



State's Poison Center Data Shows Suicide Attempts are High in Teens

Young Females Often Choose Medication to Attempt Suicide



Suicide in preteens is becoming more and more common, signaling an increasing public health concern.

Diane Calello

Executive and Medical Director
New Jersey Poison Control Center
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Potential poisons can be found in every home. Household chemicals, medicines, and other common items pose a risk of both unintentional (accidental) poisoning and intentional poisoning (suicide attempts). Medicines, whether prescription or nonprescription, can be a lethal means of self-harm for a person at risk of suicide.



1-800-222-1222





Anyone can call for medical help – children, teens, and adults

Calls to assist adolescents and young adults who have attempted suicide by poisoning is a daily occurrence at the NJ Poison Control Center. Often the specialists at the poison center assist with multiple cases of youth suicide attempts at the same time.

1-800-222-1222

Get Help 24/7

For example, a 14-year-old teen was sent to an emergency room by a poison center specialist after ingesting an unknown amount of her relative's medicine. At the same time, another poison center specialist assisted a doctor with the medical management of an unconscious teen who ingested several over-the-counter (nonprescription) products.

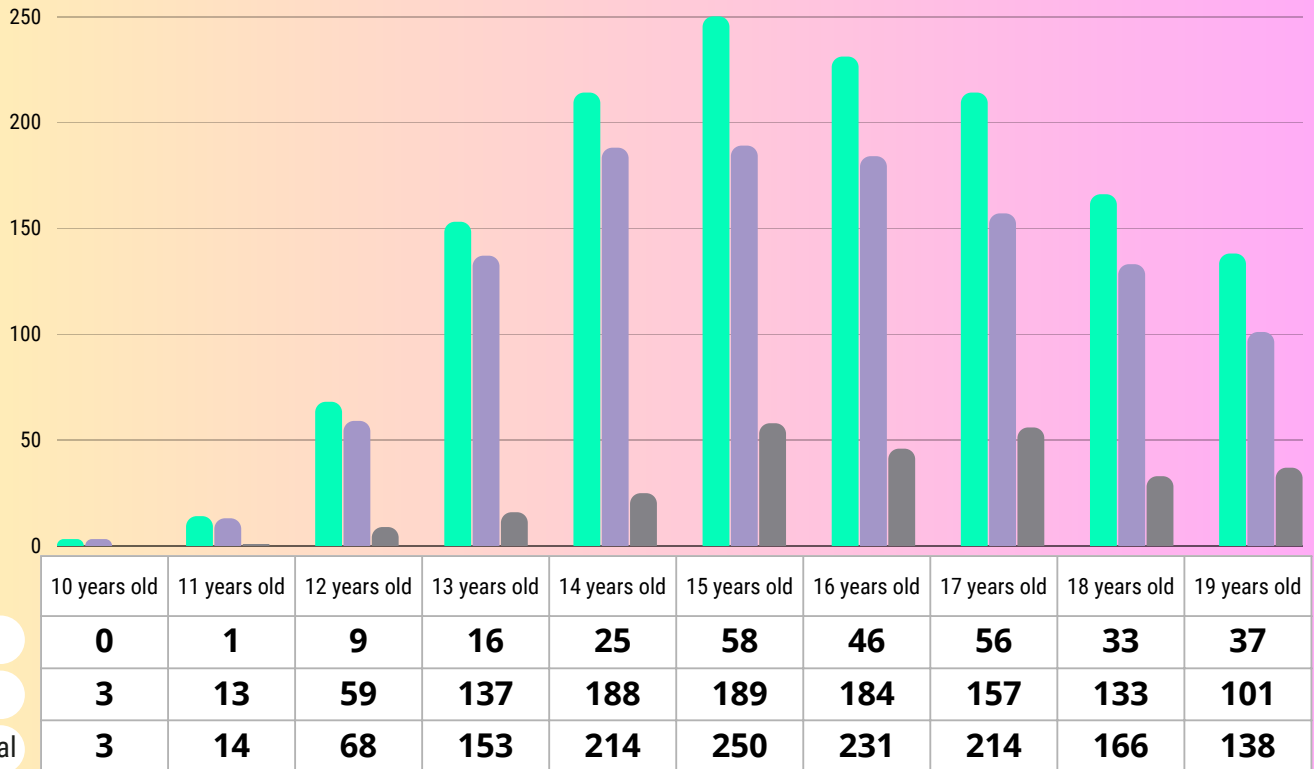
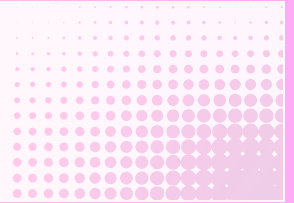
1-800-222-1222



New Jersey Poison Center

NJ Poison Control Center

Suicide Attempts by Poisoning in NJ Youth 2022 Data - Male and Female (10 - 19 Years Old)



In 2022, the NJ Poison Control Center was called to assist in the medical management of over 1,400 poisoning-related suicide attempts by youth – preteens, teens, and young adults. Nine hundred and thirty-three (933) of the over 1,400 cases involved children 16 years old and younger.



1-800-222-1222



New Jersey Poison Center



Since New Jersey law does not require hospitals and other healthcare facilities to report poison-related suicide attempts to the state's poison control center, the center's data captures only a snapshot of the true scope of this devastating public health crisis.

Most people don't realize how common it is for adolescents and young adults to have suicidal ideations (thoughts or ideas) or attempt lethal means of self-harm.

These instances are often only reported or discussed when someone has died. Unfortunately, the reality is that many more adolescents and young adults attempt lethal self-harm than die.

Females are more likely than males to choose poisoning as a lethal means of self-harm.

Last year, young females accounted for 80 percent of the poison control center's total youth suicide attempt cases. This means that for every five suicide attempt cases we had in 2022, four of them involved young females.

Diane Calello

1-800-222-1222





Given our recent data combined with the known risk of [prescription drug abuse](#) among adolescents and young adults, it's no longer safe enough for adults to just keep medicines up high and out of sight and reach.

A common risk factor for suicide is having access to lethal means of self-harm. Reducing access to medicines at home does save lives, so it's critical to lock up medicines after each use.

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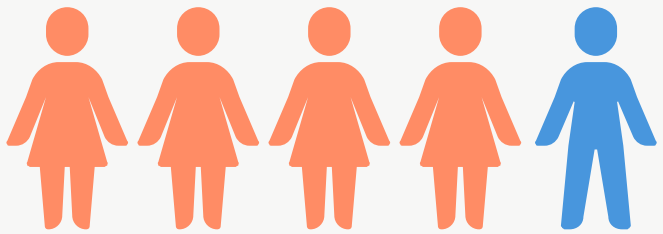
If you are a parent, coach, teacher, or friend, talking to teens about identifying suicidal behaviors in peers is key.

Often, an adolescent or young adult will express suicidal ideations to friends through texts or social media before attempting to use a lethal means of self-harm.

Teaching youth to speak up – right away – can be a critical life-saving intervention for a person at risk of suicide.

Safe storage of medicine is key to preventing suicide attempts. Just because a medicine is prescribed by a healthcare provider or bought without a prescription, does not mean it is safe.

4 out of 5 youth suicide attempt cases involved females
(80 percent of total cases)



(2022 NJ Poison Control Center Data)





SAFETY

Key safety tips to help prevent misuse or abuse of medicines (prescription or nonprescription)



SECURE MEDICINES

Lock them up to prevent access by adolescents and young adults.

MONITOR MEDICINES

Know which prescription and nonprescription medicines you have.

Regularly check pill quantities.

Pay attention to how often prescription medicines are being refilled.

ADULTS GIVE MEDICINES

Children and adolescents should not self-medicate.


GET RID OF MEDICINES

Remove unused or expired medicines.

Drop-off unneeded medicines at your local [medicine drop box](#).

You can also drop off medicines during [DEA Drug Take Back Days](#) (every April and October).





"An ounce of
prevention is worth
a pound of cure"

—
Benjamin Franklin

1-800-222-1222



New
Jersey
Poison
Center



Get Free Medical Help 1-800-222-1222

Medical specialists are available to provide information, answer questions, and provide emergency support 24 hours a day

Anyone can call for medical help – children, teens, and adults

[NJPoisonCenter.org](https://www.njpoisoncenter.org)

NJ Poison Control Center is a medical resource for both the public and healthcare providers.

If you think someone came in contact with something dangerous, contact your local poison control center immediately.

Call the NJ Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 or [Chat Here](#)

If someone is not breathing, hard to wake up, or having a seizure, call 9-1-1