

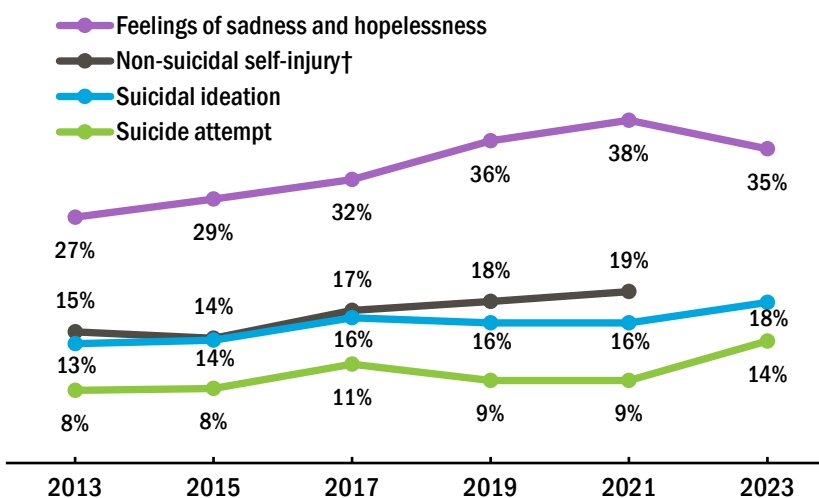
Suicide-related Behaviors among New York City Public High School and Middle School Students

Suicide-related thoughts and behaviors include feelings of sadness and hopelessness, suicidal ideation, non-suicidal self-injury, and suicide attempts, and all can be warning signs for suicide.¹ Youth suicide risk is shaped by the combination of individual, relational, communal, and societal level factors such as suicide-related behaviors, loneliness, discrimination, and stigma.¹ A 2023 [Epi Data Brief](#) from the New York City (NYC) Health Department summarized these behaviors among NYC public high school students from 2011 to 2021 and found inequities among Black, Latino, female, and LGBTQ+ youth.² LGBTQ+ and racially minoritized youth often face increased risk of suicide-related behaviors due to repeated exposure to discrimination and racism.^{3,4} This report provides updated estimates on suicide-related behaviors through 2023 and expands the survey population by adding middle school data for years 2018 to 2022. This brief identifies groups who may be at heightened risk for suicide-related behaviors using data from the NYC Youth Risk Behavior Survey on NYC public high school and middle school students.

Suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, and feelings of sadness and hopelessness have increased among New York City public high school students from 2013 to 2023

- Between 2013 and 2023, the percentage of students who reported feelings of sadness and hopelessness, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts increased.

Trends of reported suicide-related behaviors among New York City public high school students, 2013 to 2023



†Data not available for 2023

Source: New York City Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2013-2023

Definitions:

Suicide-related behaviors refer to students who responded “yes” to questions about:

Suicidal ideation: for high school students, defined as having seriously considered attempting suicide in the 12 months prior to the survey. For middle school (MS) students, this was asked over one’s lifetime.

Suicide attempt: defined as having attempted suicide one or more times in the 12 months prior to the survey. For MS YRBS, this was asked over one’s lifetime.

Feeling sad and hopeless: defined as having felt sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more during the past 12 months. In the MS YRBS, feeling sad and hopeless is defined as reporting having often been bothered by feeling down, depressed, irritable, or hopeless during the past 30 days.

Non-suicidal self-injury: defined as having done something to purposely hurt themselves without wanting to die (such as cutting or burning on purpose). For YRBS 2013-2021, the time frame was within 12 months prior to the survey and for MS YRBS, was over one’s lifetime.

LGBTQ+ (adapted from The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community Center): abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning or queer, and ‘plus’ to signify all gender identities and sexual orientations that letters and words cannot yet fully describe.

Data Sources:

NYC Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) 2013 to 2023 and NYC Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (MS YRBS) 2018 to 2022 are biennial self-administered, anonymous surveys conducted in NYC public high schools and middle schools (including charter schools) by the NYC Health Department and NYC Public Schools. For more survey details, visit

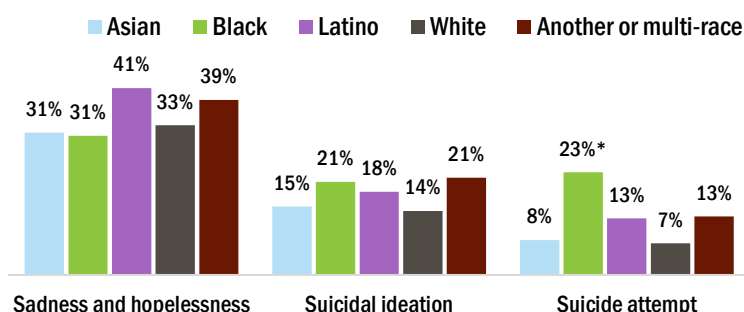
<https://www.nyc.gov/site/doh/data/data-sets/nyc-youth-risk-behavior-survey.page>

*Estimate marked with an asterisk should be interpreted with caution. Estimate’s Relative Standard Error (a measure of estimate precision) is greater than 30%, or the 95% Confidence Interval half-width is greater than 10 or the sample size is too small, making the estimate potentially unreliable.

Experiences of suicide-related behaviors among public high school students varied across racial and ethnic groups

- In 2023, Latino (41%) public high school students were more likely to experience feelings of sadness and hopelessness compared with their white (33%) peers.
- Public high school students who identified as Black (21%), Latino (18%), or Another or multi-race (21%), were more likely than white (14%) students to report suicidal ideation.
- Similarly, public high school students who identified as Black (23%*), Latino (13%), and Another or multi-race (13%), were more likely than white (7%) students to report attempting suicide.

Prevalence of suicide-related behaviors by race and ethnicity among New York City public high school students, 2023



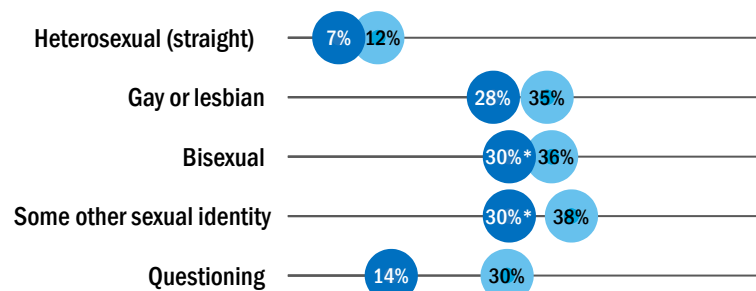
Latino includes Hispanic or Latino of any race. Asian, Black, white, and Another or multi-race categories exclude Latino ethnicity. Another or multi-race includes those who self-identify as American Indian, Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, and multiple races. *Estimate should be interpreted with caution due to wide 95% Confidence Interval.

Source: New York City Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2023

Reports of suicidal ideation and attempting suicide differed among public high school students by sexual orientation and gender identity

- In 2023, public high school students who identified as bisexual (36%), gay or lesbian (35%), some other sexual identity (38%), and questioning (30%), were more likely than those who identified as heterosexual or straight (12%) to report suicidal ideation.
- Similarly, students who identified as bisexual (30%*), gay or lesbian (28%), some other sexual identity (30%*), and questioning (14%), were more likely to report attempting suicide compared with students who identified as heterosexual or straight (7%).
- Public high school students who identified as transgender (42%), non-binary (38%*), some other gender identity (45%), or questioning (28%), were more likely to report suicidal ideation when compared with those who identified as cisgender (16%).
- Those who identified as transgender (49%*), non-binary (29%*), some other gender identity (33%*), or questioning (61%*), were more likely to report attempting suicide compared with those who identified as cisgender (9%).

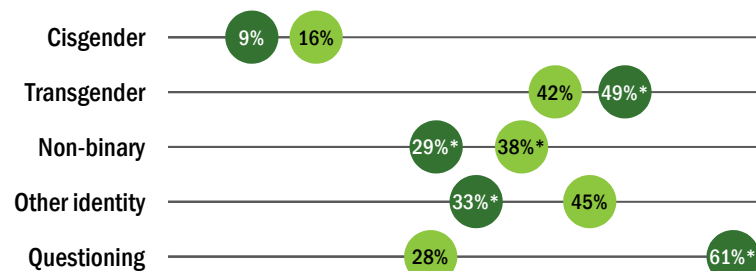
Prevalence of suicidal ideation and suicide attempts by sexual orientation among New York City public high school students, 2023



*Estimate should be interpreted with caution due to wide 95% Confidence Interval.

Source: New York City Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2023

Prevalence of suicidal ideation and suicide attempts by gender identity among New York City public high school students, 2023

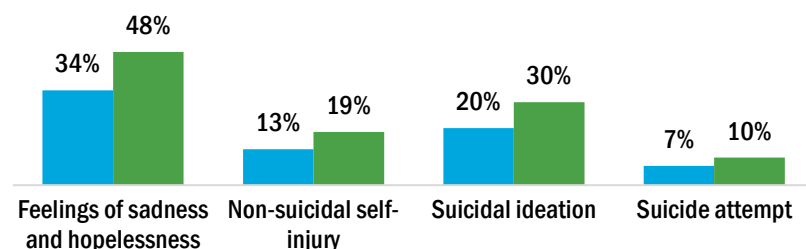


*Estimate should be interpreted with caution due to wide 95% Confidence Interval.

Source: New York City Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2023

Among middle school students, the prevalence of feelings of sadness and hopelessness, non-suicidal self-injury, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempt increased between 2018 and 2022

Prevalence of suicide-related behaviors among New York City public middle school students, 2018 and 2022

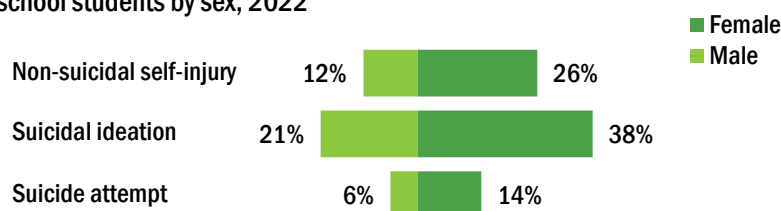


Source: New York City Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2018

- Nearly half (48%) of middle school students reported feelings of sadness and hopelessness in 2022, an increase from 2018 (34%).
- The prevalence increased from 2018 to 2022 of middle school students reporting non-suicidal self injury (13% vs. 19%), suicidal ideation (20% vs. 30%), and suicide attempt (7% vs. 10%).

Female middle school students were more likely to experience non-suicidal self-injury, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempt compared with males

Prevalence of suicide-related behaviors among New York City public middle school students by sex, 2022

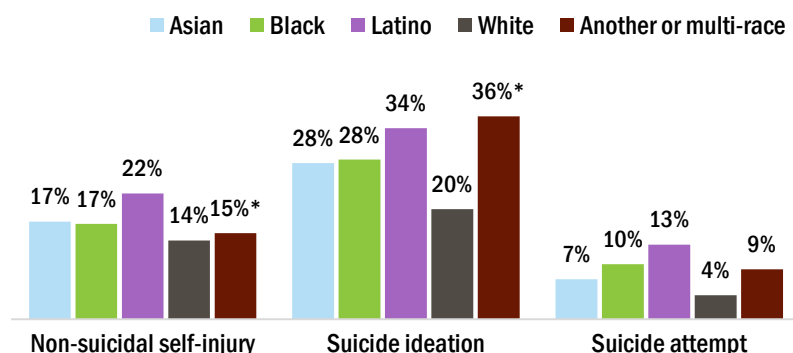


Source: New York City Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2022

- In 2022, female middle school students (26%) were more likely to report non-suicidal self-injury compared with male middle school students (12%).
- Female middle school students were also more likely to report suicidal ideation (38%) and suicide attempt (14%) compared with their male counterpart (21% and 6%, respectively).

Experiences of suicide-related behaviors among public middle school students varied across racial and ethnic groups

Prevalence of suicide-related behaviors among New York City public middle school students by race and ethnicity, 2022



Latino includes Hispanic or Latino of any race. Asian, Black, white, and Another or multi-race categories exclude Latino ethnicity. Another or multi-race includes those who self-identify as American Indian, Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, and multiple races.

*Estimate should be interpreted with caution due to large Relative Standard Error.

Source: New York City Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2022

- In 2022, Latino (22%) middle school students were more likely than their white (14%) peers to report non-suicidal self-injury.
- In 2022, public middle school students who identified as Black (28%) or Latino (34%), were more likely than white (20%) students to report suicidal ideation.
- Those who identified as Black (10%), Latino (13%), and Asian (7%), were more likely than white (4%) students to report attempting suicide.

Implications

Over the past decade there have been alarming increases in the rates of suicide-related behaviors, such as feelings of hopelessness and sadness, non-suicidal self-injury, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts among NYC public high school students. Similarly, from 2018 to 2022 there were increases in these suicide-related behaviors among NYC public middle school students. Black and Latino youth experience suicide-related behaviors at a higher and more disproportionate rate compared with white youth. LGBTQ+ youth also experience higher rates of suicide-related behaviors when compared with heterosexual and cisgender students. The Health Department is working to eliminate the inequities in youth suicidal behaviors and reducing suicide death is a focus of [HealthyNYC](#), New York City's campaign for healthier and longer lives. This work includes

tailoring suicide prevention programs and services for racially minoritized and LGBTQ+ youth, addressing the impacts of discrimination and racism on youth mental health, and improving the systems and structures that inhibit equitable access to resources that support well-being. It is important to ensure that youth suicide prevention efforts are embedded with principles of empathy, dignity and compassion and are adapted to be culturally competent, aware, and responsive. The 988 number is connection to compassionate support and care for anyone experiencing mental health-related distress, including feeling sad, depressed, or suicidal. Crisis support for LGBTQ+ youth is also available through the [Trevor Project](#) by calling 1-866-488-7386.

Health equity is attainment of the highest level of health and well-being for all people. Not all New Yorkers have the same opportunities to live a healthy life. Achieving health equity requires focused and ongoing societal efforts to address historical and contemporary injustices such as discrimination based on race and ethnicity, and other identities. For more information, visit the World Health Organization's [Health Equity](#) webpage.

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Authors: Nicole Stratton, Kemar McIntosh, Claire Ogburn, Kelli Peterman, Jaynisha Jackson, Meghan Hamwey

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- 1 Hua LL, Lee J, Rahmandar MH, et al. Suicide and Suicide Risk in Adolescents. *Pediatrics*. 2023;153(1).
- 2 Abdelnabi J, Lundy De La Cruz N, Levanon Seligson A, Hamwey M. Suicide-related factors among New York City Public High School Students. *New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: Epi Data Brief (138)*; November 2023.
- 3 Meyer IH, Frost DM. Minority Stress and the Health of Sexual Minorities. In: Patterson CJ, D'Augelli AR, eds. *Handbook of Psychology and Sexual Orientation*. Oxford University Press; 2012:0.
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New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene





Epi Data Tables

September 2025, No. 149

Suicide-Related Behaviors among New York City Public High School and Middle School Students

Data Tables

- Table 1.** Overall prevalence of suicide-related behaviors among New York City public high school students, 2023
- Table 2.** Overall prevalence of suicide-related behaviors among New York City public middle school students, 2018 and 2022
- Table 3.** Prevalence of suicide-related behaviors by demographic characteristics among New York City public high school students, 2023
- Table 4.** Prevalence of suicide-related behaviors by demographic characteristics among New York City public middle school students, 2022

Data Sources

NYC Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) 2013 to 2023 and NYC Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (MS YRBS) 2018 to 2022 are biennial self-administered, anonymous surveys conducted in NYC public high schools (including public charter schools) by the Health Department and the NYC Department of Education. For more survey details, visit www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/data/data-sets/nyc-youth-risk-behavior-survey.page.



Table 1. Overall prevalence of suicide-related behaviors among New York City public high school students, 2023

Source: New York City Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2023.

Data are weighted to the NYC public high school student population.

All N's are weighted. Weighted N population estimates are rounded to the nearest 1,000.

	Weighted N	Prevalence (%)		Lower 95% Confidence Interval	Upper 95% Confidence Interval
During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?					
Yes	92,000	35.5	D	32.5	38.6
No	167,000	64.5	U	61.4	67.5
During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide?					
Yes	46,000	17.9		16.5	19.5
No	211,000	82.1		80.5	83.5
During the past 12 months, did you actually attempt suicide one or more times?					
Yes	29,000	13.6		9.9	18.5
No	187,000	86.4		81.5	90.1

95% confidence intervals are a measure of estimate precision: the wider the CI, the more imprecise the estimate.

U When reporting to nearest whole percent, round up

D When reporting to nearest whole percent, round down

Table 2. Overall prevalence of suicide-related behaviors among New York City public middle school students, 2018 and 2022

Source: New York City Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2018 and 2022.

Data are weighted to the NYC public middle school student population.

All N's are weighted. Weighted N population estimates are rounded to the nearest 1,000.

2018					2022				2018-2022 Comparison
	Weighted N	Prevalence (%)	Lower 95% Confidence Interval	Upper 95% Confidence Interval	Weighted N	Prevalence (%)	Lower 95% Confidence Interval	Upper 95% Confidence Interval	p -value
During the past 30 days, have you often been bothered by feeling down, depressed, irritable, or hopeless?									
Yes	71,000	33.9	30.8	37.3	91,000	47.6	44.3	50.9	<0.001
No	138,000	66.1	62.7	69.2	100,000	52.4	49.1	55.7	
Did you ever do something to purposely hurt yourself without wanting to die, such as cutting or burning yourself on purpose?									
Yes	27,000	12.8	10.8	15.0	35,000	19.0	16.4	22.0	0.001
No	182,000	87.2	85.0	89.2	147,000	81.0	78.0	83.6	
Have you ever seriously thought about killing yourself?									
Yes	42,000	20.4	18.1	22.8	54,000	29.7	25.1	34.7	0.001
No	165,000	79.6	77.2	81.9	128,000	70.3	65.3	74.9	
Have you ever tried to kill yourself?									
Yes	14,000	6.9	5.7	8.2	18,000	9.9	8.1	12.0	0.009
No	194,000	93.1	91.8	94.3	164,000	90.1	88.0	91.9	

95% confidence intervals are a measure of estimate precision: the wider the CI, the more imprecise the estimate.

Significance test is based on t-test analysis. Bold p-values are significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 3. Prevalence of suicide-related behaviors by demographic characteristics among New York City public high school students, 2023

Source: New York City Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2023.

Data are weighted to the NYC public high school student population.

All N's are weighted. Weighted N population estimates are rounded to the nearest 1,000.

	Feelings of sadness and hopelessness					Suicidal ideation					Suicide attempt				
	Weighted N	Prevalence (%)	Lower 95% Confidence Interval	Upper 95% Confidence Interval	p-value	Weighted N	Prevalence (%)	Lower 95% Confidence Interval	Upper 95% Confidence Interval	p-value	Weighted N	Prevalence (%)	Lower 95% Confidence Interval	Upper 95% Confidence Interval	p-value
Total	92,000	35.5 D	32.5	38.6		46,000	17.9	16.5	19.5		29,000	13.6	9.9	18.5	
Race and ethnicity¹															
Asian	14,000	31.4	28.6	34.3	0.596	7,000	15.1	12.7	17.8	0.552	3,000	7.7	6.1	9.6	0.661
Black	19,000	30.7	23.6	38.7	0.603	13,000	20.5 U	16.8	24.8	0.010	11,000	22.6 *	11.0	40.6	0.045
Latino	42,000	41.2	38.8	43.7	0.004	18,000	18.3	16.9	19.8	0.008	10,000	12.5 U	10.3	15.2	0.002
White	11,000	33.0	28.0	38.3	reference	5,000	14.1	11.4	17.4	reference	2,000	7.0	4.3	11.2	reference
Another or multi-race	4,000	38.6	34.2	43.2	0.114	2,000	21.4	17.4	26.1	0.007	1,000	12.9	9.4	17.6	0.025
What is your gender identity?															
Cisgender	66,000	34.6	32.1	37.2	reference	30,000	15.9	14.6	17.4	reference	15,000	9.5 D	7.7	11.6	reference
Transgender	3,000	44.1 *	23.3	67.2	0.393	3,000	41.6	34.7	48.8	<0.001	3,000	49.1 *	28.2	70.3	<0.001
Non-binary	3,000	53.6 *	38.7	67.9	0.007	2,000	38.0 *	26.1	51.5	0.001	1,000	28.8 *	14.9	48.2	0.017
I identify some other way	3,000	49.9	42.0	57.9	<0.001	3,000	45.3	37.6	53.2	<0.001	2,000	33.1 *	15.2	57.9	0.033
I am not sure about my gender identity	3,000	42.3 *	20.8	67.2	0.513	2,000	28.2	22.3	34.8	<0.001	3,000	60.7 *	31.5	83.9	<0.001
I do not know what this question is asking	11,000	33.7	29.9	37.6	0.597	5,000	14.6	12.1	17.4	0.370	4,000	14.7	11.4	18.7	0.012
What is your sex?															
Female	57,000	44.9	41.4	48.4	reference	28,000	22.3	20.7	24.1	reference	15,000	14.1	10.1	19.2	reference
Male	34,000	26.2	23.9	28.7	<0.001	17,000	13.2	11.0	15.8	<0.001	13,000	12.2	8.4	17.3	0.046
Which of the following best describes you? (Sexual identity)															
Heterosexual (straight)	57,000	31.1	29.1	33.1	reference	22,000	12.2	11.2	13.4	reference	11,000	6.9	5.8	8.1	reference
Gay or lesbian	4,000	52.2	43.0	61.3	<0.001	3,000	35.1	26.1	45.3	<0.001	2,000	27.8	19.2	38.3	<0.001
Bisexual	15,000	52.9 *	39.3	66.0	0.002	10,000	35.7	32.5	39.0	<0.001	7,000	30.2 *	17.8	46.4	0.002
I describe my sexual identity some other way	6,000	53.2 *	41.3	64.7	<0.001	4,000	38.4	33.4	43.6	<0.001	3,000	29.6 *	17.6	45.2	0.002
I am not sure about my sexual identity (questioning)	5,000	46.8	39.1	54.6	<0.001	3,000	29.7	22.7	37.8	<0.001	1,000	14.0	9.3	20.3	0.012
I do not know what this question is asking	3,000	26.1 *	16.8	38.2	0.389	2,000	21.0	14.3	29.7	0.035	4,000	49.2 *	25.6	73.3	0.002

*Estimate should be interpreted with caution. Estimate's Relative Standard Error (a measure of estimate precision) is greater than 30%, or the 95% Confidence Interval half-width is greater than 10 or the sample size is too small, making the estimate potentially unreliable.

95% confidence intervals are a measure of estimate precision: the wider the CI, the more imprecise the estimate.

Significance test is based on t-test analysis. Bold p-values are significant at the 0.05 level.

U When reporting to nearest whole percent, round up

D When reporting to nearest whole percent, round down

1 Latino includes people of Hispanic or Latino origin regardless of race. All other race/ethnicity categories exclude those who identify as Latino. "Another or multi-race" includes respondents who are American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, or multiple race categories.

Suicide-related behaviors refers to students who responded "yes" to YRBS questions as follows:

Suicidal ideation is defined as reporting having seriously considered attempting suicide in the 12 months prior to survey.

Suicide attempt is defined as reporting having actually attempted suicide one or more times in the 12 months prior to survey.

Feeling sad and hopeless is defined as reporting having felt sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row during the past 12 months so that they stopped doing some usual activities.

Table 4. Prevalence of suicide-related behaviors by demographic characteristics among New York City public middle school students, 2022

Source: New York City Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2022.

Data are weighted to the NYC public middle school student population.

All N's are weighted. Weighted N population estimates are rounded to the nearest 1,000.

	Feelings of sadness and hopelessness					Non-suicidal self-injury					Suicidal ideation					Suicide attempt				
	Weighted N	Prevalence (%)	Lower 95% Confidence Interval	Upper 95% Confidence Interval	p-value	Weighted N	Prevalence (%)	Lower 95% Confidence Interval	Upper 95% Confidence Interval	p-value	Weighted N	Prevalence (%)	Lower 95% Confidence Interval	Upper 95% Confidence Interval	p-value	Weighted N	Prevalence (%)	Lower 95% Confidence Interval	Upper 95% Confidence Interval	p-value
Total	91,000	47.6	44.3	50.9		35,000	19.0	16.4	22.0		54,000	29.7	25.1	34.7		18,000	9.9	8.1	12.0	
Race and ethnicity¹																				
Asian	14,000	48.4	41.6	55.2	0.155	5,000	17.4	14.7	20.5	0.275	8,000	27.8	22.9	33.3	0.050	2,000	7.1	5.2	9.7	0.004
Black	22,000	46.1	39.3	53.1	0.475	8,000	17.0	11.3	24.8	0.476	13,000	28.4	23.6	33.8	0.027	5,000	9.8	6.8	14.0	0.015
Latino	36,000	50.3	45.1	55.6	0.070	15,000	22.4	19.9	25.0	0.009	23,000	34.0	29.2	39.1	<0.001	9,000	13.3	11.2	15.6	<0.001
White	11,000	43.1	38.1	48.2	reference	3,000	14.0	9.3	20.3	reference	4,000	19.6	14.4	26.0	reference	1,000	4.3	2.5	7.1	reference
Another or multi-race	4,000	46.2	41.0	51.5	0.139	1,000	15.3	10.2	22.4	0.689	3,000	36.1 *	16.3	62.2	0.184	1,000	8.9 *	3.2	22.6	0.289
What is your sex?																				
Female	57,000	59.9	55.1	64.6	reference	23,000	26.0	22.2	30.3	reference	34,000	38.1	31.4	45.2	reference	12,000	13.8	11.1	16.9	reference
Male	34,000	35.1	31.7	38.6	<0.001	11,000	11.9	10.2	13.8	<0.001	19,000	21.2	19.2	23.4	<0.001	5,000	6.0	4.7	7.6	<0.001

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U When reporting to nearest whole percent, round up

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Suicide-related behaviors refers to students who responded "yes" to YRBS questions as follows:

Suicidal ideation is defined as reporting having ever seriously thought about killing themselves.

Suicide attempt is defined as reporting having ever tried to kill themselves.

Feeling sad and hopeless is defined as reporting having been bothered by feeling down, depressed, irritable, or hopeless during the past 30 days.