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## Special points of interest:

- Over 14% of youth across all age groups have had sad feelings to the extent it affected their activities in the past year
- Over 9% of youth across all age groups seriously considered suicide over the past year.
- Females were significantly more likely to report sad feelings or thoughts of suicide than males.

## Fact Sheet #4 Sad Feelings and Attempted Suicide

### Sad Feelings and Attempted Suicide

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for young Canadians and accounts for more than 20% of all deaths among 15- to 19-year-olds. There are big differences between males and females as almost 77% of suicides by youth 15 to 19 are by male youth. Suicide accounts for 24% of deaths of male youth and 18% of the deaths of female youth (Statistics Canada 2006).

Even though this study shows that females are more likely to have sad feelings and to contemplate suicide, Canadian statistics show that males are much more likely to commit suicide. This indicates that males and females approach suicide and mental health differently and that our understanding of these differences needs to improve.

*“Guys don’t want to seem weak”*

*“Well a guy isn’t going to call his friend if he’s depressed, like a girl will call her friend and they’ll talk or something”*

*“Do you think, like men are allowed, in our society, to express feelings like women are?”*

*“Not really.”*

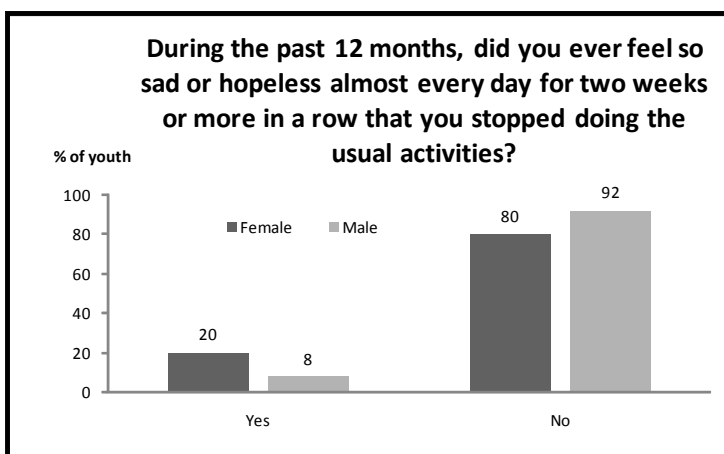
*“They’re allowed to, to girls, but if a guy sees another guy expressing his feelings it’s kind of like, what’s going on?”*

*- Conversation in Youth Focus Group*

### Females more likely to report sad feelings

Overall, about 14% of the youth responded they had experienced sad feelings to the extent that it affected their activities. There is however, a significant difference between female and male youth and more than twice as many females (19.5%) report sad feelings to the extent that it affected their activities.

When youth reports of sad feelings were compared to other responses in the study and controlled for sex and age, sexually active females were more likely to report having sad feelings. In addition, youth who reported sad feelings generally rated their health as poorer.



*“You don’t really hear anything about depression and suicide around here. I’m not saying it doesn’t exist but like those are things that people keep quiet about, they don’t go out and talk about it a whole bunch.”-*  
*Youth Focus Group Participant*

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## Saskatchewan Rural Youth Healthy Lifestyles and Risk Behaviour Study

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**Support:** Production of this document has been made possible through a financial contribution from Health Canada. Funding was also received from the Saskatoon Health Region with in-kind contributions from Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence (PWHCE), The University of Saskatchewan (UofS) and St. Peter's College (SPC).

Views, conclusions, and recommendations in this fact sheet do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the organizations or agencies sponsoring or contributing to the research in various ways.

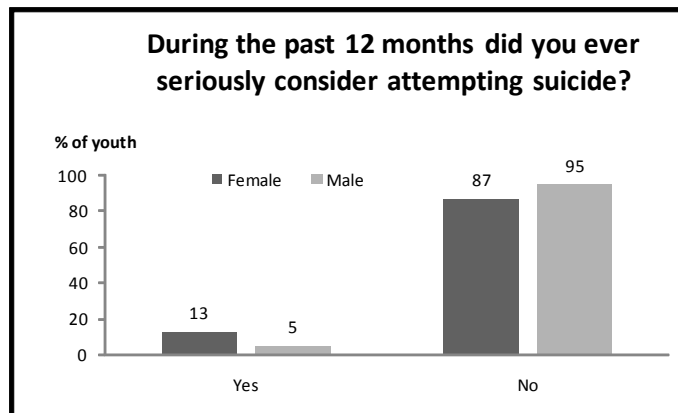
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Martz, D. and A. Wagner (2008) Saskatchewan Rural Youth Healthy Lifestyles and Risk Behaviour Project Fact Sheet. (Health Canada DSCIF Study #6558-08-2005/3480566). Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan.

*"I think if they talk about it, they're more looking for help than reasons not to do it. I don't know, people that don't say anything I think you're more serious about it than the person who would say something because then you're kind of looking out, you're trying to reach out for someone to help you but if you don't say anything, then I think it is a serious problem." - Youth Focus*

## 9% of youth consider suicide



Across all age groups, about 9% of the youth report that they had seriously considered attempting suicide over the past year. There are no strong differences between youth of different ages and reported thoughts of suicide.

However, there is a significant difference in the responses between female and male youth with females almost three times more likely to report they have seriously considered attempting suicide than males (12.8% vs. 4.5%).

*"One of our friends committed suicide when we were in grade 7. I don't know, I never saw it coming at all. Like I just don't know." - Youth Focus Group Participant*

When controlled for age and sex, sexually active females were also more likely to report considering suicide. In addition, youth who rated their health as poorer were more likely to report having considered suicide.