

### Announcements

[Injury Control Research Center for Suicide Prevention \(ICRC-S\) Launches New Webinar and Conference Call Series to Start in January 2013: The Intersection of Suicide Research and Public Health Practice](#)

[SAMHSA's Native American Center for Excellence Two Spirit Learning Community presents webinar, Depression and Suicide in the Two-Spirit Community, Tuesday, December 18, 2012, 1:00-2:00 PM ET](#)

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline issues Call for Nominations for their steering committee and subcommittees](#)

[Child Trends releases research brief, Health Insurance Access and Counseling Receipt and their Association with Later Depressive and Suicidal Symptoms](#)

### Research

#### [Help Seeking by Young People: Part II](#)

A study of help-seeking among high school students who had seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months found that "knowing adults who are trustworthy and capable of helping with suicide concerns was the most robust predictor of youth help-seeking..." Other factors associated with help-seeking included positive attitudes toward help-seeking from school staff, student engagement with the school, and student willingness to talk to adults about suicide despite promises of secrecy made to friends. The willingness to violate promises of secrecy was taken as a sign that students would engage with adults about suicidality.

The authors suggest that help-seeking among students can be enhanced by creating a school culture in which students (1) think adults are willing and capable of helping them, (2) see the school as providing resources that help them cope with problems, and (3) are willing to break promises of secrecy and talk to adults in situations involving the risk of suicide. The authors also suggest that the adults in a school must be prepared to actually help students.

The authors defined help-seeking as a combination of disclosing suicidal thoughts to an adult and consciously seeking help from that person. Among students who reported experiencing suicidal ideation in the last 12 months, about 23 percent had told an adult, 29 percent had sought adult help, and 15 percent had done both (i.e. had engaged in "help-seeking"). In contrast, 53 percent of students reporting suicidal ideation in the past 12 months had told a friend about their problem. The research explored help-seeking behavior among adolescents who had seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months from a dozen high schools in rural or underserved urban communities.

#### SPRC Commentary

The three articles on help-seeking summarized in this, and the preceding two, issues of the Weekly Spark speak to the limitations of simply teaching people to seek help if they are depressed or thinking about suicide. The article summarized in this issue helps us understand that the reluctance of teens to seek help is not simple embarrassment or a lack of information, but often based on their perceptions – accurate or not – of whether asking for help will result in assistance that effectively addresses their problems. Teaching young people to ask for help is not enough. We must also create an environment in which 1) teens understand that asking for help will result in effective help, 2) adults have been trained to provide help, and 3) the resources necessary for this help are available.

Pisani, A. R., Schmeelk-Cone, K., Gunzler, D., Petrova, M., Goldston, D. B., Tu, X., & Wyman, P. A. (2012). [Associations between suicidal high school students' help-seeking and their attitudes and perceptions of social environment](#). *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 41(10):1312-1324.

### News

#### National News

[Changes to the psychiatrists' bible, DSM: Some reactions](#)

#### State News

[Effort to fight suicide focuses on "the help and the hope"](#)

#### International News

[Study highlights need for suicide prevention strategies for young men](#)

### Weekly Spark Signup

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### Previous Issues

### About the Weekly Spark

The Weekly Spark contains announcements and information about suicide, suicide prevention and mental health issues. We offer brief summaries of national, state and international news; analyses of relevant research findings; descriptions of funding opportunities, and links to additional resources. The Weekly Spark is written and edited by SPRC staff. Every effort is made to offer relevant and timely information with links to the original content as available.

We welcome your suggestions at [info@sprc.org](mailto:info@sprc.org). In general, the Weekly Spark does not include editorials, opinion pieces or information on local events. [Events](#) may be listed in the SPRC Calendar.

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