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 2246 Virginia middle school students took the survey, most of whom (90%) were between the ages of 11 and 13 years old. Males (51%) and females (49%), as well as student grade levels were evenly distributed.

SUMMARY

Bullying
- Females were more likely than males to be bullied at school (1.6 times as likely) and electronically bullied (1.8 times as likely).
- Forty-two percent of students were bullied at school. Nineteen percent of students were electronically bullied (fig. 1).

Sadness, Hopelessness, and Anxiety
- Sixty-eight percent of students had ever felt sad, hopeless, or anxious.
- Students were less likely to have ever felt sad, hopeless, or anxious if they participated on a sports team (0.7 times as likely) or felt safe and secure in school (0.6 times as likely).
- Students were more likely to have ever felt sad, hopeless, or anxious if they were bullied at school (3 times as likely; fig. 2) or were electronically bullied (2.5 times as likely; fig. 3).

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

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

Figure 3: Percentage of students who ever felt sad, hopeless, or anxious by whether they were electronically bullied.
Suicide and Self-Harm

- Females were more likely than males to consider suicide (1.7 times as likely), make a suicide plan (1.9 times as likely), and attempt suicide (2.2 times as likely) (fig. 4).

![Figure 4](image)

**Figure 4:** Percentage of students engaging in suicide-related behaviors by sex.

- Students were more likely to consider suicide if they were bullied at school (4.2 times as likely; fig. 5) or were electronically bullied (4.3 times as likely; fig. 6).

![Figure 5](image)

**Figure 5:** Percentage of students who considered suicide by whether they were bullied at school.

![Figure 6](image)

**Figure 6:** Percentage of students who considered suicide by whether they were electronically bullied.

Suicide-Related Behaviors, 2013 and 2015

Between 2013 and 2015, the percentage of students who considered suicide and made a suicide plan slightly decreased while the percentage of students that attempted suicide remained the same (fig. 5).

![Figure 7](image)

**Figure 7:** Percentage of students engaging in suicide-related behaviors, 2013 and 2015.

Resources

- Sixteen percent of students did not have an adult or teacher at school with whom they could talk.
- Students were more likely to get the kind of help they needed if they had a teacher or other adult at school (2.3 times as likely), felt safe and secure at school (2.1 times as likely), participated on a sports team (1.8 times as likely), or volunteered in the community (1.4 times as likely).

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 VYSrequest@vdh.virginia.gov