

Research on the TeenScreen Program

Research has shown that the TeenScreen Program accurately identifies youth who are suffering from mental illness or are at risk of suicide, many of whom would not otherwise be identified.

- Teens who are at risk for suicide at the time of the screening will be identified through the screening process.¹
- Teens who are experiencing depression, anxiety, and drug or alcohol abuse at the time of the screening will be identified through the screening process.¹
- In a study of approximately 2,000 high school students who participated in TeenScreen, 74% of students who were contemplating suicide and 50% of students who had made a prior suicide attempt were not previously known to be having problems by school personnel. In addition, 69% of students found to be suffering from depression were also unknown.²
- Another study demonstrated that TeenScreen identified 15 times the number of high school students in need of mental health services than an in-school mental health program.³
- Only 1.6% of suicidal teens identified by TeenScreen in one study who also meet criteria for a clinical diagnosis were already in treatment with a mental health professional. ⁴
- The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health recognized TeenScreen as a model program in its July 2003 final report.⁵
- The national Suicide Prevention Resource Center listed the TeenScreen Program as a "Promising Program" on its list of Evidence-Based Practices in Suicide Prevention Programs.⁶

References

1 Shaffer, D., Scott, M., Wilcox, H., Maslow, C., Hicks, R., Lucas, C. P., et al. (2004). The Columbia Suicide Screen: Validity and reliability of a screen for youth suicide and depression. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 43(1), 71-79.

2 Shaffer, D., & Craft, L. (1999). Methods of adolescent suicide prevention. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 60 Suppl 2, 70-74; discussion 75-76, 113-116.

3 Kaplan, A., Olfson, M., Chrostowski, C., McGuire, L., & Flynn, L. (2005). Assessing the effectiveness of the Columbia University TeenScreen Program. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Toronto, Ontario.

4 Scott, M., Wilcox, H., Schonfeld, I. S., Davies, M., Hicks, R., Turner, J., et al. (2004). The Columbia Suicide Screen: Does screening identify previously unknown teens at risk for suicide and other mental health problems? Poster presented at the American Public Health Conference and the American Academy for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Annual Conference.

5 President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health. (2003). *Achieving the promise: Transforming mental health care in America*. Final report. Rockville, MD: DHHS Pub. No. SMA-03-3832.

6 Suicide Prevention Resource Center (2005). Available at http://www.sprc.org/whatweoffer/ebp_factsheets.asp.