

Suicide Attempts By American Youth

Every two years from 1991 to the present, as part of the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention conducts a national school-based Youth Risk Behavior Survey in which about 15,000 high school students from about 150 high schools answer an extensive questionnaire on various "risky behaviors." These data are summarized from the "suicide questions" on that survey. Remember -- students are being asked about their own suicide plans and attempts -- not on actual suicides. To see (and take if you like) a version of this survey simply click on [Survey](#).

This survey used four questions to measure an individual's seriousness about attempting suicide:

- **During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide?**
- **During the past 12 months, did you make a plan about how you would attempt suicide?**
- **During the past 12 months, how many times did you actually attempt suicide?**
- **If you attempted suicide during the past 12 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?**

Below are the survey's findings.

In addition to "Total," the sample is also divided into several sub-groups:

- by race
- by grade level
- by gender

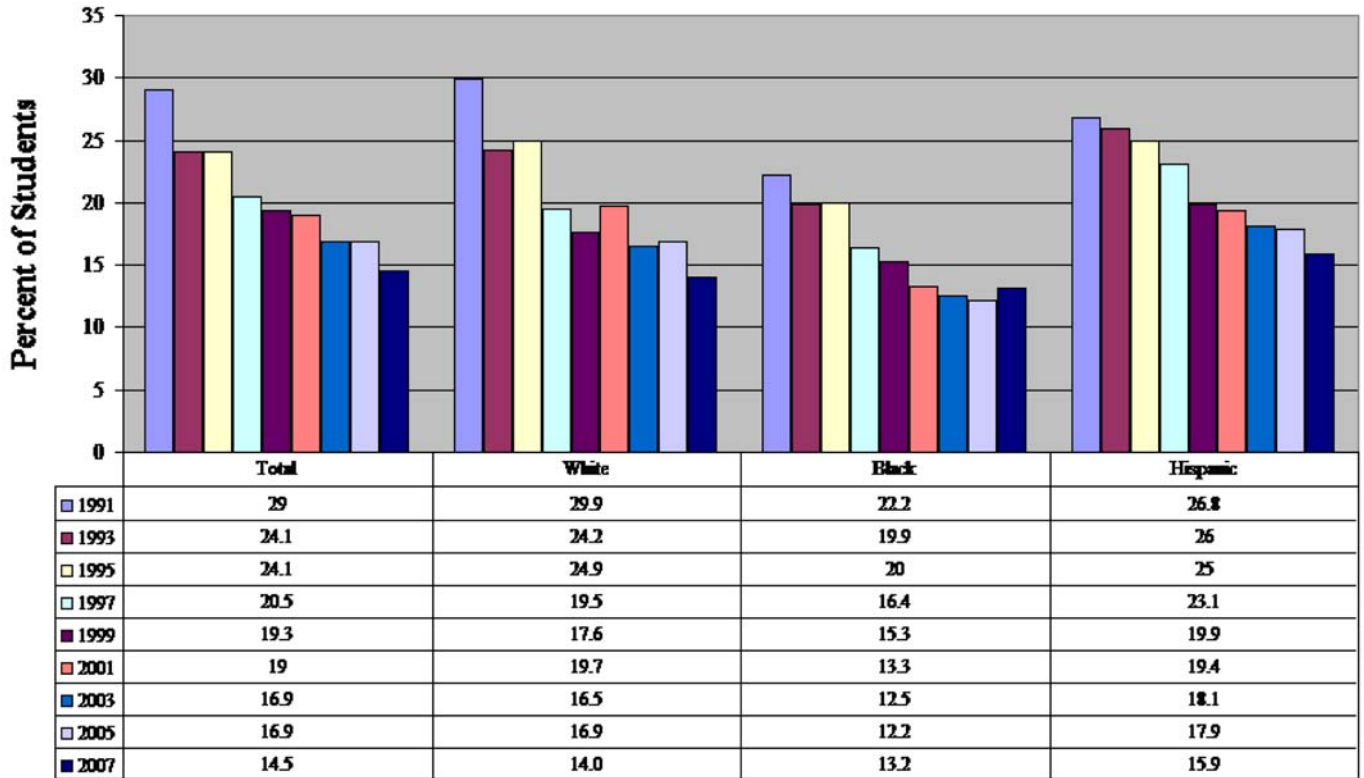
Look for *patterns of behavior* in these findings and try and think of possible reasons for these patterns.

Look for both *patterns* within the particular variable (race, grade or gender) being examined and trends over time.

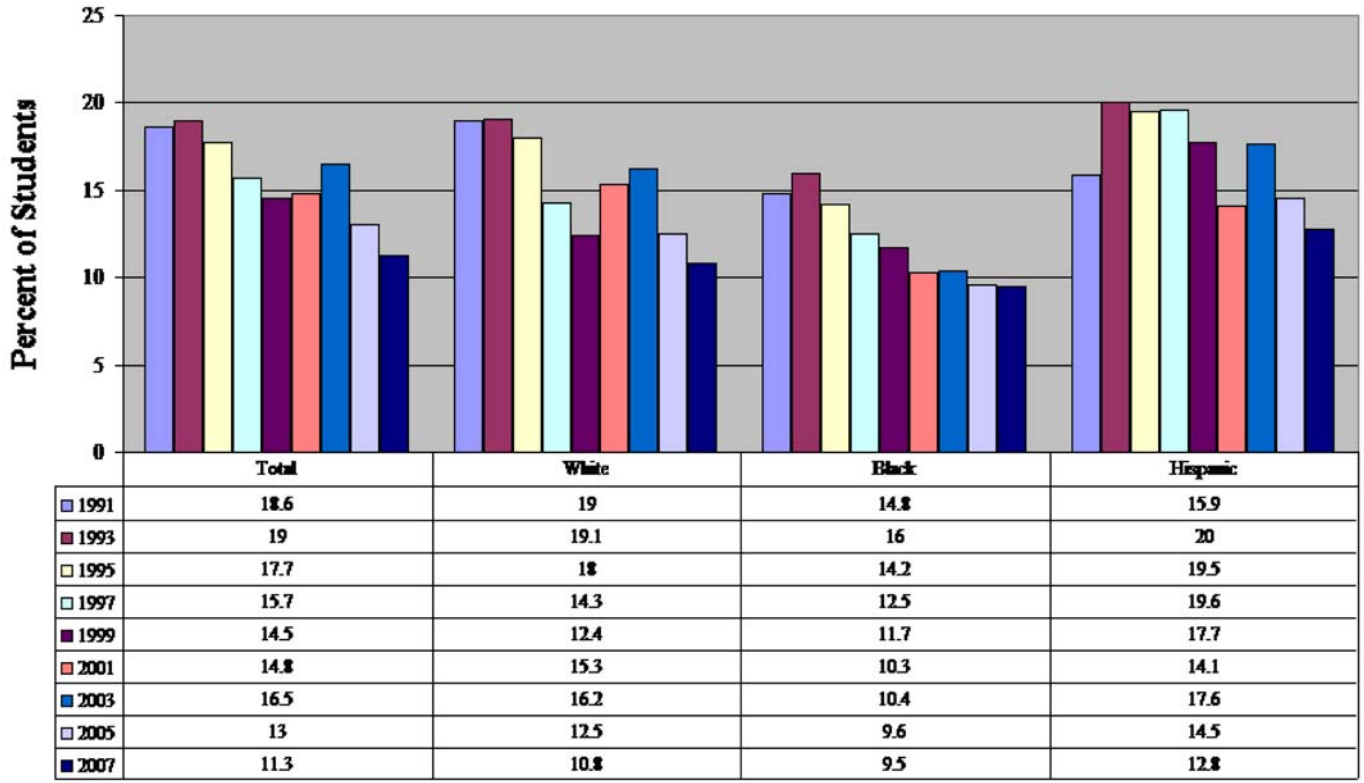
This is thinking sociologically.

Suicide and Race in American High Schools

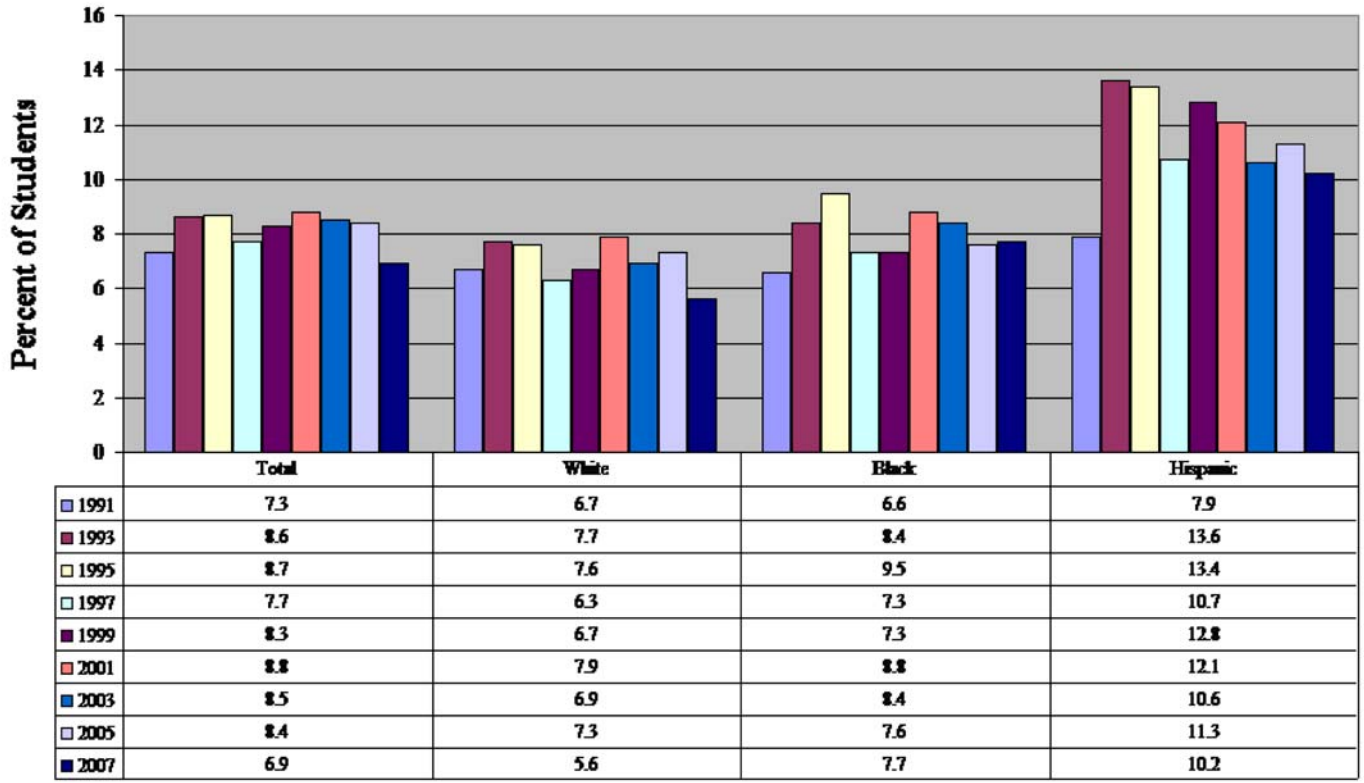
% H.S. STUDENTS WHO "SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED" ATTEMPTING SUICIDE DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS, By Race, 1991 to 2007



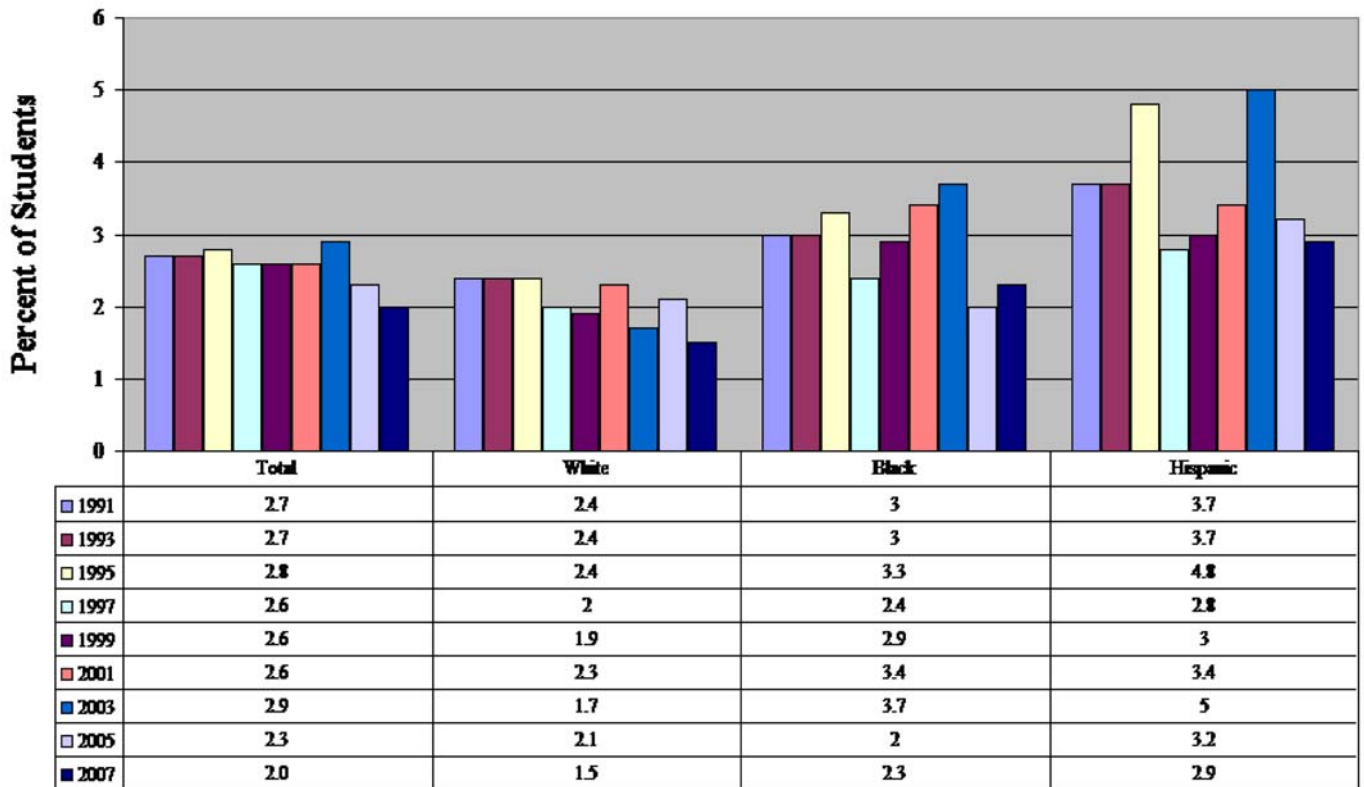
% H.S. STUDENTS WHO MADE A PLAN ABOUT HOW THEY WOULD ATTEMPT SUICIDE DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS, By Race, 1991 to 2007



% H.S. STUDENTS WHO ACTUALLY ATTEMPTED SUICIDE ONE OR MORE TIMES DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS, By Race, 1991 to 2007

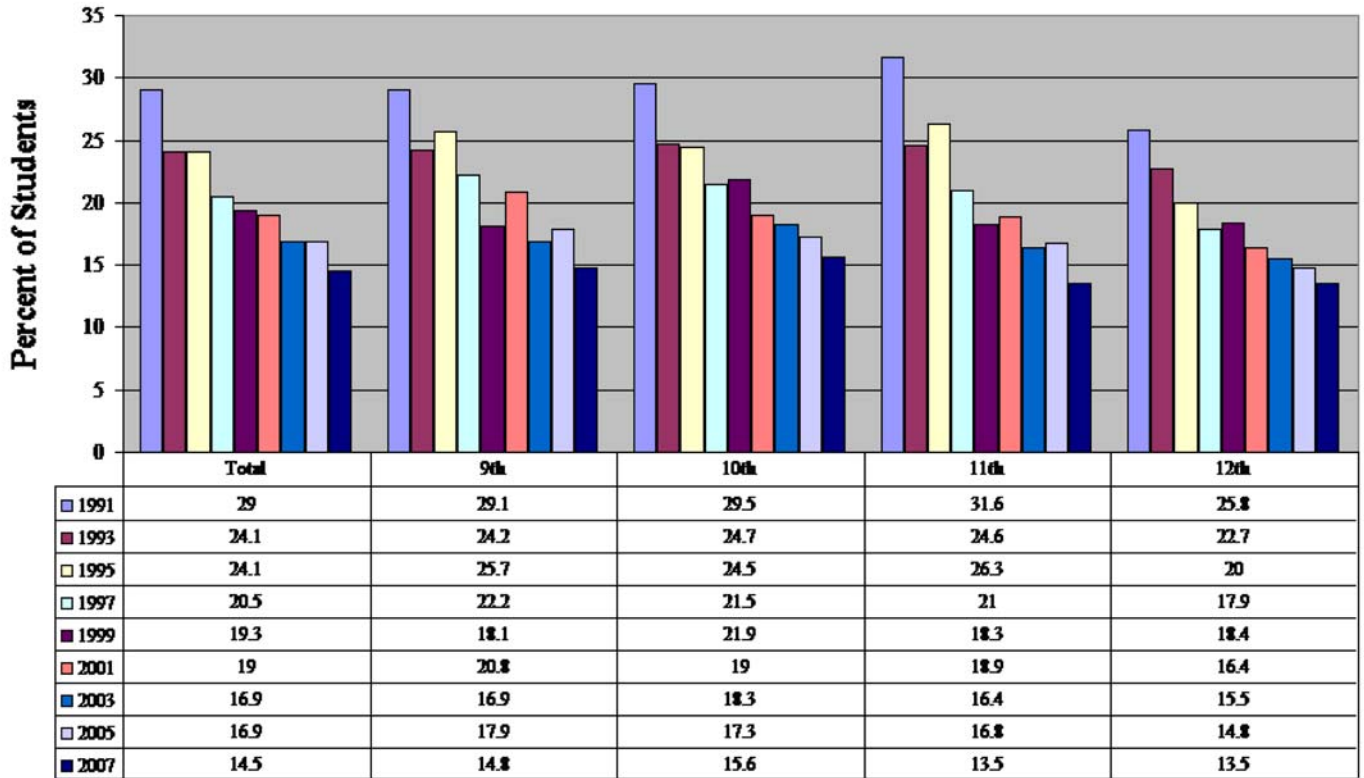


% H.S. STUDENTS WHOSE ATTEMPTED SUICIDE DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS RESULTED IN AN INJURY, POISONING, OR OVERDOSE THAT HAD TO BE TREATED BY A DOCTOR OR NURSE, By Race, 1991 to 2007

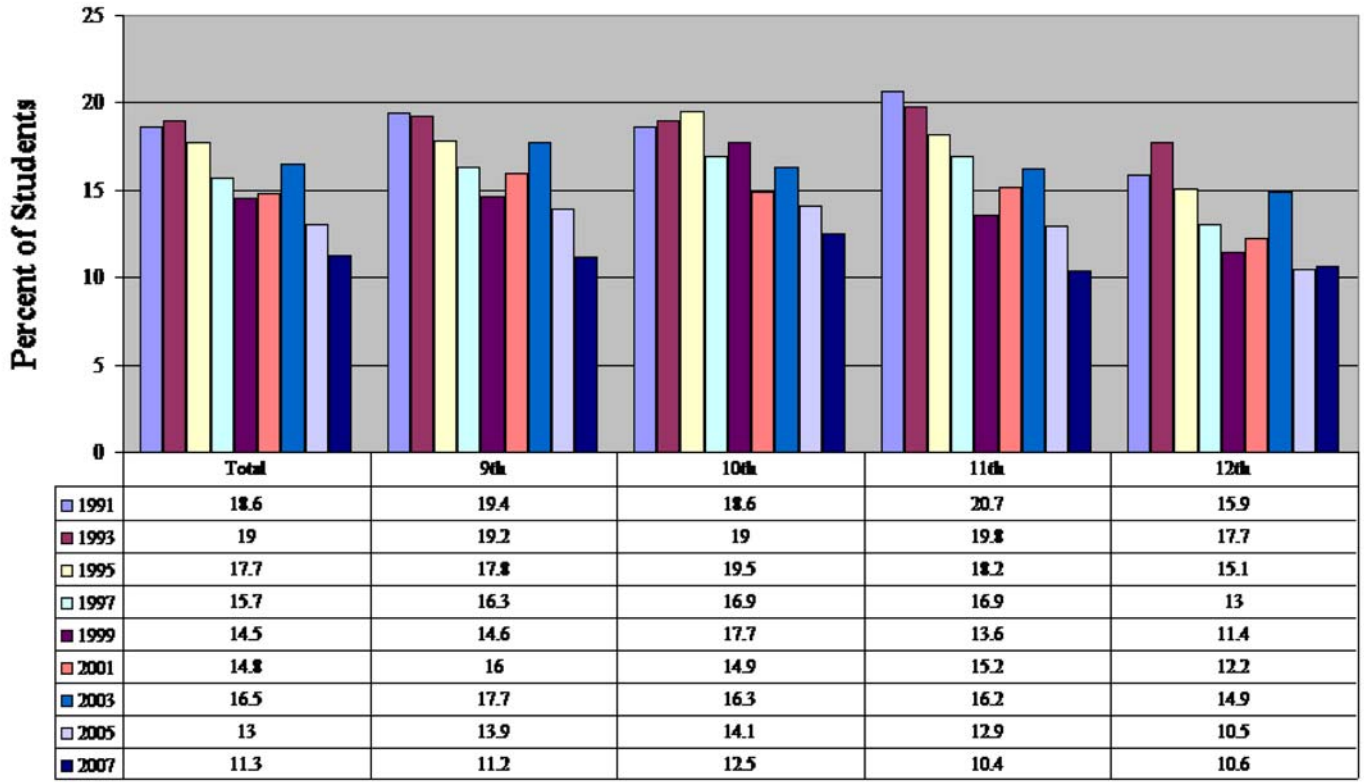


Suicide and Grade Level in American High Schools

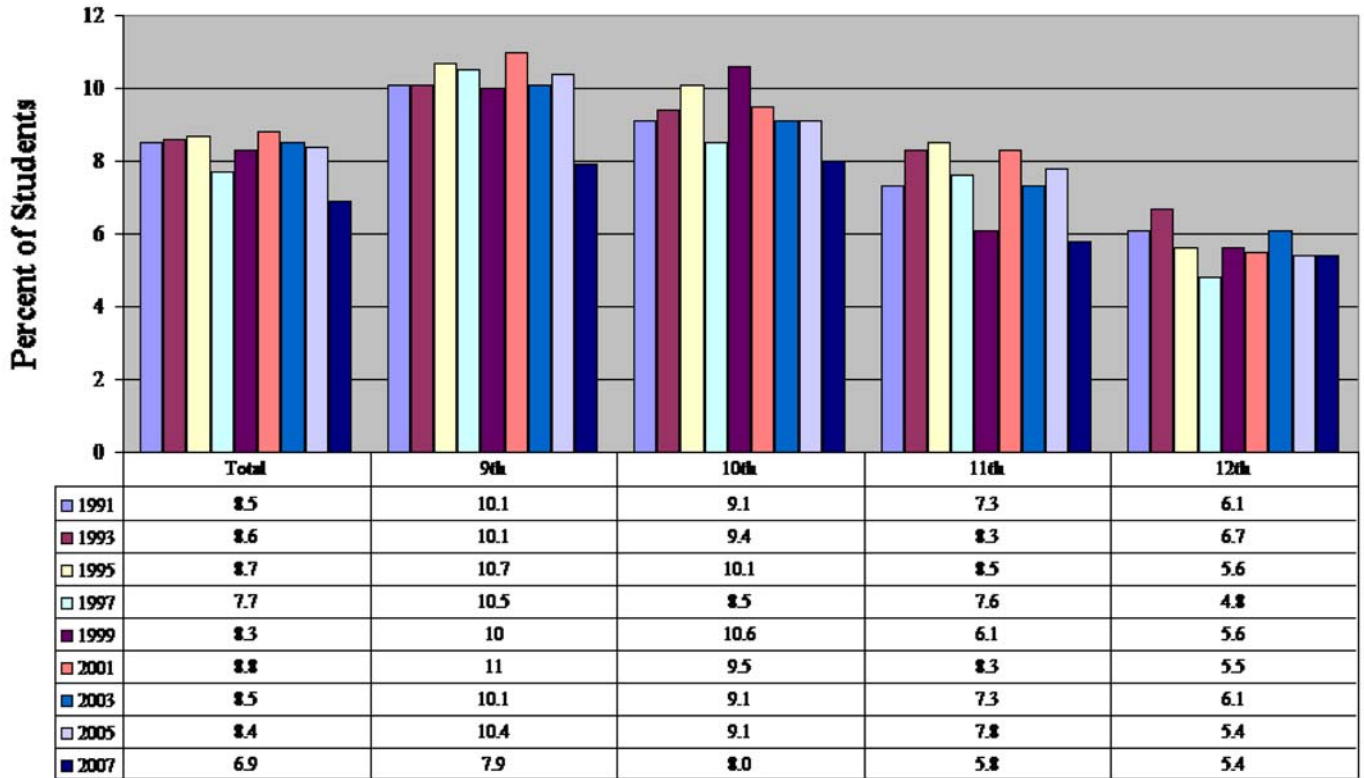
% H.S. STUDENTS WHO "SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED" ATTEMPTING SUICIDE DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS, By Grade, 1991 to 2007



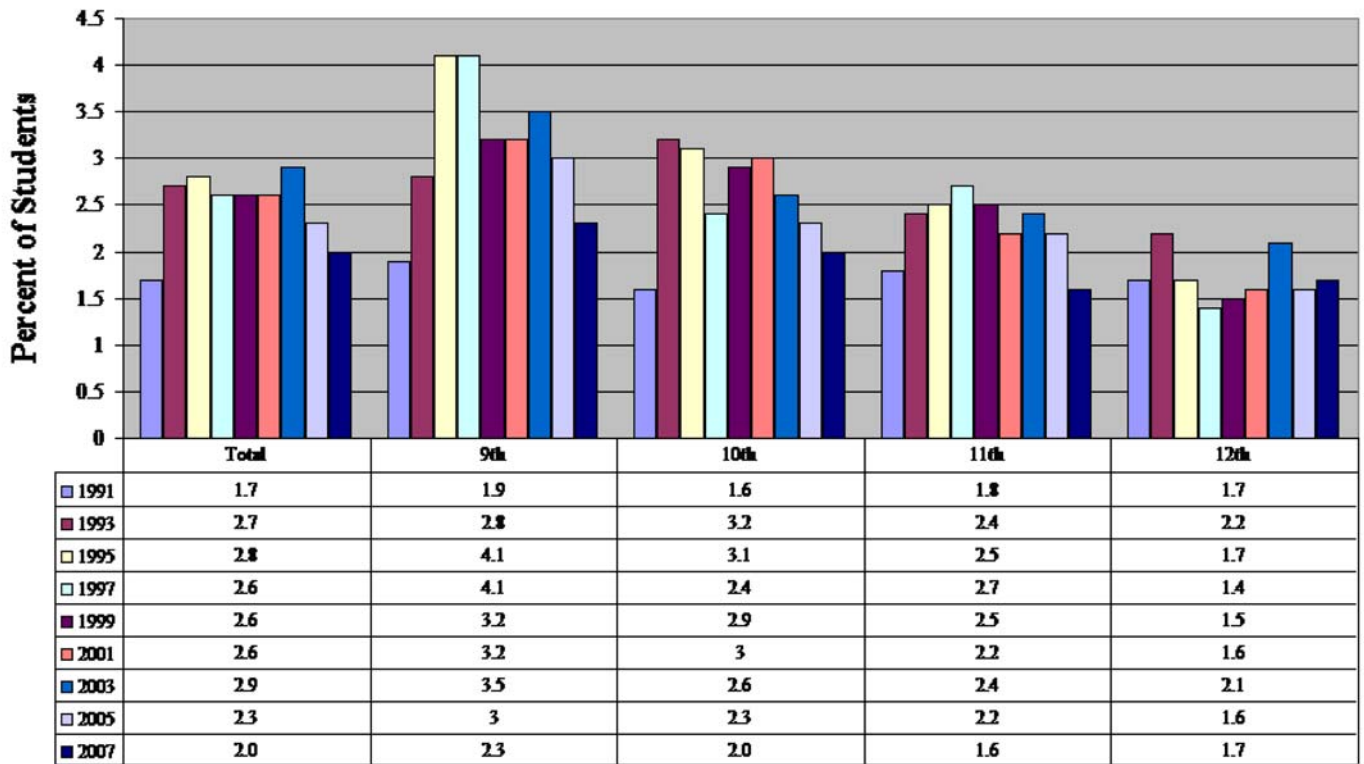
% H.S. STUDENTS WHO MADE A PLAN ABOUT HOW THEY WOULD ATTEMPT SUICIDE DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS, By Grade, 1991 to 2007



% H.S. STUDENTS WHO ACTUALLY ATTEMPTED SUICIDE ONE OR MORE TIMES DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS, By Grade, 1991 to 2007

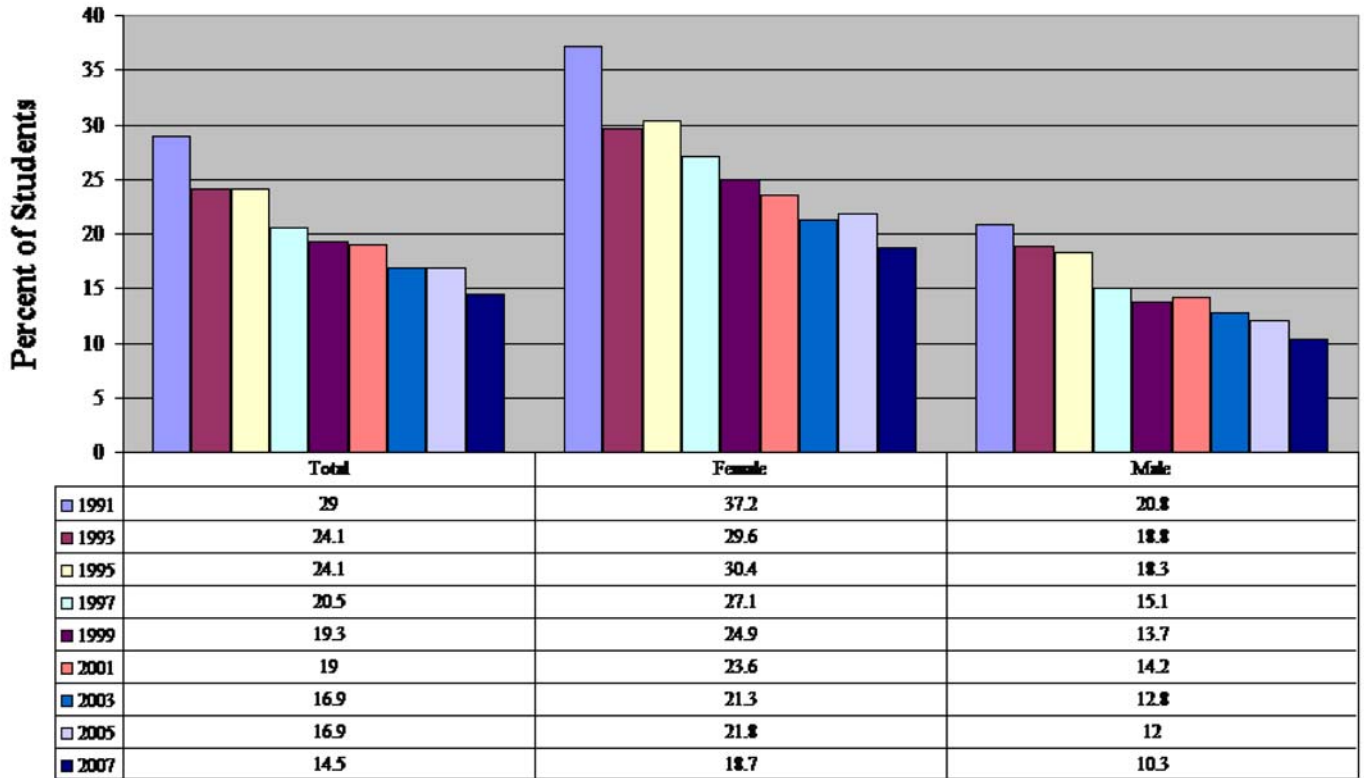


% H.S. STUDENTS WHOSE ATTEMPTED SUICIDE DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS RESULTED IN AN INJURY, POISONING, OR OVERDOSE THAT HAD TO BE TREATED BY A DOCTOR OR NURSE, By Grade, 1991 to 2007

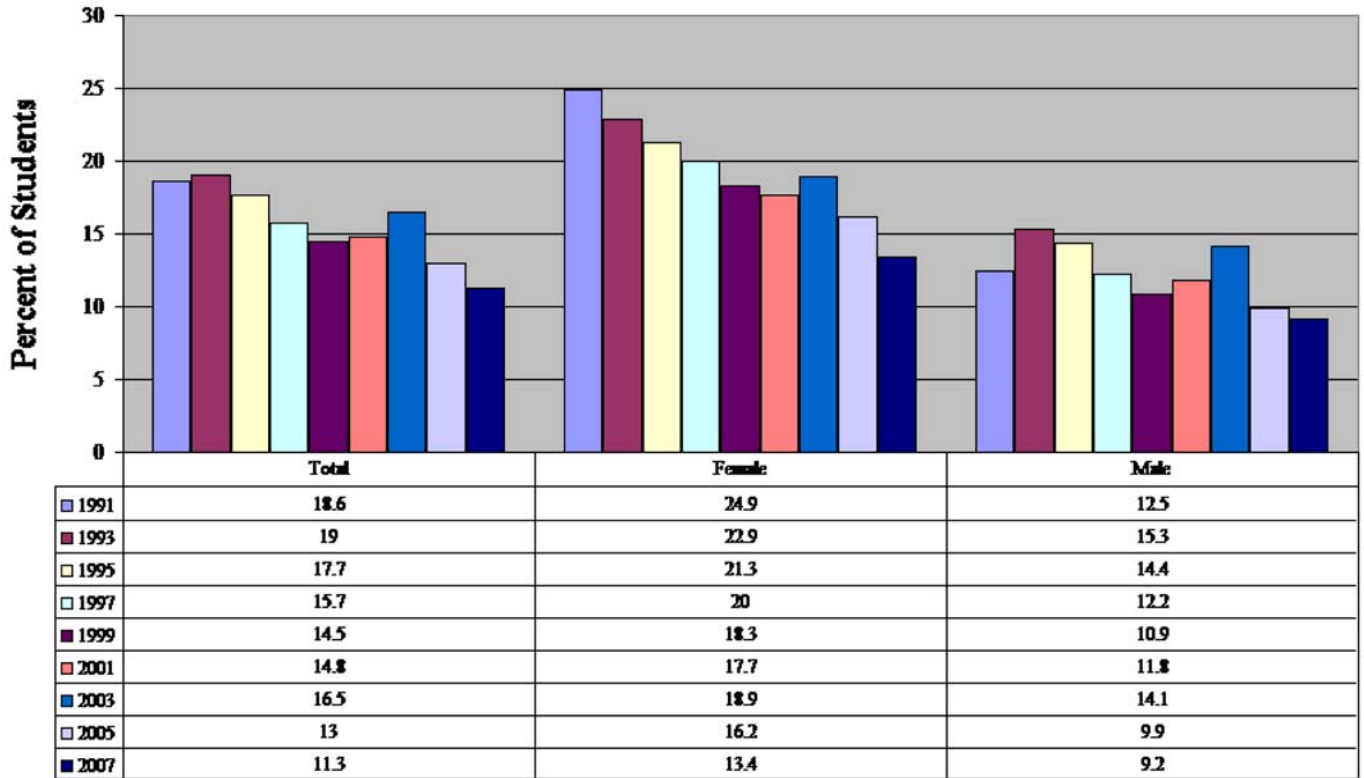


Suicide and Gender in American High Schools

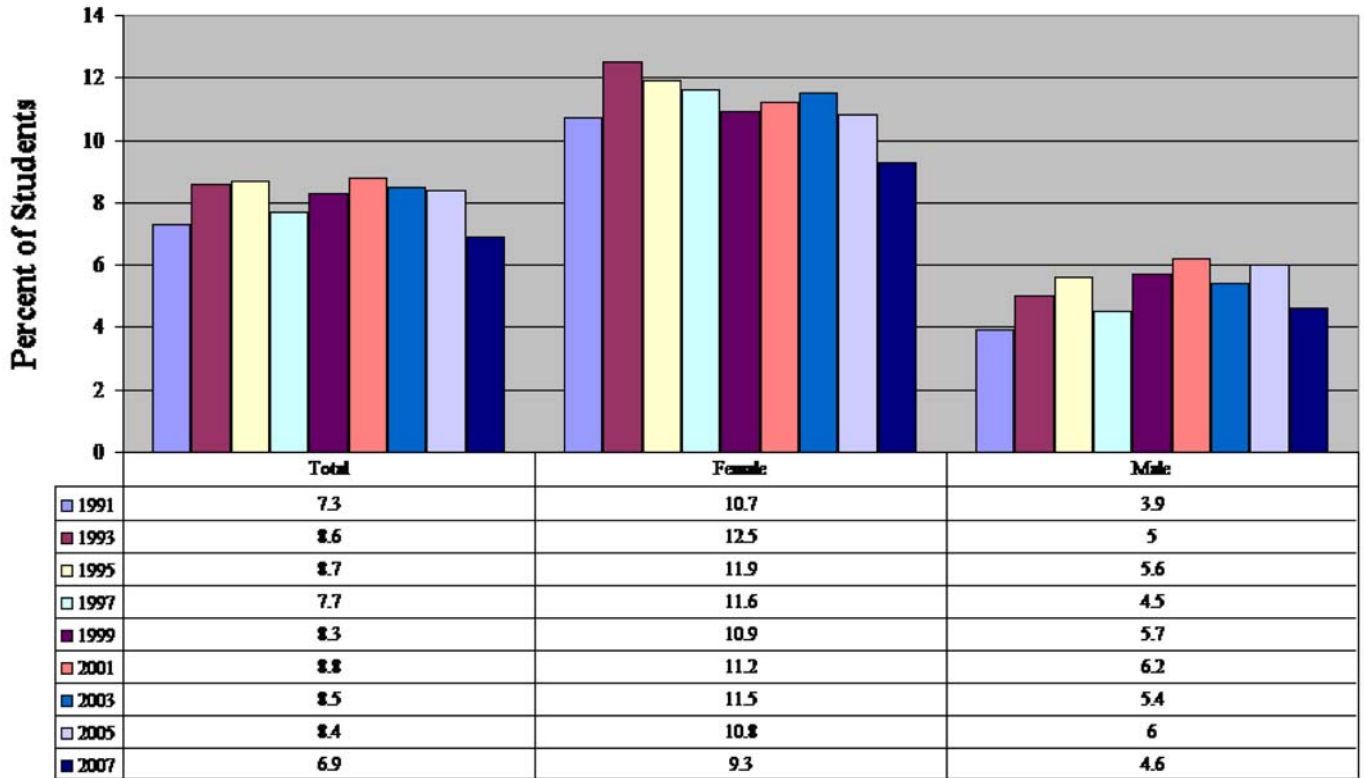
% H.S. STUDENTS WHO "SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED" ATTEMPTING SUICIDE DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS, By Sex, 1991 to 2007



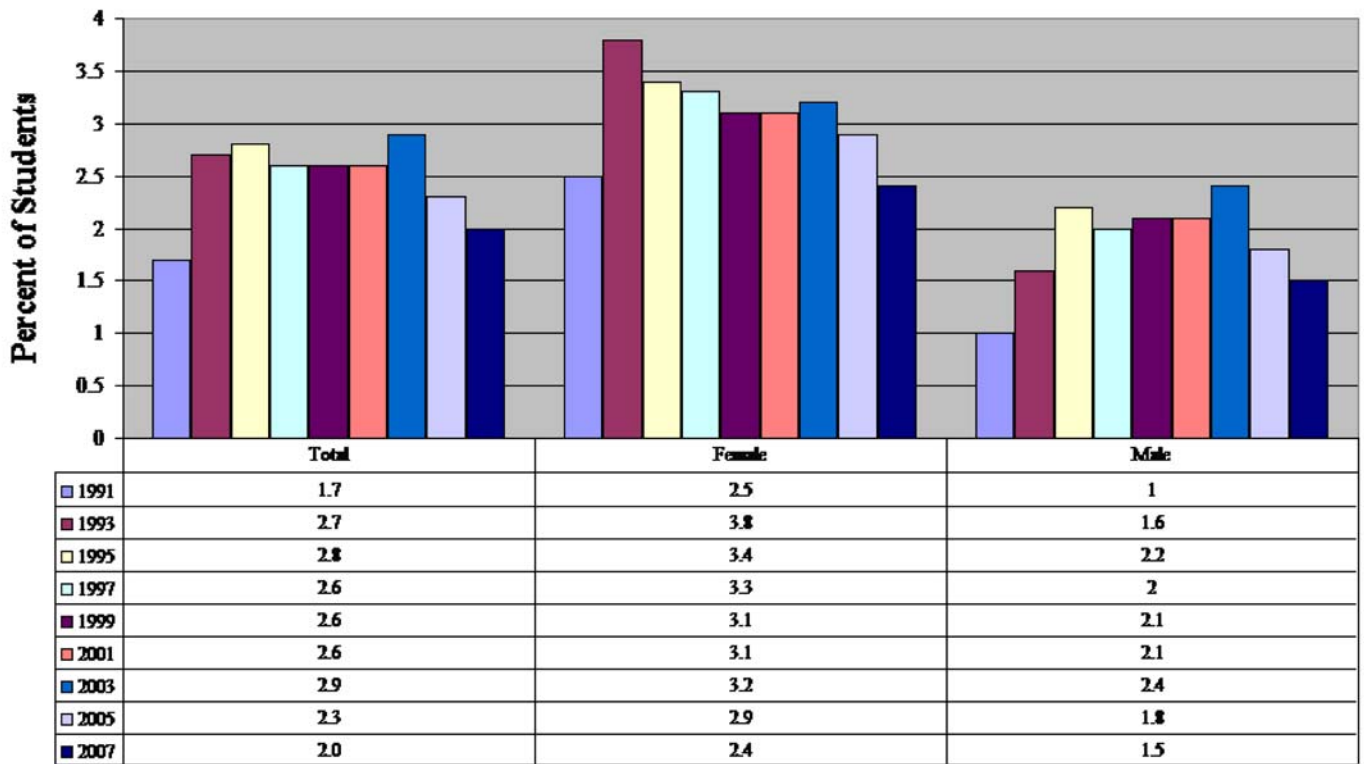
% H.S. STUDENTS WHO MADE A PLAN ABOUT HOW THEY WOULD ATTEMPT SUICIDE DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS, By Sex, 1991 to 2007



% H.S. STUDENTS WHO ACTUALLY ATTEMPTED SUICIDE ONE OR MORE TIMES DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS, By Sex, 1991 to 2007



% H.S. STUDENTS WHOSE ATTEMPTED SUICIDE DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS RESULTED IN AN INJURY, POISONING, OR OVERDOSE THAT HAD TO BE TREATED BY A DOCTOR OR NURSE, By Sex, 1991 to 2007



Some Questions:

- What patterns of behavior are evident in these findings?
- What are some hypotheses that could explain these patterns?
- On the basis of looking at these data concerning "thinking about suicide," what patterns of behavior do you think you will find if you examine data on actual suicide deaths among American youth?

Click to look at the data on [actual suicide deaths among American youth](#).

Want More Information on the Youth Risk Survey?

For more data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey go to this page: <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/yrbss/SelQuestYear.asp?Loc=XX&cat=1>

For a major report on the 2005 Youth Risk Survey Findings go to: [CDC, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance](#).