



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 9, 2022

World Suicide Prevention Day 2022: More than a tenth of Canadians have thought about suicide in the past year, according to MHRC research

TORONTO, Ontario — World Suicide Prevention Day on September 10, 2022 allows for a global conversation to be had about the impact of suicide. Mental Health Research Canada's (MHRC) research contributes to the conversation by providing stakeholders with the most up-to-date information on how Canadians are coping with their mental health. Through MHRC's quarterly national polling work, Canadians with lived experience report on their levels of anxiety and depression to identify and explore factors that influence their mental health.

"With the onset of the recent pandemic, there has never been a more important time for mental health in Canada" said Akela Peoples, CEO of Mental Health Research Canada. "Based on our research, we know more Canadians are struggling with their mental health than ever before. On World Suicide Prevention Day, and every day, we have to keep this important work top of mind, have those tough conversations and check in with each other."

MHRC's recent research demonstrates the following key findings:

- More than a tenth of Canadians have thought about suicide in the past year.
- Thoughts of suicide are more predominant among younger Canadians, with 27% of 16–17-year-olds and 21% of 18–34-year-olds having thought of it in the past year; and 8% of 16–17-year-olds and 6% of 18–34-year-olds having planned an attempt in the past year.
- Of those who identify as LGBTQ2S+, 30% have thought about suicide in the past year (20% in the past three months, similar to findings of Poll 12) and 8% have made a plan in the past year (3% in the past three months).
- Thoughts of suicide are similar among men and women.
- One fifth of frontline healthcare workers report having thought about suicide in the past year.
- African Canadians demonstrate the highest risk for suicidal thoughts (over 26%) when compared to other racialized groups.

MHRC is very pleased that the national 9-8-8 suicide crisis line is being implemented in the fall 2023 to support Canadians. This crisis line is essential and will save lives.

These and other key findings can be found in MHRC's most recent poll report, "Understanding the Mental Health of Canadians through COVID-19 and Beyond: Poll 13" available at www.mhrc.ca.

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ABOUT THE POLL

MHRC's national polling is part of a multi-year effort to track the mental health challenges of COVID-19 and beyond. The goal of MHRC's polls one through twelve was to capture Canadians' reported perception of their level of anxiety and depression, and to identify and evaluate the factors that influence mental health through the pandemic. As we move into the pandemic's recovery period, MHRC has begun shifting its focus from mental health as it relates to COVID-19, to a more current and broader approach. This change in language and timing could account for a portion of the considerable decrease in the indicators noted above.

This study was conducted by Pollara Strategic Insights with an online sample of 3,023 adult Canadians and was conducted between July 13 to 22, 2022. Results from a probability sample of this size could be considered accurate to within ± 1.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Results have been weighted based on age, gender and region to be representative of the Canadian population.

ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH CANADA

Mental Health Research Canada is a national charitable organization dedicated to improving the lives of the **1 in 5 Canadians living with mental illness**, as well as their families, caregivers, and communities. We advance evidence-based mental health knowledge that is problem solving and applicable in the real world. We are committed to doing research differently; emphasizing collaboration between academia and community, and ensuring those with lived experience are engaged throughout the research process.

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