INTRODUCTION
Suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10 and 24. Complex peer, family, and romantic relationships, mental health concerns, and school stressors all impact suicide-related behaviors. Suicidal youth are often overwhelmed with feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, both of which can be brought on by bullying. Being bullied increases the chances youth will engage in suicide-related behaviors. Bullying can also result in physical injuries, social and emotional difficulties, and academic problems.

RESPONDENTS
A total of 5195 Virginia high school students took the survey, most of whom (74%) were between the ages of 15 and 17 years old. Males (52%) and females (48%), as well as student grade levels, were evenly distributed.

SUMMARY

Sadness or Hopelessness
- Twenty-seven percent of students felt sad or hopeless almost everyday for 2 or more weeks in a row so that they stopped doing some usual activities during the 12 months before the survey.
- Students were less likely to feel sad or hopeless if they volunteered in the community (0.9 times as likely), participated on a sports team (0.5 times as likely), or felt safe and secure at school (0.4 times as likely).
- Students were more likely to feel sad or hopeless if they had safety concerns at school (4.4 times as likely) or were threatened at school (3 times as likely).
- Students were more likely to feel sad or hopeless if they were bullied at school (3.5 times as likely; fig. 2) or were electronically bullied (5.1 times as likely; fig. 3).

Suicide and Self-Harm
- Nine percent of students were choked or choked

Figure 1: Percentage of students bullied at school or electronically.

Figure 2: Percentage of students who felt sad or hopeless by whether they were bullied at school.

Figure 3: Percentage of students who felt sad or hopeless by whether they were electronically bullied.
VIOLENCE & DEPRESSION AMONG VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

- Seventy percent of students strongly agreed or agreed that they felt good about themselves.
- Students were less likely to strongly agree or agree that they felt good about themselves if they were bullied at school (0.4 times as likely; fig. 6) or were electronically bullied (0.3 times as likely; fig. 7).

![Figure 4: Percentage of students engaging in suicide-related behaviors.](image1)

**Suicide-Related Behaviors 2011-2015 Trends**

All suicide-related behaviors in 2015 were lower than in 2013 and 2011. The percentage of students who considered suicide and attempted suicide steadily decreased between 2011 and 2015 (fig. 5).

![Figure 5: Percentage of students engaging in suicide-related behaviors, trending from 2011-2015.](image2)

**Self-Esteem**

- Seventy percent of students strongly agreed or agreed that they felt good about themselves.
- Students were less likely to strongly agree or agree that they felt good about themselves if they were bullied at school (0.4 times as likely; fig. 6) or were electronically bullied (0.3 times as likely; fig. 7).

**Resources**

- Twenty-five percent of students did not have a teacher or adult at school with whom they could talk.

**MORE INFORMATION**

3. [https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/bullyingresearch/](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/bullyingresearch/)

For more information, please visit [http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/virginia-youth-survey/](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/virginia-youth-survey/) or contact VYSSrequest@vdh.virginia.gov