

## Facts & Figures: Mental Health & Autism

### Trauma & Suicide

- Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are 2-3 times **more likely to experience trauma** than typically developing peers.
- Individuals with ASD who experience trauma are **28 times more likely to attempt or complete suicide** than typically developing peers.
- Individuals with ASD who experience high levels of childhood stress and trauma are **significantly more likely to develop a behavioral/mood disorder**.

### Co-Occurring Conditions

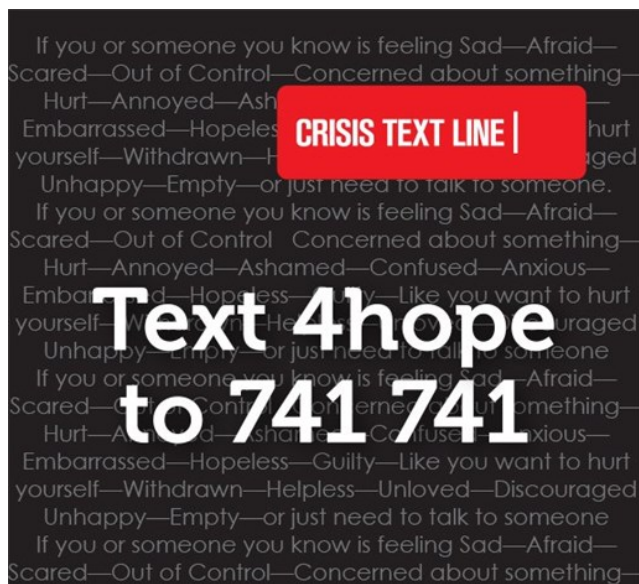
- **40 – 70% of youth with ASD also have ADHD** – the most prevalent comorbidity in youth with ASD.
- Individuals with ASD + ADHD are at an increased risk for developing a third psychiatric condition – usually anxiety or depression.
- Depression Prevalence = 7% of children and 26% of adults
- Anxiety Prevalence = 11-40%

### Emergency Room (ER) Utilization

- Children with ASD were **nine times more likely to visit an ER** for psychiatric problems than children who don't have autism.
- 12.9% of ER visits for children with ASD were for psychiatric reasons, compared to 1.75% of visits for children without ASD.
- **Private insurance increased the chances** of a psychiatric ER visit.
- Accessing care through the ER was primarily due to lack of coverage for or availability of community services.

## Data Sources

1. Fuld, S. (2018). Autism Spectrum Disorder: The Impact of Stressful and Traumatic Life Events and Implications for Clinical Practice. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 1-10.
2. Antshel, K. M., & Russo, N. (2019). Autism Spectrum Disorders and ADHD: Overlapping Phenomenology, Diagnostic Issues, and Treatment Considerations. *Current psychiatry reports*, 21(5), 34.
3. CDC. Data and Statistics on Autism. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/data.html>
4. Kalb, L.G., Stuart, E.A., Freedman, B., Zablotzky, B., & Vasa, R. (2012). Psychiatric-related emergency department visits among children with an autism spectrum disorder. *Pediatr Emer Care*, 28(12), 1269-1276.



You are not alone.

## Warning Signs of Suicide

- Talking about wanting to die
- Looking for a way to kill oneself
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no purpose
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious, agitated or recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings

The more of these signs a person shows, the greater the risk. Warning signs are associated with suicide but may not be what causes a suicide.

## What to Do

If someone you know exhibits warning signs of suicide:

- Do not leave the person alone
- Remove any firearms, alcohol, drugs or sharp objects that could be used in a suicide attempt
- Call the U.S. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255)
- Take the person to an emergency room or seek help from a medical or mental health professional