) – provides guidance on what to do when a friend or loved one is struggling with their mental health
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention:
 - [COVID-19 Parental Resources Kit](#) – provides guidance and information to assist parents, caregivers, and other adults serving children and young people in recognizing children and youth people's social, emotional, and mental health challenges and helping to ensure overall well-being.
 - [COVID-19 Support for Teens and Young Adults](#) – provides guidance and information for youth and youth adults to manage stress
- The Trevor Project:
 - [TrevorSpace](#) - The Trevor Project's safe space social networking site for LGBTQ youth ages 13-24 is an affirming international community for young people to find peer support.
 - [Protect Your Space and Well-Being on Instagram](#) - a guide that helps young people practice self-care and supports their well-being online.
- The Jed Foundation:
 - [Mental Health Resource Center](#) – provides tools to help teens and young adults navigate life's challenges and also has information for family members and friend on how to support the teens and young adults in your life.
 - [Coronavirus Mental Health Resource Guide](#) – provides resources and tips to help teens and young adults, parents and guardians, and high school and higher education professionals navigate the mental health impacts of COVID-19

- [Seize The Awkward](#) - provides tips and resources around maintaining mental health during the coronavirus and connecting with friends and family.
- [National Center for School Mental Health COVID-19 Resource Center](#) – provides resources and tips for students, schools, and families.

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FOR MEDIA PARTNERS:

Research shows that the media may influence suicide rates by the way they report on suicide. Evidence suggests that when the media tell stories of people positively coping in suicidal moments, more suicides can be prevented. We urge all members of the media working on these stories to refer to the [Recommendations for Reporting on Suicide](#) for best practices for safely and accurately reporting on suicide (such as including the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800-273-TALK \[8255\]](#)). For stories of persons with lived experience of suicidality and finding hope, refer to www.lifelineforattemptsurvivors.org.

NATIONAL ACTION ALLIANCE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION:

The [National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention](#) (Action Alliance) is the public-private partnership working to advance the [National Strategy for Suicide Prevention](#) and make suicide prevention a national priority. The [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) provides funding to [EDC](#) to operate and manage the Secretariat for the Action Alliance, which was launched in 2010. Learn more at theactionalliance.org and join the conversation on suicide prevention by following the Action Alliance on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#).

MENTAL HEALTH & SUICIDE PREVENTION NATIONAL RESPONSE TO COVID-19:

The [Mental Health & Suicide Prevention National Response to COVID-19](#) (National Response) is a dynamic, diverse, nonpartisan group of leading public and private sector organizations that are committed to driving meaningful, lasting change through collaboration, leadership, and action. As an initiative of the Action Alliance, the National Response is the unifying national voice and galvanizing force for accelerating actionable solutions to strengthen mental health, suicide prevention, and resilience for all Americans.