



**SUICIDE
PREVENTION
&
AWARENESS**

SEPTEMBER 2023



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September — Suicide Prevention & Awareness Month

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LETTER TO PARTNERS



Hi everyone,

If you're back in school, we hope the new semester is bringing feelings of joy, learning, and growth. Be sure to check out last month's Back-to-School toolkit for tips and tools to help you navigate the new year.

This month, we're providing resources specific to suicide awareness and prevention. Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone, regardless of race, gender, religion, etc., and we hope to equip as many individuals as possible with knowledge about suicide as well as how to respond or approach the subject if you or someone you know may be considering suicide.

As always, share this toolkit with your peers and colleagues, and follow us on social media for regular updates!

TAKE ACTION

Follow us on Twitter,
Instagram and
Facebook
[@FreeYourFeelsGA](#)



**SEPTEMBER:
SUICIDE
PREVENTION
& AWARENESS
MONTH**

BACKGROUND



Suicide was the third leading cause of death for Georgia children aged 5-17 in 2021.

Source: 2021 Georgia Child Fatality Review Panel

Thoughts of suicide, and death by suicide, are affecting young people at an alarming rate. While this topic is often stigmatized and thought of as “taboo”, not talking about it perpetuates the stigma. Starting the conversation can save a life. That’s why, this month, we’re honoring Suicide Prevention Month by raising awareness and having an open and honest conversation (and encouraging others to do the same) about suicide.

September is National Suicide Prevention Month

- All month, mental health advocates, survivors, mental health organizations, community members, and more unite to promote suicide prevention awareness.

World Suicide Prevention Day (Sep. 10)

- World Suicide Prevention Day is September 10. It’s a day to remember those affected by suicide, raise awareness, and emphasize treatment resources for those who may need it.

 **FOR URGENT SUPPORT TEXT OR CALL 988, OR CALL OR DOWNLOAD GCAL: 1-800-715-4225**



BACKGROUND

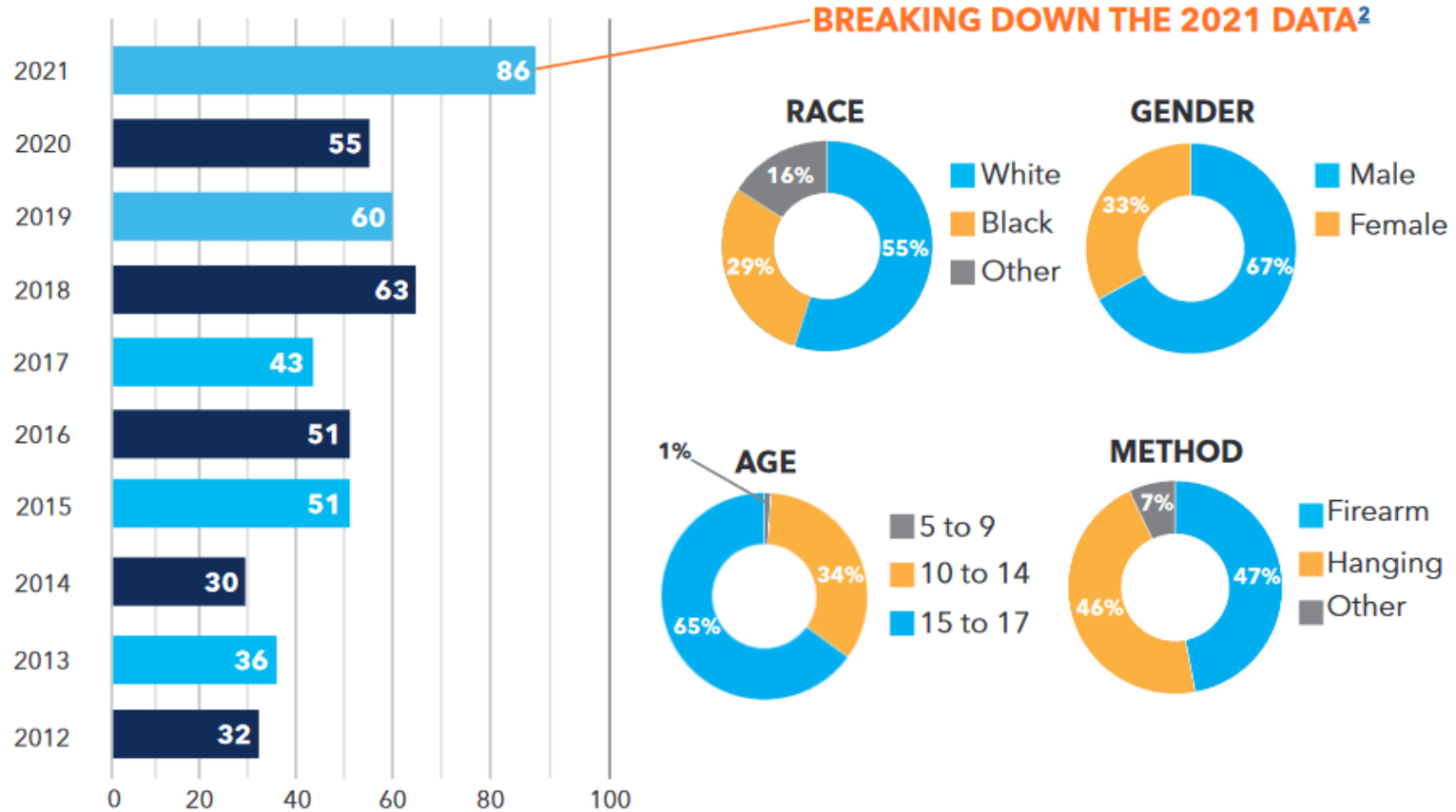


Youth Suicide in Georgia

Suicide was the **third** leading cause of death for Georgia children aged 5-17 in 2021.¹

GEORGIA YOUTH SUICIDES, AGES 5-17

Source: State Child Fatality Review Panel



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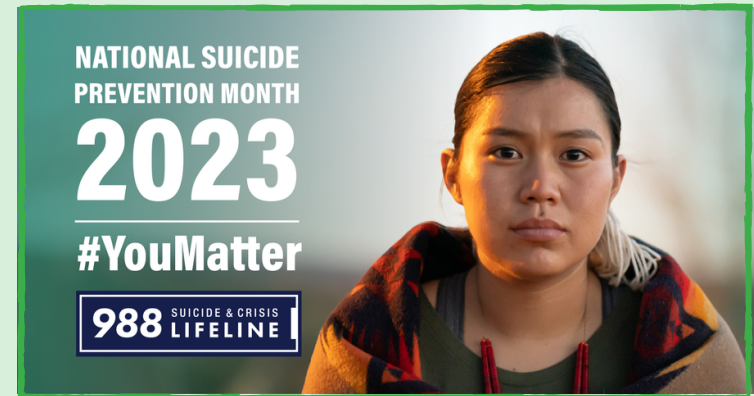
FOR EVERYONE

FREE
your
FEELS™

Everyone – of any age, race, ethnicity, gender, or religion – take a few seconds to save 988 in your phone. Last summer, the three-digit number 9-8-8 launched as the designed National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. You can call or text 988 at any time or day if you or someone else is in distress, feel like there may be a risk of suicide, or are having a crisis related to mental health, substance use, or a developmental disability. Text and online chat services available in English and Spanish.

TAKE ACTION

Save 988 in your phone and visit www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988 to learn more.



FOR URGENT SUPPORT TEXT OR CALL 988, OR CALL THE GA CRISIS AND ACCESS LINE: 1-800-715-4225

FOR EVERYONE




If you knew someone close to you was thinking about suicide, chances are, you would likely take action. But many people don't know where to start or what to do in that situation. This 3-minute video illustrates 5 steps you can take to help save a life. (Fun fact: this video is narrated by actor Nick Offerman!)



TAKE ACTION

Watch this brief video for steps you can take to help save a life.



FOR YOUTH



Have you heard of a safety plan? Do you have one in place? A safety plan helps guide you through a crisis. Each step can help you feel safer and find help. Create a plan and keep it readily and easily accessible in case you begin to have thoughts of harming yourself.

Step 1/6

MY WARNING SIGNS

A warning sign is something you think, feel, or do as suicidal thoughts are starting to develop.

Warning Sign

Warning Sign

Warning Sign

⊕ ADD ANOTHER WARNING SIGN

- How will you know when to use your safety plan?
- What is happening when you start to experience suicidal thoughts or feel overwhelmed?
- How do you feel physically before you begin feeling suicidal or like harming yourself? (e.g., heart racing, not sleeping or eating well)

Next



TAKE ACTION

Learn more and create your own safety plan at <https://www.mysafetyplan.org/>



FOR YOUTH



It may be difficult to know what to say to a friend or peer who you think may be having suicidal thoughts, but it's critical to reach out and start the conversation. Keep top of mind that research clearly shows that asking something clearly and directly about suicide does not inspire suicidal thoughts.

How to Help a Friend Who May Be Feeling Suicidal



TAKE ACTION

Read specific tips from the Jed Foundation here:
<https://jedfoundation.org/resource/how-to-help-a-friend-who-is-suicidal/>



FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS



The Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide was founded by two caregivers who lost teenage children to suicide. Based out of New Jersey, this nonprofit organization focuses on raising awareness and saving lives.

TAKE ACTION

Caregivers can use [this webpage](#) as a guide for talking to your children about suicide.



Talking To Your Kids About Suicide



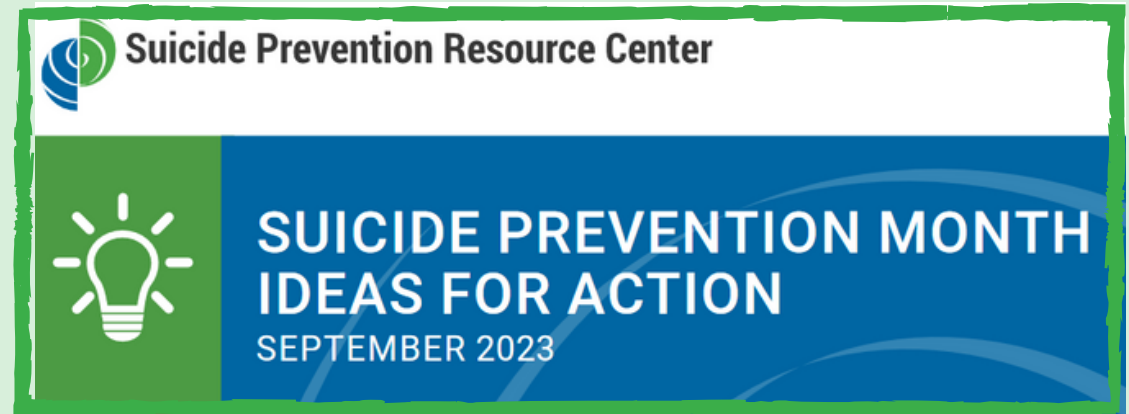
FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS



The Suicide Prevention Resources Center offers information to aide anyone in taking action to help prevent suicide in your community, such as learning about effective suicide prevention, sharing stories of hope, and empowering everyone to be there for those in distress.

TAKE ACTION

View [this two-pager](#) for ideas for action!



FOR EDUCATORS & PROFESSIONALS



There are actions we can take to promote healing, to help, and to give hope to young people who may be struggling with suicidal thoughts. Individuals are more likely to feel less depressed, less suicidal, less overwhelmed, and more hopeful after speaking to someone who listens without judgment.

WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR



These signs may mean that someone is at risk for suicide. Risk is greater if the behavior is new, or has increased, and if it seems related to a painful event, loss, or change. Risk is also greater with the presence of multiple warning signs.⁴

- Talking about wanting to die or kill oneself
- Seeking or having lethal means, such as firearms or medication, to kill oneself
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or being in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Displaying extreme mood swings
- Putting affairs in order or saying goodbye
- Sudden cheerful mood after depression
- Losing interest in enjoyable things
- Difficulty dealing with life issues

PROTECTIVE FACTORS TO PREVENT SUICIDE

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, protective factors buffer individuals from suicidal thoughts and behaviors.⁵

- Ongoing quality healthcare for mental, physical, and substance abuse disorders
- Easy access to a variety of clinical interventions and support
- Family and community support and connection
- Development of strong skills for non-violent conflict resolution and problem solving
- Cultural and religious beliefs that discourage suicide and support instincts for self-preservation

TAKE ACTION

Learn more about the warning signs of suicidal behavior as well as protective factors to help prevent suicide [here](#).



FOR EDUCATORS & PROFESSIONALS

FREE
your
FEELS™

Raising staff awareness about suicide and training staff to take steps that prevent it are critical components of any comprehensive school-based suicide prevention program. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention even offers the “Model School District Policy on Suicide Prevention” to give educators and school administrators a comprehensive way to implement suicide prevention strategies and policies in their local community.



TAKE ACTION

Download actionable steps to support schools, including: how to involve parents, guidance for addressing suicide attempts in and out of school, warning signs, and more.



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QUESTIONS? CONTACT

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