

Suicide Prevention Hotline - 660-7500

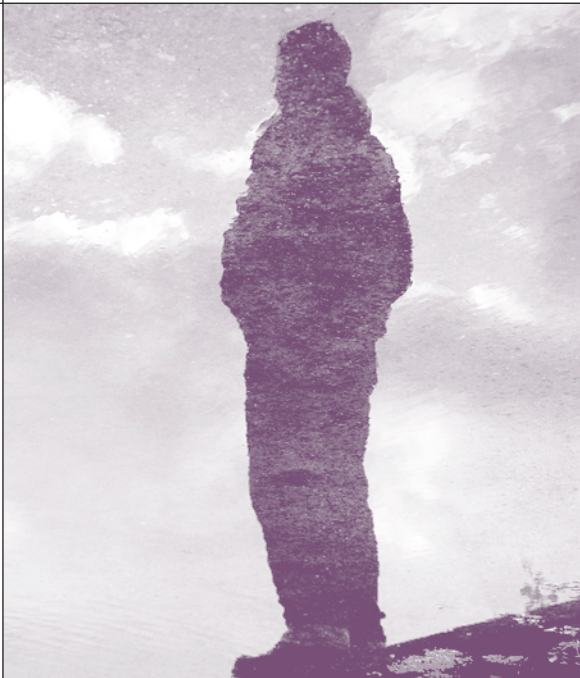


2008
Sedgwick County
Suicide Prevention
Task Force
Annual Report

"Suicide can be prevented"



*Sedgwick County...
working for you*





Who Commits Suicide in Sedgwick County?

- > In 2008 there were 59 suicides in Sedgwick County.
- > Overall, a history of mental illness was reported in approximately 50% of 2008 suicides, and many had a history of prior attempts and/or suicidal ideation. Other related or precipitating factors include interpersonal and life stressors (e.g. intimate-partner problems, other relationship problems, financial or legal trouble), which were reported in over a third of 2008 cases. A history of medical illness was reported in roughly 2% of 2008 suicides.
- > Consistently, over the course of 8 years of data collection in Sedgwick County (2001-2008), the highest rates of suicide have been in the 15-54 year age range. In 2008, we saw an increase in the rates for the 25-34 year age group and a decrease in the 45-54 year age group.
- > In 2008, other demographic data for suicide victims include disproportionate gender and racial distributions (80% male, 20% female, 70% Caucasian, 12% Hispanic, 4% African American), which is consistent with 2001-2008 aggregate data.
- > Toxicological analysis for alcohol and other compounds were conducted and available for this report in roughly 50% of 2008 cases. Of those tested 19% were negative for alcohol and other drugs tested, 19% tested positive for ethanol, 15% for opiates, 25% stimulants (cocaine and methamphetamine), 11% benzodiazepines, and 11% other.
- > The most common place of self-inflicted injury was place of residence, followed by natural areas, streets or highways, and motor vehicles.

2008 Events

The Sedgwick County Suicide Prevention Task Force hosted the **5th Annual 'Link 4 Life' Run** on Saturday, April 12, 2008 at the Sedgwick County Zoo. Each year the participation increases with 1850 runners and walkers registered in 2008. The event not only raises the level of awareness of suicide, but generates funds to support prevention efforts in our community throughout the year.

The Sedgwick County Suicide Prevention Task Force and community volunteers handed out 40,000 bookmarks displaying warning signs of suicide and where to seek help during **National Suicide Prevention Week**, September 7-13, 2008.

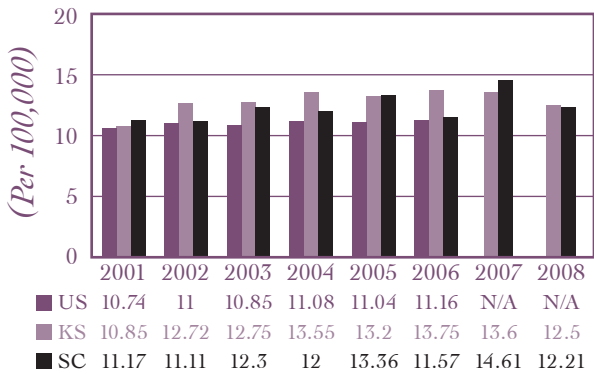
When someone, particularly a youth, commits suicide, sometimes friends follow. In 2008, the Coalition developed a **"Cluster Response Plan"** to assist Sedgwick County communities to proactively respond to suicide clusters.

The 'Link 4 Life' Run also provides funding for the **Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program** at area schools which focuses on providing education about depression and suicide prevention, teaching students that they can be an important link in the life of a friend, family member or even themselves.

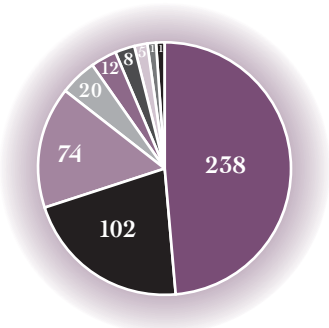
Every year on the Saturday before Thanksgiving, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention sponsors **National Survivors of Suicide Day** providing an opportunity for those who have lost someone to suicide come together for support, healing, information and empowerment. On November 22, 2008 at Via Christi St. Joseph Hospital, the Suicide Prevention Task Force hosted the fourth Survivors of Suicide Conference and Web cast.



National, State, and Sedgwick County Annual Suicide Rates



2001 - 2008



Method of Suicide

- Gunshot - 238
- Hanging - 102
- Drug Intoxication - 74
- Carbon Monoxide - 20
- Blunt Force - 12
- Sharp Force - 8
- Smoke Inhalation/Burns - 5
- Drowning - 1
- Electrocution - 1

Warning Signs

Warning Signs of Suicide:

Suicide can be prevented. While some suicides occur without any outward warning, most people who are suicidal do give warnings. Prevent the suicide of loved ones by learning to recognize the signs of someone at risk, taking those signs seriously and knowing how to respond to them.

- > Observable signs of serious depression:
 - Pessimism
 - Hopelessness
 - Desperation
 - Anxiety, emotional pain and inner tension
 - Withdrawal from friends and/or family
 - Sleep problems
- > Increased alcohol and/or other drug use
- > Recent impulsiveness and taking unnecessary risks
- > Threatening suicide or expressing a strong wish to die
- > Making a plan
- > Seeking access to pills, weapons or other means
- > Unexpected rage or anger

Although most depressed people are not suicidal, most suicidal people are depressed. Serious depression can be manifested in obvious sadness, but often it is rather expressed as a loss of pleasure or withdrawal from activities that had been enjoyable. One can help prevent suicide through early recognition and treatment of depression and other psychiatric illnesses. **Be A Link, Save A Life**

- > LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN
- > Don't promise to keep their comments of suicide a secret; and
- > Help them to get help by talking to a family doctor, counselor, clergy, by calling the Suicide Prevention Hotline or going to an emergency room.

Suicide Prevention Hotline - 660-7500
24 Hours/7 Days a Week

How You Can Help



2008 Sedgwick County Suicide Prevention Task Force

Suicide Prevention Hotline - 660-7500

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