

Issues Facing Today's Teen and Helpful Ways to Intervene

By Dorene Ahmad



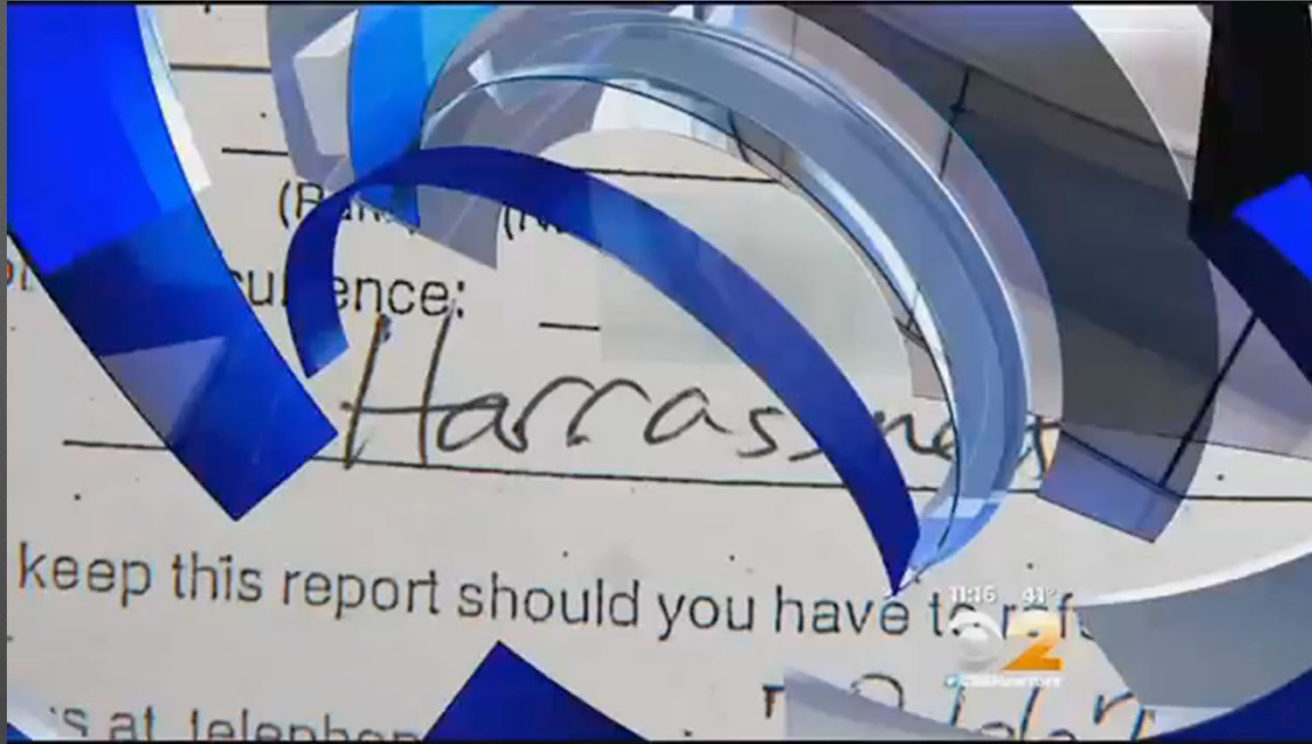
Suicide

Each day in our nation, there are an average of over 3,470 attempts by young people grades 9-12. If these percentages are additionally applied to grades 7 & 8, the numbers would be higher. Four out of Five teens who attempt suicide have given clear warning signs

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255

Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741

<http://www.texassuicideprevention.org/>



Self Harm

Self-harm is common, reported by about 8 percent of 14- to 19-year-olds.
At every stage, more girls reported self-harm than boys.

<http://www.twloha.com>

<http://kidshealth.org/en/teens/cutting.html>

Calm Harm App - <http://www.stem4.org.uk/calmharm/>

**TO
WRITE
LOVE
ON HER
ARMS.**

Developmental Impact of Self Harm on Student Achievement

- “Once suspected, students who are hurting themselves may deny their actions, but they really do want help and will eventually admit to their problems, said Ms. Alderman. “It may be days, months, or a year later,” she said.
- She added: “Most of these kids feel isolated and alienated, and they want someone to talk to.”
- “Their behavior is so isolating,” she said, and school provides a connection for them. “We would much prefer kids to spend a half an hour in my office than miss a whole day of school.”
- If the students are having associated panic attacks— hyperventilating and sobbing—they can’t go to class, Ms. Peterson points out. “How do you walk in the door if you think everyone is watching you and judging you?” Unless they seek help, Ms. Peterson said that eventually, “their academics are going to suffer.”
- Help at Wheaton North comes in the form of a “No-Harm Contract,” in which students promise in writing that they will not harm themselves. It also lists the names of three people the students can call for help, a hotline number, and a list of objects in the students’ home that they should avoid.”
- Source: <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2003/12/03/14cutters.h23.html>



Eating Disorders

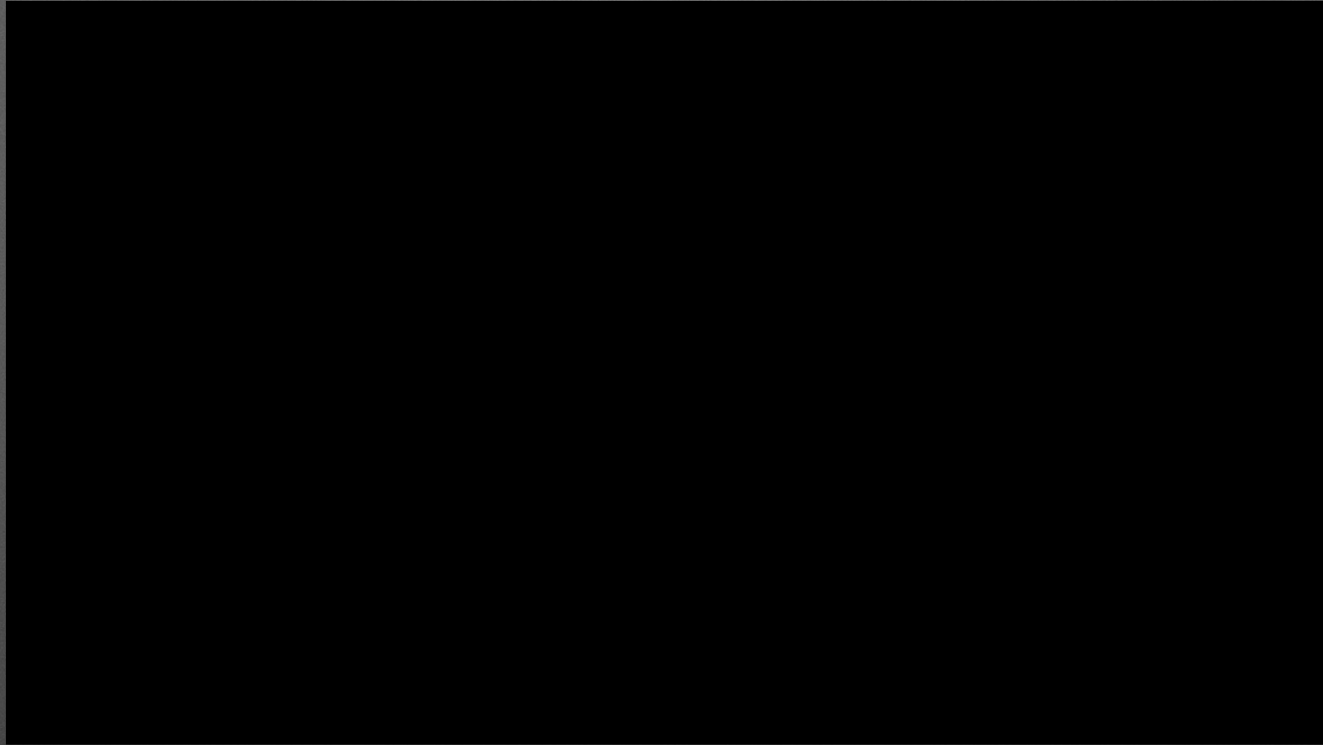
About 3 percent of U.S. adolescents are affected by an eating disorder, but most do not receive treatment for their specific eating condition.

The NEDA (National Eating Disorders Association) Helpline is available Monday-Thursday from 9AM to 9PM ET, and Friday from 9AM to 5PM ET. Contact the Helpline for support, resources and treatment options for yourself or a loved one. 1-800-931-2237

<https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/>

Developmental Impact of Eating Disorders on Student Achievement

- “Most eating disorders occur between the ages of 13 and 17, when adolescents are dealing with puberty as well as other academic and social pressures. Eating disorders can severely impact school performance because of the combination of nutritional and mental health issues. Students with eating disorders often have problems with concentration, memory and information processing. They may also become irritable, socially withdrawn and apathetic, and they may experience fatigue and develop a poor overall immune system due to poor nutrition. All of these effects impact student behavior, academic achievement and school attendance. Also, research shows that individuals suffering from eating disorders spend 70 to 90 percent of their waking hours thinking about food and weight-related issues. A child who is plagued with these unhealthy thoughts can not thrive at school or beyond.”
- Source: <https://www.aft.org/childrens-health/mental-health/eating-disorders>



Teen Pregnancy

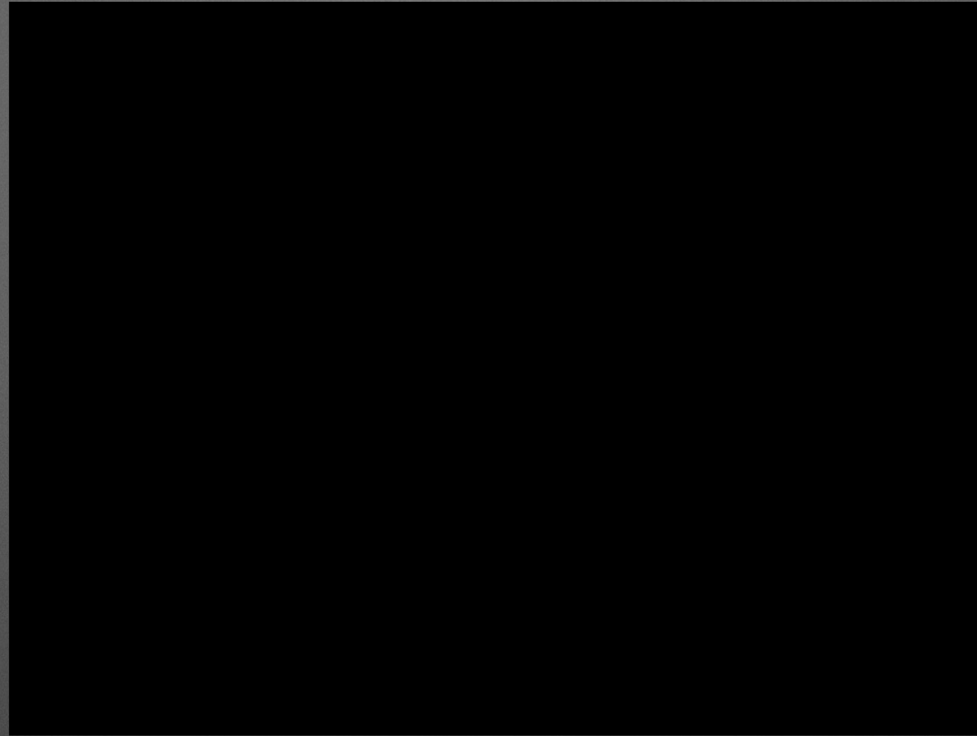
Texas has the highest rate of repeat teen pregnancies in the country.

<http://txcampaign.org/> - The Texas Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

<https://www.cdc.gov/teenpregnancy/about/index.htm>

Developmental Impact of Teen Pregnancy on Student Achievement

- “Thirty percent of all teenage girls who drop out of school cite pregnancy and parenthood as key reasons. Rates among Hispanic (36 percent) and African American (38 percent) girls are higher.
- Only 40 percent of teen mothers finish high school. Fewer than 2 percent finish college by age 30.
- Young women who give birth while attending a community college are 65 percent less likely to complete their degree than women who do not have children during that time.
- Children of teen mothers perform worse on many measures of school readiness, are 50 percent more likely to repeat a grade, and are more likely than children born to older mothers to drop out of high school..”
- Source: <http://www.ncsl.org/research/health/teen-pregnancy-affects-graduation-rates-postcard.aspx>



Underage Drinking

Though statistics show that progress is being made, 19% of 12-20 year olds reported alcohol consumption in a national survey of over 7 million people.

<https://responsibility.org/start-a-conversation/responsibility-teens/>
<https://drugfree.org/article/how-to-address-underage-drinking/>

Developmental Impact of Underage Drinking on Student Achievement

- “The brain doesn’t finish developing until the mid-twenties and introducing alcohol during this critical time has serious consequences.
- The prefrontal cortex enables a person to think clearly, to make good decisions and to control impulses. Underage drinking could cause severe changes in this area, which plays an important role in forming adult personality and behavior. Damage from alcohol at this time can be long-term and irreversible.
- The hippocampus, involved in learning and memory, suffers the worst alcohol related brain damage in teens. Long-term, heavy drinking causes teens to have a 10% smaller hippocampi (American Medical Association, 2010). In addition, short-term or moderate drinking impairs learning and memory far more in youths than adults. Frequent drinkers may never be able to catch up in adulthood since alcohol inhibits systems crucial for storing new information.”
- Source: <http://nextstepcommunitysolutions.com/blog/uncategorized/7-consequences-of-underage-drinking/>