

# 2014 FACTS

## YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY HIGH SCHOOL RESULTS ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND



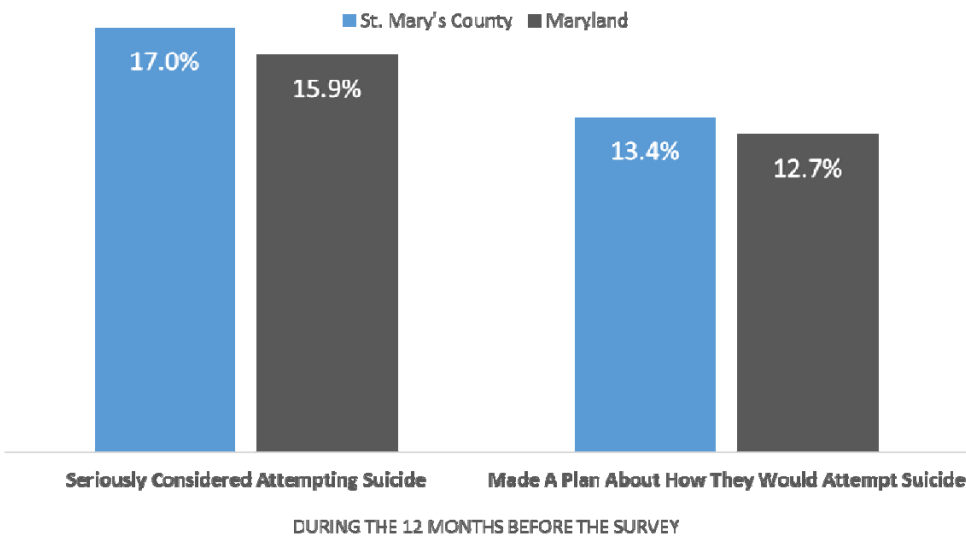
**27%**  
of students  
**FELT SO SAD  
OR HOPELESS**

almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities in the last year



### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Mental health is critical to physical well-being and academic success. In a positive state of mental health, an individual can cope with the normal stresses of life, is better able to maintain good physical health, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to their community. Emotional distress or imbalance can interfere with a child's ability to successfully develop into a healthy, productive adult.



**18%**  
were bullied on  
school property

**15%**  
were bullied  
electronically



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HIGH SCHOOL RESULTS  
ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

## What PARENTS Can Do...

- ***If you're concerned about your child's mental health, consult their health care provider.*** Don't delay. Your health care provider can help determine if your child has a mental health concern and how to address it.
- ***Know the warning signs of suicide.*** If your child talks about: harming themselves or others, being hopeless, having no reason to live, or being a burden to others – these are some warning signs of suicide. Get immediate help. Call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK to be connected to a professional.
- ***Maintain a supportive and involved relationship with your child.*** Adolescence can be very stressful. Risk factors for suicide, such as depression, can be overwhelming to an already stressed adolescent. Maintaining open and supportive communications with your child is important to help your child cope.
- ***Be aware of lethal means for suicide.*** If your child has previously attempted suicide or is otherwise at risk for suicide, make sure you reduce their access to lethal means. If you own a gun at home, keep it unloaded in a lockbox, and with the ammunition locked separately. Dispose of expired, unwanted, or unused medications by using the Medication drop-box at the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office in Leonardtown.
- ***Consider family counseling to understand your child's mental health needs.*** It is important for the whole family to understand and support your child's health, and know what can be done to support them.
- ***Take part in community efforts to improve mental health.*** Visit [www.HealthyStMarys.com](http://www.HealthyStMarys.com) to get involved.

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## What the COMMUNITY Can Do...

- ***Advocate for bullying prevention policies in schools and throughout the community.*** Community-wide strategies can help identify and support children who are being bullied, redirect the behavior of children who bully, and change the attitudes of those who tolerate bullying behaviors in peer groups, schools and communities.
- ***Support Suicide Prevention Programming and training for students, staff, and administration in the school system.*** Learn about what programs actually work in school settings by using the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices at: [www.nrepp.samhsa.gov](http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov). Advocate with school administrators and elected officials to put effective programs in place in school settings.
- ***Work to reduce the stigma around mental illness and suicide.*** Social stigma can be a terrible barrier to families and youth who are seeking help. Support local efforts to reduce stigma surrounding mental illness.