

Myths and facts about kids' and teens' mental health



Kids and teens today face many stressors. They are more alone, have more access to screens and social media, and they have their everyday stressors as well. Sometimes all this is too much for them to carry alone. Sadly, many are not getting the help they need to manage these many stressors. This is a fact.

MYTH: Suicide only affects people with mental health conditions.

FACT: Not everyone who considers suicide has a mental illness.

** As many as 1 out of 4 kids have some form of suicidal thinking at some time.*

MYTH: If your kid or teen is struggling, you've done something wrong as a parent.

FACT: Mental health concerns are more common than you think.

** Seeking help doesn't mean you've done something wrong. It means your kid or teen needs extra help learning how to respond to certain situations.*

MYTH: Talking about suicide with someone gives them ideas about suicide.

FACT: Talking about suicide moves people to seek help.

** Talking about suicidal feelings can provide the emotional support and strength needed to calm their concerns.*

MYTH: People who talk about suicide are just seeking attention.

FACT: It's important to take any talk about suicide seriously.

** More than half of suicidal people discuss their intentions with others. Threats, jokes or talking about suicide should always be taken seriously and directly addressed.*

Around 2 million
kids and teens
attempt suicide
each year.
Suicide is the
second-leading
cause of death
among kids
and teens.

*Interested in
more tips, videos
and resources?*



[childrenswi.org/
shinethrough](https://childrenswi.org/shinethrough)



You can bring mental and behavioral health into the light by talking with a kid or teen in your life.

Here are some resources to help start talking:

- Children's Wisconsin has tips and information to help discuss mental health with kids at childrenswi.org/shinethrough
- Mental Health Literacy's ToolBox has resources for parents, health providers and teachers at mentalhealthliteracy.org/toolbox
- KidsHealth provides kid-friendly tips for coping with life stressors at kidshealth.org/teens

If your kid or teen is having suicidal thoughts:

Call or text the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at **988**, call **911** or bring your child to the nearest emergency room.

