

Teen Girls Make a Pact to Kill Themselves, and are Successful

First there were pregnancy pacts, now there are suicide pacts? Last week in Norwood, PA, two teen girls carried out a pact to end their lives while standing in front of a high-speed train. A third girl, who was also part of the pact, witnessed this tragedy only moments after she backed out. Today would have been one of the girl's Sweet 16.

Suicide is the third-leading cause of death for 15- to 24-year-olds, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). And, suicide strikes hard in Central Texas, reporting the highest suicide rate of major metropolitan areas in Texas.*

In GENaustin's (the Girls Empowerment Network) after-school program, clubGEN, trained and employed high school girls lead middle school girls through curriculum proven to reduce high-risk behaviors. Girls are more likely than boys to admit to internalizing symptoms such as depression and anxiety, and are twice as prone to depression when entering adolescence. More specifically, Latinas between 12 and 17 are more likely than any other racial or ethnic group of that age range to attempt suicide.* To help address this concern in clubGEN, and because 63% of participants are Latina, girls are provided with a safe, girl-only environment where they meet weekly in small supportive group sessions to exchange their ideas and concerns.

Suicide rates differ between boys and girls. Girls think about and attempt suicide about twice as often as boys, and tend to attempt suicide by overdosing on drugs or cutting themselves. Yet boys die by suicide about four times as often girls, because they tend to use more lethal methods, such as firearms and hanging. Girls are also reported to have more depressive symptoms than boys and experience more stressors, especially involving peers, family, and their romantic lives.

Suicide among teens often occurs following a stressful life event, such as a perceived failure at school, a breakup with a boyfriend or girlfriend, the death of a loved one, a divorce, or a major family conflict. GENaustin can provide you with a spokesperson who can speak about girls and depression and ways in which adults can help prevent high-risk behaviors in teens.

Find out more information about GENaustin at www.genaustin.org

*Texas Mortality Statistics for Suicide

*American Psychologist

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About GENaustin

GENaustin (The Girls Empowerment Network of Austin) fosters healthy self-esteem in girls by engaging them to explore and define their personal values and build skills that empower them with confidence and courage to make wise choices. For more information about GENaustin, a 501(c)(3) non profit organization visit www.genaustin.org