



2021 Iowa Youth Survey Special Topics Report: Mental Health Findings

Prepared for
Iowa Department of Public Health
Iowa Youth Survey

Prepared By:

Kyle Endres
Ki Park
Erin O. Heiden
Mary E. Losch

Center for Social and Behavioral Research
University of Northern Iowa

March 2022

Acknowledgements

CSBR would like to thank the over 46,000 students who participated in the 2021 Iowa Youth Survey. We would also like to acknowledge and thank our partners at the Iowa Department of Public Health, the school coordinators and other teachers/employees for their vital role in administering the 2021 Iowa Youth Survey.

Suggested Citation:

Endres, K., Park, K., Heiden, E.O., & Losch, M.E. (2022). *2021 Iowa Youth Survey Special Topics Report: Mental Health Findings*. Cedar Falls, IA: Center for Social and Behavioral Research, University of Northern Iowa.

Gov. Kim Reynolds
Lt. Gov. Adam Gregg
IDPH Director Kelly Garcia

Report Contact Information:

Pat McGovern
Iowa Youth Survey Director
Iowa Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse
Lucas State Office Building, Sixth Floor
321 East 12th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319-0075
pat.mcgovern@idph.iowa.gov

Kyle Endres, PhD, Associate Director
Center for Social and Behavioral Research
University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0402
(319) 273-2105; Kyle.Endres@uni.edu

Or

Mary E. Losch, PhD, Professor and Director,
Center for Social and Behavioral Research
University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0402
(319) 273-2105; Mary.Losch@uni.edu

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| List of Tables | iv |
| List of Acronyms | vi |
| Introduction..... | 7 |
| Limitations | 7 |
| Mental Health and Suicide Preliminary Results | 10 |
| Mental Health and Suicide by Grade | 10 |
| Mental Health and Suicide by Sex | 13 |
| Mental Health and Suicide by Race/Ethnicity | 16 |
| Mental Health and Suicide by Sexual Orientation..... | 19 |
| References..... | 22 |

List of Tables

Table L1: Proportion of Public-School Districts participating by overall enrollment 8

Table L2: Race and ethnic makeup of 2021 IYS compared to the Iowa Department of Education’s profile 8

Table MH1: General mental health status measured by feeling sad or hopeless by grade 10

Table MH2A: Suicidal ideation by grade 11

 Table MH2A.1: Suicide plans among students reporting suicidal ideation by grade 11

 Table MH2A.2: Suicide attempts among students reporting suicidal ideation by grade 11

 Table MH2A.2.1: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempt among students who attempted suicide in the past 12 months by grade 11

Table MH2B: Suicide plans among full sample by grade 11

Table MH2C: Suicide attempts among full sample by grade 12

Table MH2D: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempts among full sample by grade 12

Table MH3: General mental health status measured by feeling sad or hopeless by sex 13

Table MH4A: Suicidal ideation by sex 145

 Table MH4A.1: Suicide plans among students reporting suicidal ideation by sex 14

 Table MH4A.2: Suicide attempts among students reporting suicidal ideation by sex 14

 Table MH4A.2.1: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempt among students who attempted suicide in the past 12 months by sex 14

Table MH4B: Suicide plans among full sample by sex 14

Table MH4C: Suicide attempts among full sample by sex 15

Table MH4D: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempts among full sample by sex 15

Table MH5: General mental health status measured by feeling sad or hopeless by race and ethnicity 17

Table MH6A: Suicidal ideation by race and ethnicity 17

 Table MH6A.1: Suicide plans among students reporting suicidal ideation by race and ethnicity 17

 Table MH6A.2: Suicide attempts among students reporting suicidal ideation by race and ethnicity 17

 Table MH6A.2.1: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempt among students who attempted suicide in the past 12 months by race and ethnicity 18

Table MH6B: Suicide plans among full sample by race and ethnicity 18

Table MH6C: Suicide attempts among full sample by race and ethnicity 18

Table MH6D: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempts among full sample by race and ethnicity 18

Table MH7: General mental health status measured by feeling sad or hopeless by sexual orientation

Table MH8A: Suicidal ideation by sexual orientation 19

 Table MH8A.1: Suicide plans among students reporting suicidal ideation by sexual orientation 20

 Table MH8A.2: Suicide attempts among students reporting suicidal ideation by sexual orientation 20

 Table MH8A.2.1: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempt among students who attempted suicide in the past 12 months by sexual orientation 20

Table MH8B: Suicide plans among full sample by sexual orientation 21

Iowa Youth Survey Status Report

Table MH8C: Suicide attempts among full sample by sexual orientation..... 21
Table MH8D: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempts among full sample
by sexual orientation 21

List of Acronyms

| | |
|------------|--|
| CSBR | Center for Social and Behavioral Research |
| CSD | Community School District |
| IDPH | Iowa Department of Public Health |
| IYS..... | Iowa Youth Survey |
| LGB+ | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or another Non-Heterosexual Identity |
| UNI | University of Northern Iowa |

Introduction

In Spring 2021, the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) secured the services of the Center for Social and Behavioral Research (CSBR) at the University of Northern Iowa to assist in the revision, design, and implementation of the Iowa Youth Survey (IYS).

The IYS is a bi-annual survey of Iowa youth in grades 6th, 8th and 11th. The IYS has been administrated since 1999, and there have been a number of revisions in the questionnaire content and analysis approaches.¹

The implementation status reports related to survey design, questionnaire content and pre-testing of the instrument are reported elsewhere.² This report is intended to provide the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) with results from the Mental Health and Suicide section which will be incorporated into the 2021 statewide report. The 2021 IYS statewide report will be submitted for IDPH review in March 2022 for release later this spring. The Mental Health and Suicide section was selected for inclusion in this status report upon request by IDPH in response to expressed interest by their partners and other stakeholders. The forthcoming statewide report will present the full findings from the 2021 IYS along with a description of the methods, measures, and limitations of the survey.

Limitations

Survey data collection, like all types of data collection, has limitations.

Although it is designed as a census, not all districts participated in the IYS. In addition, parents of children who attend registered schools may choose not to provide consent for their child to participate. Students who do not attend a participating school and students who are homeschooled are excluded by default since the schools administer the survey, on campus, directly to their students. Students who were learning virtually during the data collection period, or otherwise absent on data collection day(s) at their school, may not have had an opportunity to participate. For the 2021 administration, the IYS findings likely have coverage bias owing to differential response propensity across the state. Specifically, few districts in highly-populated cities chose to participate. Among the 11 cities with a population over 50,000, the CSDs in only 4 of them participated in 2021 and no districts in the three highest populated cities participated. This same trend is also evident when considering the proportion of CSDs that participated based on their overall 2021-2022 enrollment. In 2021, 175 of 327 (54%) CSDs participated in the IYS, and only three of the nine (33%) largest school districts (with a K-12 enrollment greater than 10,000) participated. The proportion of school districts participating is shown in Table L1 separately based on the overall enrollment of the CSD.

¹ Previous state reports can be found at <https://iowayouthsurvey.idph.state.ia.us/Reports/State-of-Iowa>

² See Endres et al. 2021a and Endres et al., 2021b.

Table L1: Proportion of Public-School Districts participating by overall enrollment

| Certified Enrollment, 2021-2022 | Percent of CSDs participating | # of students participating |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 0-500 | 44% | 3,391 |
| 501-1,000 | 58% | 9,463 |
| 1,001 – 1,500 | 68% | 7,249 |
| 1,501 – 2,000 | 43% | 3,009 |
| 2,001 – 3,000 | 57% | 3,536 |
| 3,001 – 5,000 | 50% | 4,469 |
| 5,001 – 10,000 | 78% | 7,889 |
| 10,001+ | 33% | 6,475 |
| Total | 54% | 45,481 |

Note: The table excludes the 610 participating students from private schools. Enrollment numbers were retrieved from: <https://educateiowa.gov/documents/school-district-certified-enrollment/2021/12/2021-2022-certified-enrollment-district>

A comparison of the self-identified racial/ethnic identity of 2021 IYS participants compared to the Iowa Department of Education’s profile can also be used to gauge the approximate resemblance of the 2021 IYS to the racial and ethnic background of Iowa students more broadly (Table L2). It is important to note that the profile includes all K-12 students and the IYS is limited to grades 6, 8, and 11. Overall, the main differences appear to be a slightly lower percentage of African American (non-Hispanic) students in the IYS and a slightly higher percentage of White (non-Hispanic) students. This difference is consistent with the low representation of districts in the largest cities. The lack of city-centric schools may also impact other findings that tend to be associated with higher levels of student diversity.

Table L2: Race and ethnic makeup of 2021 IYS compared to the Iowa Department of Education’s profile

| | 2021 IYS | 2021 Iowa School Profile |
|--|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| White (Non-Hispanic) | 76% | 74% |
| Hispanic or Latino/a (all races) | 12% | 12% |
| Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) | 4% | 7% |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native (Non-Hispanic) | <1% | <1% |
| Asian (Non-Hispanic) | 2% | 3% |
| Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander (Non-Hispanic) | <1% | <1% |
| Another Single Race (Non-Hispanic) | <1% | -- |
| 2 or more races (Non-Hispanic) | 5% | 5% |
| Did not answer | <1% | -- |

Question wording: (1) Are you Hispanic or Latino? Yes/no (2) What is your racial identity? Check all that apply. White/Black or African American/American Indian or Alaska Native/Asian/Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander/Other race(s) Please specify: _____

Item non-response can also introduce bias if the individuals who decline to answer a particular survey item (or question) are different from the individuals who do answer the question. The instructions read by the teacher or other school personnel administering the 2021 IYS explicitly stated that students “may skip any question you (they) do not want to answer.” These verbal instructions were echoed on the online survey, which encouraged students to skip questions they did not understand, that they could not answer truthfully, or that they did not want to answer. Students were allowed to skip any and all items, including both demographic/background items and substantive questions. Items asked near the end of the

Iowa Youth Survey Status Report

questionnaire are generally more likely to be skipped than items asked earlier. As detailed in the data cleaning section of the forthcoming statewide report (and the Data Collection Status Report, see Endres et al. 2021b), students who skipped all of the demographic/background questions as well as students who failed to answer any items after Q20a (approximately 25% of the way through the questionnaire) are excluded from this report.

Caution should be exercised when comparing findings from the 2021 IYS to earlier years as the schools who participated, the question wording, and question order differ across years. The instrument is reviewed and updated with each survey administration, and seemingly minor changes in wording and order, at times, can have substantively meaningful effects.

Mental Health and Suicide Results

All students participating in the 2021 IYS were asked about their general mental health and presence of suicidal ideation in the past twelve months. Students who reported having thought about killing themselves were asked two additional items. Students who reported having attempted to kill themselves during the past twelve months were asked one additional item. The following subsections separately present these findings by grade, sex, race and ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

Mental Health and Suicide by Grade

Between 27% and 36% of students, depending on the grade, reported they had felt “so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row” that they stopped doing some usual activities. The percentage was highest for 11th graders at 36%, followed by 29% for 8th graders, and 27% for 6th graders (Table MH1). Eleventh grade students also reported the highest rates of suicidal ideation where almost one in four (24%) indicated they had thought about killing themselves in the past twelve months compared to 21% for participating 8th graders and 17% for participating 6th graders (Table MH2A).

Students who reported having thought about killing themselves in the past twelve months were separately asked whether they had made a plan to kill themselves and whether they had attempted to do so during this same twelve-month period. Approximately half of the students who had thought about killing themselves had made a plan, with 47% of 6th graders, 54% of 8th graders, and 49% of 11th graders with suicidal ideation reporting they had made a plan (Table MH2A.1). This is equivalent to 8% of all participating 6th graders, 11% of all participating 8th graders, and 12% of all participating 11th graders reporting they had made a plan to kill themselves in the past twelve months (Table MH2B). Further, among the subsample of participating students who had thought about killing themselves, 24% of 6th graders, 26% of 8th graders and 20% of 11th graders reported they had tried to kill themselves during the past twelve months (Table MH2A.2). Students who attempted suicide during this time period account for 4% of 6th graders and 5% of 8th and 11th graders among the full sample of participating IYS students (Table MH2C). Approximately one in four students – 22% for 6th grade, 23% for 8th grade, and 25% for 11th grade – who attempted suicide indicated that they required medical treatment from a doctor or nurse due to an injury, poisoning, or overdose from their attempt (Table MH2A.2.1). These students who required some form of medical attention constitute approximately 1% of all participating students in each grade (Table MH2D).

Table MH1: General mental health status measured by feeling sad or hopeless by grade

| | 6 th grade | 8 th grade | 11 th grade |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Yes | 27% | 29% | 36% |
| No | 73% | 71% | 64% |
| # Responding | 15,398 | 16,956 | 13,501 |

Question: In the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?

Table MH2A: Suicidal ideation by grade

| | 6th grade | 8th grade | 11th grade |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Yes | 17% | 21% | 24% |
| No | 83% | 79% | 76% |
| # Responding | 15,117 | 16,789 | 13,461 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you thought about killing yourself?

Table MH2A.1: Suicide plans among students reporting suicidal ideation by grade

| | 6th grade | 8th grade | 11th grade |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Yes | 47% | 54% | 49% |
| No | 53% | 46% | 51% |
| # Responding | 2,605 | 3,460 | 3,244 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you made a plan about how you would kill yourself?

Table MH2A.2: Suicide attempts among students reporting suicidal ideation by grade

| | 6th grade | 8th grade | 11th grade |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Yes | 24% | 26% | 20% |
| No | 76% | 74% | 80% |
| # Responding | 2,594 | 3,466 | 3,244 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you tried to kill yourself?

Table MH2A.2.1: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempt among students who attempted suicide in the past 12 months by grade

| | 6th grade | 8th grade | 11th grade |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Yes | 22% | 23% | 25% |
| No | 78% | 77% | 75% |
| # Responding | 633 | 912 | 656 |

Question: If you attempted to kill yourself in the past 12 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?

Table MH2B: Suicide plans among full sample by grade

| | 6th grade | 8th grade | 11th grade |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Yes | 8% | 11% | 12% |
| No | 9% | 9% | 12% |
| No suicidal ideation reported | 83% | 80% | 76% |
| # Responding | 15,490 | 17,010 | 13,524 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you made a plan about how you would kill yourself?

Table MH2C: Suicide attempts among full sample by grade

| | 6th grade | 8th grade | 11th grade |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Yes | 4% | 5% | 5% |
| No | 13% | 15% | 19% |
| No suicidal ideation reported | 83% | 80% | 76% |
| # Responding | 15,479 | 17,016 | 13,524 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you tried to kill yourself?

Table MH2D: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempts among full sample by grade

| | 6th grade | 8th grade | 11th grade |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Yes | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| No | 3% | 4% | 4% |
| No suicide attempt reported | 96% | 96% | 95% |
| # Responding | 15,513 | 17,045 | 13,529 |

Question wording: If you attempted to kill yourself in the past 12 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?

Mental Health and Suicide by Sex

A greater proportion of female students (41%) than male students (20%) reported they had felt “so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row” that they stopped doing some usual activities (Table MH3). Female students also reported higher rates of suicidal ideation than males; more than one in four (27%) females indicated they had thought about killing themselves in the past twelve months compared to 14% of males (Table MH4A).

Students who reported having thought about killing themselves in the past twelve months were then asked whether they had made a plan to kill themselves and whether they had attempted to do so during this same twelve-month period. Approximately half of the students who had thought about killing themselves had made a plan, with 52% of female students and 46% of male students with suicidal ideation reporting they had made a plan (Table MH4A.1). This is equivalent to 14% of all participating female students and 7% of all participating male students reporting they had made a plan to kill themselves in the past twelve months (Table MH4B). Further, among the subsample of participating students who had thought about killing themselves, 25% of females and 20% of males reported they had tried to kill themselves during the past twelve months (Table MH4A.2). Students who attempted suicide during this time period account for 7% of females and 3% of males among the full sample of participating IYS students (Table MH4C). Approximately one in four students who attempted suicide – 23% for females and 24% for males – required medical treatment from a doctor or nurse due to an injury, poisoning, or overdose from their attempt (Table MH4A.2.1). These students who required some form of medical attention constitute approximately 2% of all participating female students and 1% of all participating male students (Table MH4D).

Table MH3: General mental health status measured by feeling sad or hopeless by sex

| | Female | Male |
|---------------------|--------|--------|
| Yes | 41% | 20% |
| No | 59% | 80% |
| # Responding | 21,975 | 23,613 |

Question: In the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?

Table MH4A: Suicidal ideation by sex

| | Female | Male |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Yes | 27% | 14% |
| No | 73% | 86% |
| # Responding | 21,671 | 23,455 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you thought about killing yourself?

Table MH4A.1: Suicide plans among students reporting suicidal ideation by sex

| | Female | Male |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Yes | 52% | 46% |
| No | 48% | 54% |
| # Responding | 5,790 | 3,363 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you made a plan about how you would kill yourself?

Table MH4A.2: Suicide attempts among students reporting suicidal ideation by sex

| | Female | Male |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Yes | 25% | 20% |
| No | 75% | 80% |
| # Responding | 5,794 | 3,355 |

Question wording: In the past 12 months, have you tried to kill yourself?

Table MH4A.2.1: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempt among students who attempted suicide in the past 12 months by sex

| | Female | Male |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Yes | 23% | 24% |
| No | 77% | 76% |
| # Responding | 1,466 | 679 |

Question wording: If you attempted to kill yourself in the past 12 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?

Table MH4B: Suicide plans among full sample by sex

| | Female | Male |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Yes | 14% | 7% |
| No | 13% | 8% |
| No suicidal ideation reported | 74% | 86% |
| # Responding | 22,071 | 23,679 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you made a plan about how you would kill yourself?

Table MH4C: Suicide attempts among full sample by sex

| | Female | Male |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Yes | 7% | 3% |
| No | 20% | 11% |
| No suicidal ideation reported | 74% | 86% |
| # Responding | 22,075 | 23,671 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you tried to kill yourself?

Table MH4D: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempts among full sample by sex

| | Female | Male |
|------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Yes | 2% | 1% |
| No | 5% | 2% |
| No suicide attempt reported | 93% | 97% |
| # Responding | 22,116 | 23,691 |

Question: If you attempted to kill yourself in the past 12 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?

Mental Health and Suicide by Race/Ethnicity

A smaller proportion of White (non-Hispanic) students (28%) than students from all other racial and ethnic groups reported they had felt “so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row” that they stopped doing some usual activities; 34% of African American students, 45% of American Indian or Alaskan Native students, 30% of Asian students, 40% of Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students, 41% of students who identified as “another race,” 41% of students who identified as two or more races, and 40% of Hispanic or Latino/a students of any race responded affirmatively (Table MH5). Non-White students also reported higher rates of suicidal ideation with the highest rate (31%) reported among students who identified as two or more races and the lowest rate among White students (19%) (Table MH6A).

Students who reported having thought about killing themselves in the past twelve months were then asked whether they had made a plan to kill themselves and whether they had attempted to do so during this same twelve-month period. Among the students who had thought about killing themselves between 44% (Asian students) and 73% (Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students) had made a plan (Table MH6A.1). This is equivalent to between 9% and 19% of all participating students, depending on their race and ethnicity, reporting they had made a plan to kill themselves in the past twelve months (Table MH6B). Further, among the subsample of participating students who had thought about killing themselves, between 18% and 42% of students across racial and ethnic groups reported they had made an attempt during the past twelve months (Table MH6A.2). Table MH6C presents this same information, but with the full sample of participating students as the denominator to demonstrate the overall share of the student for each racial/ethnic group who had attempted suicide. More than one in five White, African American, Hispanic or Latino/a, and multi-racial students – 21% for White students, 30% for African American students, 27% of students who identified as two or more races, and 30% for Hispanic or Latino/a students – who attempted suicide required medical treatment from a doctor or nurse due to an injury, poisoning, or overdose from their attempt (Table MH6A.2.1). These students who required some form of medical attention constitute approximately 4% of participating American Indian or Alaskan Native students and 1-2% of all participating students in the remaining racial and ethnic groups (Table MH6D). However, we must caution that the sample sizes of American Indian or Alaskan Native students, Asian students, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students, and students who identified as “another race” are quite small for the latter follow-up questions and hence, should be interpreted with caution.

Table MH5: General mental health status measured by feeling sad or hopeless by race and ethnicity

| | White | African American | American Indian or Alaskan Native | Asian | Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander | Another race | 2 or more races | Hispanic or Latino/a |
|---------------------|--------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|---|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Yes | 28% | 34% | 45% | 30% | 40% | 41% | 41% | 40% |
| No | 72% | 66% | 55% | 70% | 60% | 59% | 59% | 60% |
| # Responding | 34,662 | 1,643 | 218 | 959 | 189 | 110 | 2,152 | 5,595 |

Question: In the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?

Table MH6A: Suicidal ideation by race and ethnicity

| | White | African American | American Indian or Alaskan Native | Asian | Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander | Another race | 2 or more races | Hispanic or Latino/a |
|---------------------|--------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|---|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Yes | 19% | 22% | 26% | 22% | 26% | 26% | 31% | 23% |
| No | 81% | 78% | 74% | 78% | 74% | 74% | 69% | 77% |
| # Responding | 34,325 | 1,621 | 215 | 952 | 188 | 106 | 2,125 | 5,530 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you thought about killing yourself?

Table MH6A.1: Suicide plans among students reporting suicidal ideation by race and ethnicity

| | White | African American | American Indian or Alaskan Native | Asian | Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander | Another race | 2 or more races | Hispanic or Latino/a |
|---------------------|-------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|---|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Yes | 49% | 50% | 60% | 44% | 73% | 52% | 56% | 57% |
| No | 51% | 50% | 40% | 56% | 27% | 48% | 44% | 43% |
| # Responding | 6,641 | 354 | 55 | 207 | 49 | 27 | 656 | 1,245 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you made a plan about how you would kill yourself?

Table MH6A.2: Suicide attempts among students reporting suicidal ideation by race and ethnicity

| | White | African American | American Indian or Alaskan Native | Asian | Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander | Another race | 2 or more races | Hispanic or Latino/a |
|---------------------|-------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|---|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Yes | 21% | 30% | 42% | 18% | 33% | 42% | 28% | 33% |
| No | 79% | 70% | 58% | 82% | 67% | 58% | 72% | 67% |
| # Responding | 6,637 | 352 | 55 | 207 | 49 | 26 | 655 | 1,249 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you tried to kill yourself?

Table MH6A.2.1: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempt among students who attempted suicide in the past 12 months by race and ethnicity

| | White | African American | American Indian or Alaskan Native | Asian | Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander | Another race | 2 or more races | Hispanic or Latino/a |
|---------------------|-------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|---|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Yes | 21% | 22% | 39% | 22% | 19% | 9% | 27% | 30% |
| No | 79% | 78% | 61% | 78% | 81% | 91% | 73% | 70% |
| # Responding | 1,393 | 104 | 23 | 37 | 16 | 11 | 184 | 412 |

Question: If you attempted to kill yourself in the past 12 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?

Table MH6B: Suicide plans among full sample by race and ethnicity

| | White | African American | American Indian or Alaskan Native | Asian | Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander | Another race | 2 or more races | Hispanic or Latino/a |
|--------------------------------------|--------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|---|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Yes | 9% | 11% | 15% | 9% | 19% | 13% | 17% | 13% |
| No | 10% | 11% | 10% | 12% | 7% | 12% | 13% | 10% |
| No suicidal ideation reported | 81% | 78% | 75% | 79% | 74% | 75% | 70% | 78% |
| # Responding | 34,781 | 1,645 | 218 | 968 | 190 | 109 | 2,158 | 5,616 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you made a plan about how you would kill yourself?

Table MH6C: Suicide attempts among full sample by race and ethnicity

| | White | African American | American Indian or Alaskan Native | Asian | Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander | Another race | 2 or more races | Hispanic or Latino/a |
|--------------------------------------|--------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|---|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Yes | 4% | 6% | 11% | 4% | 8% | 10% | 9% | 7% |
| No | 15% | 15% | 15% | 17% | 17% | 14% | 22% | 15% |
| No suicidal ideation reported | 81% | 79% | 75% | 79% | 74% | 76% | 70% | 78% |
| # Responding | 34,777 | 1,643 | 218 | 968 | 190 | 108 | 2,157 | 5,620 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you tried to kill yourself?

Table MH6D: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempts among full sample by race and ethnicity

| | White | African American | American Indian or Alaskan Native | Asian | Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander | Another race | 2 or more races | Hispanic or Latino/a |
|------------------------------------|--------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|---|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Yes | 1% | 1% | 4% | 1% | 2% | 1% | 2% | 2% |
| No | 3% | 5% | 6% | 3% | 7% | 9% | 6% | 5% |
| No suicide attempt reported | 96% | 94% | 89% | 96% | 92% | 90% | 91% | 93% |
| # Responding | 34,819 | 1,647 | 218 | 968 | 190 | 110 | 2162 | 5,631 |

Question: If you attempted to kill yourself in the past 12 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?

Mental Health and Suicide by Sexual Orientation

A higher percentage of students identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or another non-heterosexual identity (LGB+; 67%) than heterosexual students (24%) reported they had felt “so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row” that they stopped doing some usual activities (Table MH7). LGB+ students also reported higher rates of suicidal ideation than heterosexual students where more than one in two (55%) LGB+ students indicated they had thought about killing themselves in the past twelve months compared to 15% for participating heterosexual students (Table MH8A).

Students who reported having thought about killing themselves in the past twelve months were separately asked whether they had made a plan to kill themselves and whether they had attempted to do so during this same twelve-month period. Among the students who had thought about killing themselves 62% of LGB+ students and 44% of heterosexual students had made a plan (Table MH8A.1). This is equivalent to 33% of all participating LGB+ students and 6% of all participating heterosexual students reporting they had made a plan to kill themselves in the past twelve months (Table MH8B). Further, among the subsample of participating students who had thought about killing themselves, 32% of LGB+ and 19% of heterosexuals reported they had tried to kill themselves during the past twelve months (Table MH8A.2). Students who attempted suicide during this time period account for 17% of LGB+ and 3% of heterosexuals among the full sample of participating IYS students (Table MH8C). Approximately one in four students – 23% for heterosexuals and 24% for LGB+ – who attempted suicide required medical treatment from a doctor or nurse due to an injury, poisoning, or overdose from their attempt (Table MH8A.2.1). These students who required some form of medical attention constitute approximately 4% of all participating LGB+ students and 1% of all participating heterosexual students (Table MH8D).

Table MH7: General mental health status measured by feeling sad or hopeless by sexual orientation

| | Heterosexual | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or another identity |
|---------------------|--------------|--|
| Yes | 24% | 67% |
| No | 76% | 33% |
| # Responding | 35,086 | 6,139 |

Question: In the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?

Table MH8A: Suicidal ideation by sexual orientation

| | Heterosexual | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or another identity |
|---------------------|---------------------|--|
| Yes | 15% | 55% |
| No | 85% | 45% |
| # Responding | 34,850 | 5,992 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you thought about killing yourself?

Table MH8A.1: Suicide plans among students reporting suicidal ideation by sexual orientation

| | Heterosexual | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or another identity |
|---------------------|---------------------|--|
| Yes | 44% | 62% |
| No | 56% | 38% |
| # Responding | 5,131 | 3,294 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you made a plan about how you would kill yourself?

Table MH8A.2: Suicide attempts among students reporting suicidal ideation by sexual orientation

| | Heterosexual | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or another identity |
|---------------------|---------------------|--|
| Yes | 19% | 32% |
| No | 81% | 68% |
| # Responding | 5,128 | 3,293 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you tried to kill yourself?

Table MH8A.2.1: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempt among students who attempted suicide in the past 12 months by sexual orientation

| | Heterosexual | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or another identity |
|---------------------|---------------------|--|
| Yes | 23% | 24% |
| No | 77% | 76% |
| # Responding | 980 | 1,051 |

Question: If you attempted to kill yourself in the past 12 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?

Table MH8B: Suicide plans among full sample by sexual orientation

| | Heterosexual | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or another identity |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Yes | 6% | 33% |
| No | 8% | 20% |
| No suicidal ideation reported | 85% | 47% |
| # Responding | 35,174 | 6,165 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you made a plan about how you would kill yourself?

Table MH8C: Suicide attempts among full sample by sexual orientation

| | Heterosexual | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or another identity |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Yes | 3% | 17% |
| No | 12% | 36% |
| No suicidal ideation reported | 85% | 47% |
| # Responding | 35,171 | 6,164 |

Question: In the past 12 months, have you tried to kill yourself?

Table MH8D: Required medical treatment due to suicide attempts among full sample by sexual orientation

| | Heterosexual | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or another identity |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Yes | 1% | 4% |
| No | 2% | 13% |
| No suicide attempt reported | 97% | 83% |
| # Responding | 35,201 | 6,188 |

Question: If you attempted to kill yourself in the past 12 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?

References

Endres, K., Park, K., Heiden, E.O., & Losch, M.E. (2021a). *Iowa Youth Survey Status Report: Programming and Testing*. Cedar Falls, IA: Center for Social and Behavioral Research, University of Northern Iowa.

Endres, K., Park, K., Heiden, E.O., & Losch, M.E. (2021b). *Iowa Youth Survey Status Report: Data Collection*. Cedar Falls, IA: Center for Social and Behavioral Research, University of Northern Iowa.