

## Study: Transgender teens at higher risk of violence, suicide attempts

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Transgender teens are at a higher risk of being victims of violence, using drugs and attempting suicide compared to their peers, according to a new report.

High school students were asked about gender identity as part of a pilot question on the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

Among the sample from 19 sites, about 1.8% of students identified as transgender, 94.4% said they were not transgender and the remaining students were unsure of their identity or did not understand the question, according to the study by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention researchers published in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

About 27% of transgender students said they feel unsafe at school compared to 5% of cisgender males and 7% of cisgender females. More transgender students also reported being bullied at school — 35% compared to 15% of cisgender males and 21% of cisgender females.

Transgender teens were more likely than their peers to have their first sexual intercourse before age 13. They also were more likely to be forced to have sexual intercourse, according to the report.

Researchers also found just over 26% of transgender teens have experienced physical dating violence, compared to 6% of cisgender males and 9% of cisgender females.

Transgender teens' risk factors for suicide also were higher including suicide attempts — 35% compared to 5.5% of cisgender males and 9% of cisgender females.

Substance use among transgender teens was higher for nearly all substances in the survey. Authors noted this could be linked to their high rates of violence victimization. They called for more support for these teens.

“Taking steps to create safe learning environments and provide access to culturally competent physical and mental health care might be important first steps to improving the health of transgender youths,” they wrote.

### Resources

- [AAP policy "Office-Based Care for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Youth"](#)
- [AAP Section on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Health and Wellness](#)
- [Information for parents on transgender children](#)

