

# 40 Years of Research Suggests Assessments may Increase Risk of Suicide

*Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death for Americans with an average of 44,965 people committing suicide annually.*

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, November 18, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day approaches, the Florida chapter of the [Citizens Commission on Human Rights](#) (CCHR) is questioning the reliance on suicide risk assessments.

Observed on November 21st this year, International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day is “an event in which survivors of suicide loss come together to find connection, understanding, and hope through their shared experience.” [1]



Each year an average of 44,965 people commit suicide in the United States making it the 10th leading cause of death for Americans.

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death for Americans Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death for Americans with 48,344 people committing suicide in 2018. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suicide deaths were more than double those due to homicides in 2015, which means that for every murder reported in the news, there were at least 2 other deaths that occurred due to suicide. [2,3,4]

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Almost 10 years after it was recommended that ‘assessment tools’ not be used, so called experts continue to call for increased use of suicide risk assessments. This makes no sense.”

*Diane Stein, president CCHR Florida*

Equally disturbing is that suicide is the second-leading cause of death in young people in the United States. Once again [suicide risk assessment](#) is often promoted as the solution but experts in the field have repeatedly concluded that there is not any one scale that can predict who will commit suicide to any useful degree. [5,6]

This year the call for more screening, especially of children, seems even louder due in large part to COVID-19 and mental health advocates predictions that “suicide is likely to become a more pressing concern as the pandemic spreads and has longer-term effects on the general population, the economy, and vulnerable groups”. [7]

However, this solution may be a contributing factor to the increase in suicide rates. Citing an article published in Scientific American CCHR believes that the misguided reliance on screenings, assessments and psychiatric drugs is clouding the search for real answers. According to the article, a study of the past 40 years of suicide risk assessment research suggests that not only do these assessments not help but may actually cause harm by increasing the risk of suicide. [8,9,10]

“Prediction models in suicidology have made little sense. If practitioners and administrators keep getting it wrong, why are they still employed to continue bad work? They are collectively and demonstrably responsible for “this beaten path,” these awful heartbreaks,” asks retired psychiatrist Russell Copelan. [11]

Placing even more doubt on the legitimacy of mental health evaluations, a study published in earlier this year in the journal Psychology Science in the Public Interest by a group of lawyers and psychologists found that many tests used in courtrooms are considered scientifically unreliable; in the headline, the journal dubbed them “junk science.” According to the study, a team of lawyers and psychologists reviewed 364 exams used in the legal system, finding a third of them don’t pass muster with forensic mental health experts. [12]

“Almost 10 years after the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence recommended that



With 1 in 6 Americans taking a psychiatric drug and 1 in 10 of these being an antidepressant, drugging human behavior has become big business.



“More Americans are turning to anti-anxiety and antidepressant medications as the coronavirus pandemic upends everyday life for many.” The Hill Published on Apr 16, 2020 By Alexandra Kelley

'assessment tools' not be used, so called experts continue to call for increased use of suicide risk assessments. This makes no sense." states Diane Stein, president CCHR Florida. [13]

CCHR believes that normal responses to adversity are being labeled as mental illness and that instead of getting help people are being given dangerous drugs with side effects that include suicidal ideation and completed suicide. [14]

This belief is not unfounded. Alison Escalante reported in an article this month titled "Researchers Doubt That Certain Mental Disorders Are Disorders At All", how "in a compelling new paper, biological anthropologists call on the scientific community to rethink mental illness." Escalante goes on to report that, "with a thorough review of the evidence, they show good reasons to think of depression or PTSD as responses to adversity rather than chemical imbalances. And ADHD could be a way of functioning that evolved in an ancestral environment, but doesn't match the way we live today." [15]

In addition to the risks when it comes to evaluating suicide through the use of unworkable assessments and screenings, CCHR is also alerting parents about the side effects of the drugs commonly prescribed when a child is labeled as mentally ill; side effects which include suicidal ideation. [16]

"There are almost 3.4 million children in this country taking psychiatric drugs for ADHD and almost 70,000 of these children are age 5 and under," stated Diane Stein. "It is known that children labeled with ADHD are at a greater risk for suicide yet the fact that the psychiatric drugs prescribed to 'treat' ADHD have suicidal ideation as a side effect is ignored." [17]



If proof is needed that suicide prevention programs and risk assessments do not work all you need to do is look at the increasing number of people taking their lives despite ever increasing mental health programs.



NBC News reported on April 22, 2018 that the Center for Disease Control (CDC) findings show that suicides in the U.S. are at the highest level in "almost three decades".

“Parents need to not only know the risks associated with these drugs but also that they have the right in Florida to refuse psychological screening and drugging of their child,” said Stein. [18]

To learn more about parental rights, suicide and [psychiatric drug side effects](#) please contact CCHR at 800-782-2878 or visit [www.cchrflorida.org](http://www.cchrflorida.org).

About CCHR: Initially established by the Church of Scientology and renowned psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz in 1969, CCHR's mission is to eradicate abuses committed under the guise of mental health and enact patient and consumer protections. L. Ron Hubbard, founder of Scientology, first brought psychiatric imprisonment to wide public notice: “Thousands and thousands are seized without process of law, every week, over the ‘free world’ tortured, castrated, killed. All in the name of ‘mental health,’” he wrote in March 1969.

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[11] Op-Ed: Is Suicide Assessment Evidence-Free Drivel or a Historical Calculation?

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Alison Escalante Aug 11, 2020,

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[16] Why You Should Pay Attention to Black Box Warnings on Medication

By Michael Bihari, MD Fact checked by Shereen Lehman, MS Updated on March 01, 2020

<https://www.verywellhealth.com/black-box-warnings-1124107>

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[18] Parental Rights <https://www.cchrflorida.org/parental-rights/>

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