Alabama Suicide Fact Sheet

- Based on National 2018 death statistics, suicide is the 10th leading cause of death for all ages and the 2nd leading cause of death for youth and young adults between the ages of 10-34 years old (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 2020).
- A person dies by suicide every 11 minutes in the United States; and an estimated 1.4 million people attempted suicide in the U.S. in 2018 (CDC 2020).
- Suicide was the 11th leading cause of death in Alabama with 823 citizens lost to suicide in 2018, as compared to 567 deaths due to homicide.
- The majority of suicides completed in Alabama are by firearms (67.1 percent). This is also true when categorized by males (71.3 percent) and females (52.5 percent).

Suicide Rates in United States and Alabama, 2000-Present

- The 2018 suicide rate in Alabama was 16.8 per 100,000 population. Alabama has shown a pattern of higher rates than the U.S. national average since 1990, including the most recently available national rate of 14.8 per 100,000 population (American Association of Suicidology 2020).

Alabama Suicides by Age Group, 2018

- In 2018, 116 youth and young adults between the ages of 10 and 24 died by suicide in 2018 with 66 of those deaths in young people ages 20-24.
- Suicide rates are highest among White, non-Hispanic males. Of the 823 suicides in Alabama, 721 were completed among the White, non-Hispanic population.
Myths About Suicide

Myth #1: No one can stop a suicide.

• Fact: If a young person gets the help they need, they are less likely to be suicidal again.

Myth #2: Confronting a person about suicide will only make them angry and increase risk of suicide.

• Fact: Asking about suicide lowers anxiety, opens up communication, and reduces risk of impulsive acts.

Myth #3: Suicidal people keep their plans to themselves.

• Fact: Most suicidal people communicate their intent at some point near their attempt.

Myth #4: Those who talk about suicide don't do it.

• Fact: People who talk about suicide may try or even complete it.

Myth #5: Once a person decides to complete suicide, there is nothing anyone can do to stop them.

• Fact: Suicide is one of the most preventable kinds of death.

Myth #6: Most suicides happen during the holidays.

• Fact: There are seasonal variations in suicide rates.

Risk Factors

• Previous suicide attempt
• Alcohol or drug abuse
• Mental Illness
• Depression
• Strong wish to die or preoccupied with death
• Current talk of suicide or making a plan
• Giving away prized possessions
• Recent attempt by friend or family member
• Feeling hopeless, helpless, or worthless
• Social Isolation

Protective Factors

• Network of family or friends (social support)
• Marital Status
• Religiosity or Spirituality
• Reduced access to lethal means

For more information, please visit:
Alabama Department of Public Health: www.alabamapublichealth.gov
Alabama Suicide Prevention and Resource Coalition: www.asparc.org
American Association of Suicidology: www.suicidology.org
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: www.afsp.org
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/fastfact.html

TOLL FREE HOTLINE NUMBER: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)