

Improving Community Health

Mental Health: Sara Jesse, Facilitator

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act, and helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

 **1 in 4** of Sauk County adults have ever **been told by a health professional that they had depressionⁱ**.

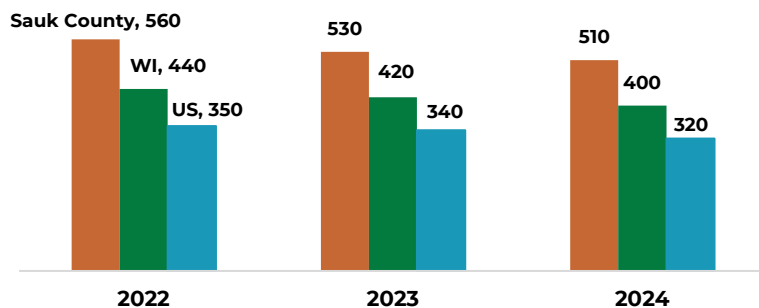
60% of 2024 Sauk County CHA Survey respondents selected **Mental Health** as a **community problem** that we should work to improve, making it the 2nd most selected community problem.

Problem: Access to Mental Health Providers is Limited, Leading to Long Waits

The ratio of **Population to Mental Health Providers in Sauk County is improving**, though still higher than **state** and **national** ratesⁱⁱ.

We are getting more mental health providers

(The # of people per mental health provider is decreasing)



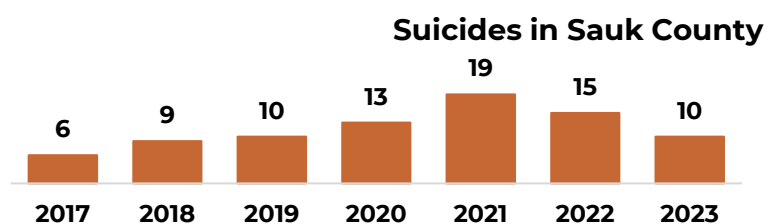
Local Activities: While we are making progress at increasing access to mental healthcare, sometimes people who wish to see a mental health provider are being put on wait lists. This can lead to mental health challenges getting worse while they wait. To address this need, Prevent Suicide Sauk County selected the CredibleMind platform to provide mental health support to Sauk County area residents. **The CredibleMind website is free and confidential and has thousands of expert vetted mental health resources to help you flourish. Check it out at <https://saukcounty.crediblemind.com/>.**

“Mental health resources are extremely limited. Many people don't know where to begin. In-person appointments are almost impossible to schedule, and virtual appointments come with their own set of problems. These challenges can be overwhelming for someone who is already stressed. There is also a stigma to mental health, making people feel that asking for mental health help is a sign of weakness.”
-Sauk County CHA Survey Respondent 40



Problem: Sauk County has High Rates of Suicide Attempts and Deaths

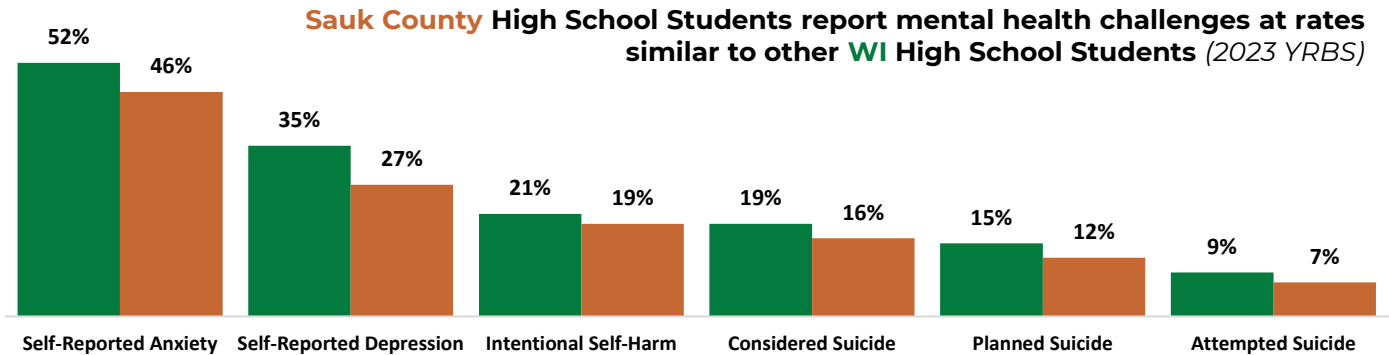
At **17 Suicide Deaths per 100,000 population, Sauk County continues to have More Suicide Deaths** than state (15 per 100,000) and national (14 per 100,000) ratesⁱⁱⁱ. (2017-2021 Data)



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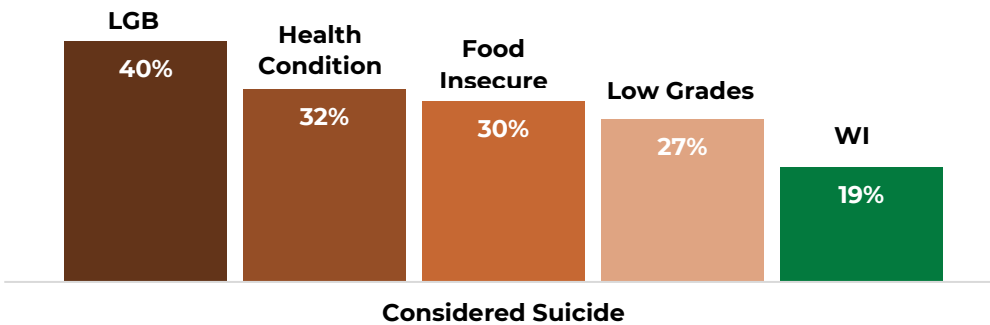
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Adolescent Mental Health^{iv}



Adolescent Suicidal Ideation: High Risk Groups^v

High risk groups have greatly increased rates of suicidal ideation. (2023 YRBS)



Lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) youth, students with a chronic health condition, those with food insecurity, and those with low grades are at the highest risk for suicidal ideation. **LGB youth are at the highest risk.**

Prevent Suicide Sauk County

Local Activities: Promoting the Live Today, Put It Away Safe Storage Program, where local gun shops/gun clubs can provide safe storage options for people in crisis. Provide training to hunter safety classes, gun club members, gun shop owners/staff on suicide warning signs.

Wins: [SaukCounty.CrediblyMind.com](https://www.saukcounty.org/crediblymind) platform launched in May 2023 thanks to funding from Sauk Prairie Healthcare, SSM Health, and Public Health Sauk County.

Want to get involved? Learn more at <https://bit.ly/PSSCinfo>.

ⁱ PLACES. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Interactive Map. Accessed September 24, 2024. <https://arcg.is/1HmX800>

ⁱⁱ County Health Rankings, Mental Health Providers. Retrieved September 16, 2024, from <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/wisconsin/sauk?year=2024#health-factors>

ⁱⁱⁱ County Health Rankings, Suicides. Retrieved September 20, 2024 from <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/health-factors/social-economic-factors/community-safety/suicides?year=2024&county=55111>

^{iv} Sauk County YRBS Results compiled from Baraboo - Baraboo High 2023 YRBS Results (High School Version), River Valley - River Valley High 2023 YRBS Results (High School Version), and Reedsburg - Reedsburg Area High 2023 YRBS Results (High School Version). Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2023. Data compiled by Public Health Sauk County Staff, August 2024.

^v Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. 2024. "2023 Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey Summary Report." Retrieved September 13, 2024, from <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/yrbs>