

Mental Illness and Suicide in Youth: Why Screening is Needed

Screening can help find those youth who are suffering from undiagnosed mental illness or are at risk for suicide, make their parents aware of their children's difficulties and help connect them with mental health services that can save their lives.

Every year 3.4 million U.S. high school students think seriously about killing themselves

Almost 2 million high school students report having made a prior suicide attempt

606,500 students report having made an attempt that required medical attention

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

How We Work With Local Communities

TeenScreen assists communities throughout the country develop locally operated and sustained screening programs. Screening can take place in schools, clinics, shelters and a variety of other youth serving organizations and settings. Columbia University offers free consultation, training, screening tools and technical assistance to qualifying communities that wish to implement their own screening programs using the TeenScreen model.

Groups interested in implementing the TeenScreen Program complete TeenScreen's site development process. This process involves developing a comprehensive screening plan, creating partnerships with other local entities that can help in the successful implementation of the program, and completing the TeenScreen application. To receive the TeenScreen Getting Started Guide, please contact our national office at 1-866-833-6727 or by e-mail at : teenscreen@childpsych.columbia.edu.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY TEENSCREEN PROGRAM

For other inquiries, please contact the TeenScreen Program office at 866-TeenScreen (866-833-6727) or by e-mail at teenscreen@childpsych.columbia.edu for information and assistance.

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In the United State, 21% of youth suffer from a mental health condition serious enough to cause impairment.
- U.S. Surgeon General, 2001



Tel: 1-800-464-5767 Toll Free in the State of Maine



TeenScreen Program Overview

The Columbia University TeenScreen Program is a national mental health and suicide risk screening program for young people.

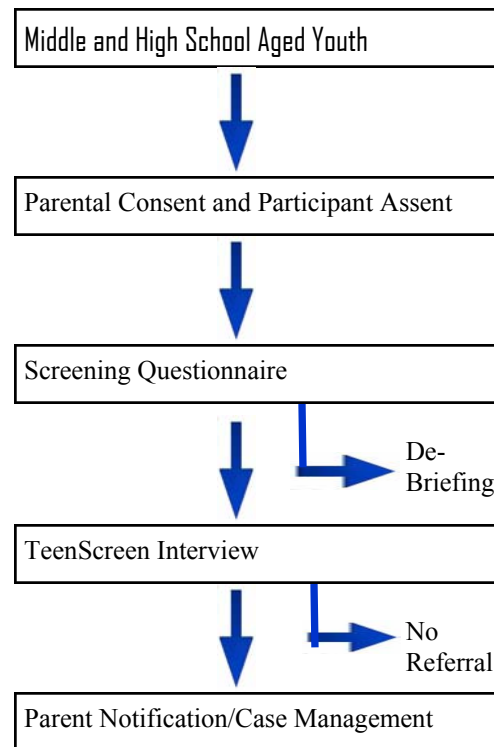
Today, more than 450 communities throughout the country have made TeenScreen a part of their efforts to help young people live healthy happy lives.

TeenScreen is a voluntary screening program that requires both parental consent and youth assent for participation. The program uses a questionnaire and interview process.

Support for TeenScreen and Mental Health Screening

The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health specifically cited TeenScreen as a model program, and the national Suicide Prevention Resource Center included TeenScreen in its list of promising evidence-based programs. Further, 35 of the 41 states with suicide prevention plans recommend screening, and seven mention TeenScreen by name. To date, 34 national health, mental health and education organizations are on record as supporting voluntary mental health screenings for youth.

The Screening Process



"TeenScreen gave me an adult to talk to—someone to listen—and then connected me with a counselor that I could see regularly. I am proof of the program's success. I am in college and I have not hurt myself or thought about suicide since." - Former Screening Participant



Parental Consent: Parental consent is *always* required.

Participant Assent: Teens are given a description of the program and are told that the screen is *entirely voluntary* and that they may refuse to answer any question

Screening Questionnaire: Participants complete a brief scientifically-tested, self administered screening questionnaire

Interview: Only those teens that score positive on the screening questionnaire AND are also deemed to be at risk by a mental health professional are considered a positive screen and receive a recommendation for a complete mental health evaluation.

Parent Notification/Case Management: Screening staff contact parents of youth who receive a recommendation for a complete evaluation