

NEWS RELEASE

AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION

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American Psychiatric Association Statement Teen Suicide Rates

Arlington, Va. – The American Psychiatric Association (APA) is urging the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to continue to monitor data and to review the most recent research on teen suicides in light of growing evidence that a required warning label on antidepressant medications may be causing harm.

A study published this month in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* shows a continued high rate of youth suicides in 2005, the year after the FDA required a strong “black box” warning on antidepressant medications.

The results indicate the spike in teen suicides that occurred in 2004 may not have been an anomaly. Given the steady decline in youth suicides in the 1990s, the results reported in *JAMA* are particularly disturbing. This shift correlates with a decrease in the use of medication to treat depression in children and adolescents following an October 2004 decision by the FDA to impose a black box warning on antidepressants.

Depression can be successfully treated, especially with early, sustained interventions. Not all children and adolescents with depression need medication, but for those who do, it can be an extremely effective and even life-saving component of treatment.

The FDA has an obligation to monitor the impact of their regulatory decisions, and to modify their actions when and if warranted by subsequent findings. The APA is urging the FDA to reconvene the advisory panel to help review the most recent research.

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About the American Psychiatric Association:

The American Psychiatric Association is the nation’s leading medical specialty society whose more than 38,000 physician members specialize in diagnosis, treatment, prevention and research of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. Visit the APA at www.psych.org and www.HealthyMinds.org.