

Did You Know?

Student Mental Health & Substance Abuse Fact Sheet for School Staff

Last Reviewed January 2007

The Mental Health and Substance Abuse issues that students in Maine report (Youth Risk Behavior Survey for High School Students 2005 – self reported data (n= 1,375) 27 public schools, statistically significant) available at www.maineeshp.com/survey.html

- **Suicide** – 13% of students seriously considered attempting suicide. 6% attempted suicide.
- **Substance Abuse** – 25% of students participated in ‘binge drinking’ within the month of the survey (a decrease from 34% in 1997). 22% of students reported using marijuana, 8% cocaine, 5% ecstasy, 4% heroin and 4% steroids.
- **Depression** – 21% of students felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 weeks or more in a row, that they stopped doing some usual activities.
- **Eating Disorders** – 10% of students went 24 hours or more without food to lose weight. 5.8% vomited or took laxatives within 30 days of the survey to lose weight.
- **Self Abuse** – 21.6% of students reported purposefully hurting themselves, such as cutting or burning.
- **Bullying/Harassment** – 12.5% reported that someone made offensive racial comments or attacks at school or on their way to or from school, based on race or ethnicity and 8% reported offensive comment based on perceived sexual orientation.

These are problems affecting your students and interfering with their academic achievement.

| Signs which may alert you to a problem: | What can you do? |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate behavior or feelings e.g. unfounded fear • Drop in academic achievement • Persistent sadness • Withdrawing from friends • Developing physical symptoms or fears related to personal or school problems • Truancy • Frequent somatic complaints | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to appropriate school resources • Build a positive relationship with the student • Work with families to develop a comprehensive plan |

- **In-School Resources:** Many schools have school social workers and/or counselors.
- **Community Resources:** Many local mental health agencies have school-based programs to deliver services directly to your students. To find mental health resources available in your area, call **Maine Alliance for Mentally Ill at 1-800-464-5767.**
- **Statewide Community Crisis phone – 1-888-568-1112 or 621-2553**
- **DHHS, Behavioral Health Services:**
 - Cumberland & York Counties – **1-800-269-5208**
 - Kennebec, Somerset, Androscoggin, Franklin, Oxford, Sagadahoc, Knox, Lincoln & Waldo Counties – **1-800-866-1814**

- Aroostook County– **1-800-432-7366**
- Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis & Washington Counties – **1-800-963-9491**

- **Substance Abuse Information and Resource Center – 1-800-499-0027**

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