

# Suicide Prevention and School Safety

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**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# CDPHE Resources

Office of Suicide  
Prevention

Child Fatality  
Prevention  
System

Communities  
that Care

Office of  
Health  
Equity

Interpersonal  
Violence  
Prevention

Essentials for  
Childhood

Overdose  
Prevention

Healthy  
Kids  
Colorado  
Survey

Colorado Violent  
Death Reporting  
System

Maternal and  
Child Health

School Based  
Health Centers

Data

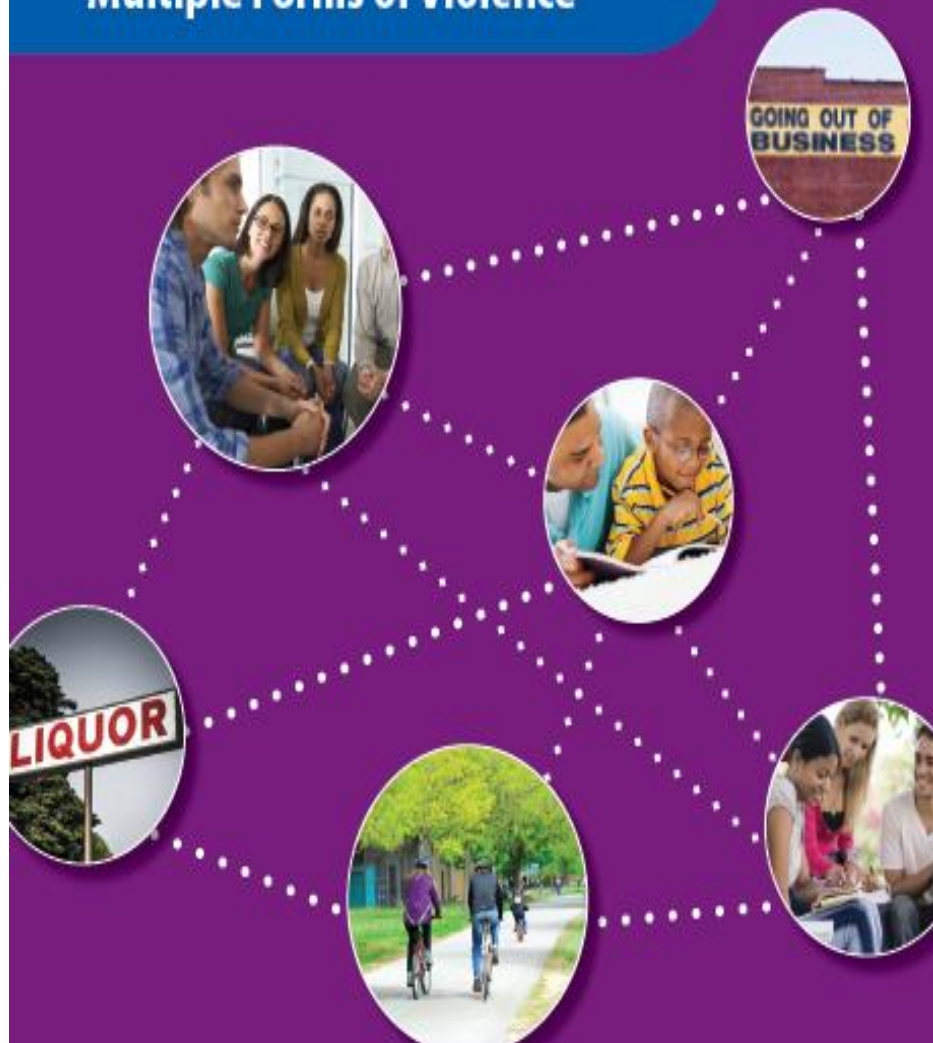


Violence and suicide share common risk and protective factors.

Both are often the result of despair and hopelessness in response to community/social drivers.

Some situations of mass violence are driven initially by suicidal despair.

## Connecting the Dots: An Overview of the Links Among Multiple Forms of Violence



# SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL MODEL



# SUICIDE IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH FOR CHILDREN UNDER AGE 17

	n	Percent		n	Percent
<b>All (n = 1093)</b>			<b>Ages 5 - 9 (n = 88)</b>		
Suicide	261	23.9	Motor vehicle and other transportation-related	43	48.9
Motor vehicle and other transportation-related	237	21.7	Child maltreatment	30	34.1
Sudden unexpected infant death	228	20.9	Unintentional drowning	12	13.6
Child maltreatment	223	20.4	Firearm	7	8.0
Firearm	168	15.4	Fall or Crush	5	5.7
<b>Age &lt; 1 (n = 299)</b>			<b>Ages 10 - 14 (n = 173)</b>		
Sudden unexpected infant death	228	76.2	Suicide	84	48.6
Child maltreatment	90	30.1	Motor vehicle and other transportation-related	48	27.8
Unintentional drowning	6	2.0	Child maltreatment	21	12.1
Motor vehicle and other transportation-related	6	2.0	Firearm	38	22.0
Other	8	2.7	Homicide	7	4.0
<b>Ages 1 - 4 (n = 149)</b>			<b>Ages 15 - 17 (n = 384)</b>		
Child Maltreatment	62	41.6	Suicide	177	46.1
Unintentional drowning	25	16.8	Motor vehicle and other transportation-related	116	30.2
Motor vehicle and other transportation-related	24	16.1	Firearm	116	30.2
Asphyxia	12	8.1	Homicide	32	8.3
Fire	10	6.7	Unintentional poisoning	26	6.8

Data source: Child Fatality Prevention System, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

\*Cause of death categories are not mutually exclusive. Totals may sum beyond 100%.



# COMMON RISK FACTORS

- Low Connection to school.
- Harmful norms around masculinity and femininity.
- Cultural norms that support aggression towards others.
- Poor neighborhood support and cohesion.
- Social isolation.
- Trauma.



# Example

Youth who feel low commitment/connection to school are more likely to:

Attempted Suicide

**2.8x**

Use Marijuana

**2.4x**

Source: Healthy Kids Colorado 2017

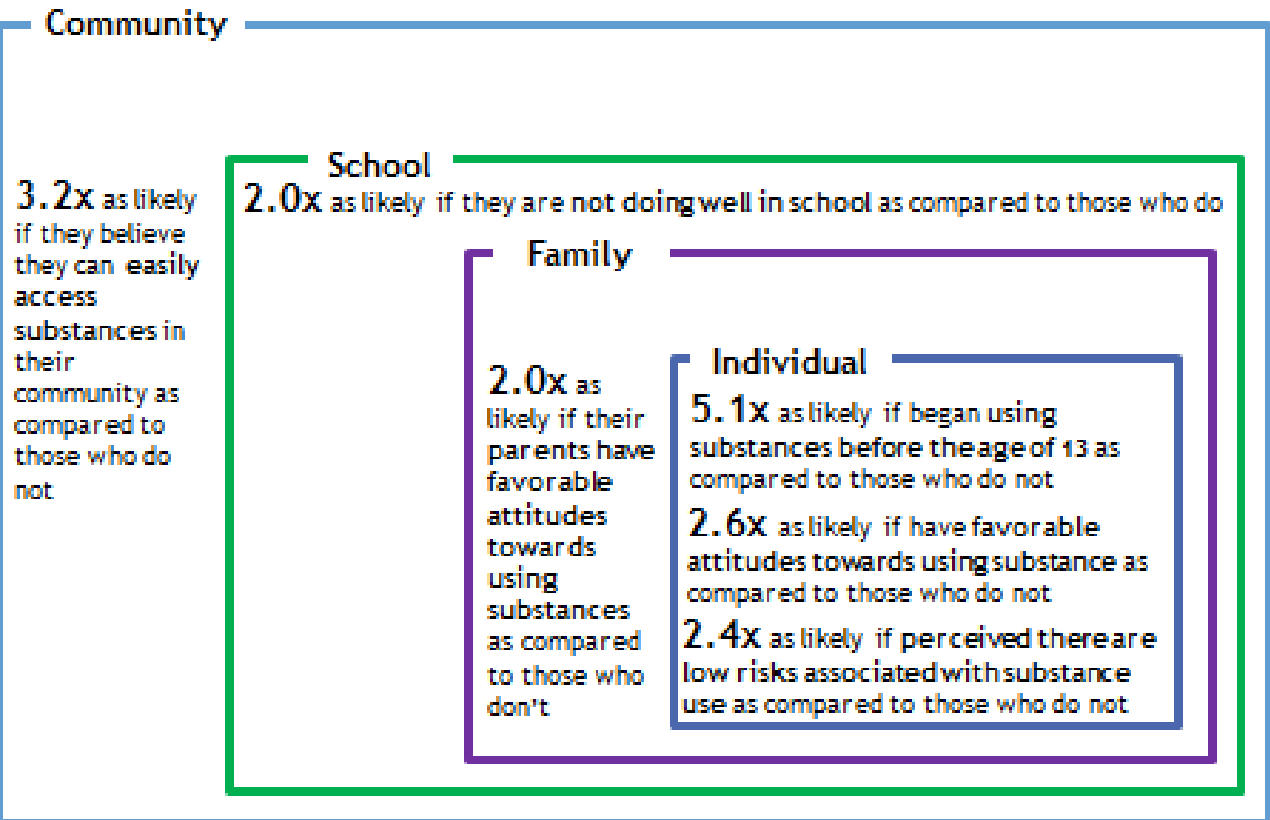


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# Health Kids Colorado- Middle School

## Exposure to Risk Factors & Suicide Attempt Among Youth

A middle school student in Colorado is more likely to have attempted suicide in the last 12 months if they have high exposure to these **risk factors**:





# Health Kids Colorado- High School

## Exposure to Risk Factors & Suicide Attempt Among Youth

A high school student in Colorado is more likely to have attempted suicide in the last 12 months if they have high exposure to these **risk factors**:

### Community

**1.8x** as likely if they believe the community where they live has laws and norms that are favorable to using substances as compared to those who do not

**2.2x** as likely if they believe they can easily access substances in their community as compared to those who do not

### School

**2.5x** as likely if they are not doing well in school as compared to those who do

**2.8x** as likely if they do not feel committed to school as compared to those who do

### Family

**2.6x** as likely if they have poor family management at home as compared to those who do not

**1.6x** as likely if their parents have favorable attitudes towards using substances as compared to those who don't

### Individual

**3.7x** as likely if began using substances before the age of 13 as compared to those who do not

**2.2x** as likely if have favorable attitudes towards using substance as compared to those who do not

**1.8x** as likely if perceived there are low risks associated with substance use as compared to those who do not



# COMMON PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Family support and connectedness.
- Connection to caring adult.
- Prosocial peers
- Connection and Commitment/Safety at School.
- Early Social-emotional learning.
- Protective environments



# COMMON PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Positive youth development
- Reducing family stress
- Addressing trauma.
- Open dialogue about mental health challenges and recovery.
- Access to responsive care.





## Preventing Suicide

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Approach</b>
<b>Strengthen economic supports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strengthen household financial security</li><li>• Housing stabilization policies</li></ul>
<b>Strengthen access and delivery of suicide care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coverage of mental health conditions in health insurance policies</li><li>• Reduce provider shortages in underserved areas</li><li>• Safer suicide care through systems change</li></ul>
<b>Create protective environments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduce access to lethal means among persons at risk of suicide</li><li>• Organizational policies and culture</li><li>• Community-based policies to reduce excessive alcohol use</li></ul>
<b>Promote connectedness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peer norm programs</li><li>• Community engagement activities</li></ul>
<b>Teach coping and problem-solving skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social-emotional learning programs</li><li>• Parenting skill and family relationship programs</li></ul>
<b>Identify and support people at risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gatekeeper training</li><li>• Crisis intervention</li><li>• Treatment for people at risk of suicide</li><li>• Treatment to prevent re-attempts</li></ul>
<b>Lessen harms and prevent future risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Postvention</li><li>• Safe reporting and messaging about suicide</li></ul>



## Promising/ Evidence-Based Practices

- Sources of Strength
- Trusted Adult and Positive Youth Development Trainings
- Mental Health First Air/Youth Mental Health First Aid
- Botvin Lifeskills Training
- Good Behavior Game/Riding the Waves.
- Gay Straight Alliances
- Hot Spot Mapping
- Second Wind Fund



# Gaps and Opportunities

- Comprehensive community-driven prevention model.
- Expand suicide prevention efforts.
- Consistent training for mental health and behavioral health providers.
- Sustainable funding.
- Support for local infrastructure.



# Gaps and Opportunities

- **Scaling evidence-based programs.**
  - Current reach of LifeSkills Training from CDPHE funds: 11% of MSs
  - Current reach of Communities That Care: ~35% of CO population
  - Current reach of Sources of Strength: ~16% of HSs
- **Support research and evaluation.**



# Local Resources

Colorado Crisis Services: 1-844-493-8255; <https://coloradocrisisservices.org>

- 24/7 walk-in clinics
- Respite care facilities
- Acute care units
- Mobile crisis teams
- Crisis line with peer support and follow up
- Services available regardless of county, region, or insurance
- Textline (38255); media campaign Below the Surface for youth: [www.coloradocrisisservices.org/youth](http://www.coloradocrisisservices.org/youth)

Second Wind Fund: [www.thesecondwindfund.org](http://www.thesecondwindfund.org)

Colorado School Safety Resource Center: [www.colorado.gov/cssrc](http://www.colorado.gov/cssrc)

Mental Health First Aid: [www.mhfacolorado.org](http://www.mhfacolorado.org)

One Colorado: [www.one-colorado.org](http://www.one-colorado.org)

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <https://afsp.org/chapter/afsp-colorado>



# Toolkits & Resources

Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools:

[www.store.samhsa.gov/product/Preventing-Suicide-A-Toolkit-for-High-Schools/SMA12-4669](http://www.store.samhsa.gov/product/Preventing-Suicide-A-Toolkit-for-High-Schools/SMA12-4669)

After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools (Second Edition):

[www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/resource-program/AfteraSuicideToolkitforSchools.pdf](http://www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/resource-program/AfteraSuicideToolkitforSchools.pdf)

Mental Health Colorado Toolkit:

[www.mentalhealthcolorado.org/schooltoolkit](http://www.mentalhealthcolorado.org/schooltoolkit)

Messaging about Suicide:

[www.suicidepreventionmessaging.org](http://www.suicidepreventionmessaging.org)

Recommendations for Reporting on Suicide:

[www.afsp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/recommendations.pdf](http://www.afsp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/recommendations.pdf)

Recommendations for Reporting on a Mass Shooting:

[www.reportingonmassshootings.org](http://www.reportingonmassshootings.org)

# THANKS!

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**More questions?**

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