

Surveillance for Suicidal Behavior: Assessing the Utility of the National Survey on Drug Use and Health—United States, 2008-2014

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Burden of Nonfatal Suicidal Behaviors among Adults in the U.S.

- **Difficult to measure**
- **One ongoing national survey measuring these behaviors among adults in the U.S.**
 - **National Survey on Drug Use and Health**
 - **No existing assessment of trends**

National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH)

- **SAMHSA's annual household survey of noninstitutionalized U.S. civilians aged 12 and older**
 - 70,000 interviews/year, weighted to represent larger population
- **National, state, sub-state estimates of substance use and mental health issues**

NSDUH Suicidal Behavior Measurement

Mental Health Module*

In the past 12 months, did you...

- think seriously about trying to kill yourself?
- make any plans to kill yourself?
- try to kill yourself?
- get medical attention as a result of an attempt to kill yourself?
- stay in a hospital overnight or longer because you tried to kill yourself?

*All 18+, since 2008

NSDUH Suicidal Behavior Measurement

Mental Health Module*	Adult Depression Module*
In the past 12 months, did you...	During your worst/most recent depressive episode, did you...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• think seriously about trying to kill yourself?• make any plans to kill yourself?• try to kill yourself?• get medical attention as a result of an attempt to kill yourself?• stay in a hospital overnight or longer because you tried to kill yourself?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• often think a lot about death, either your own, someone else's, or death in general?• ever think that it would be better if you were dead?• think about committing suicide?• make a suicide plan?• make a suicide attempt?

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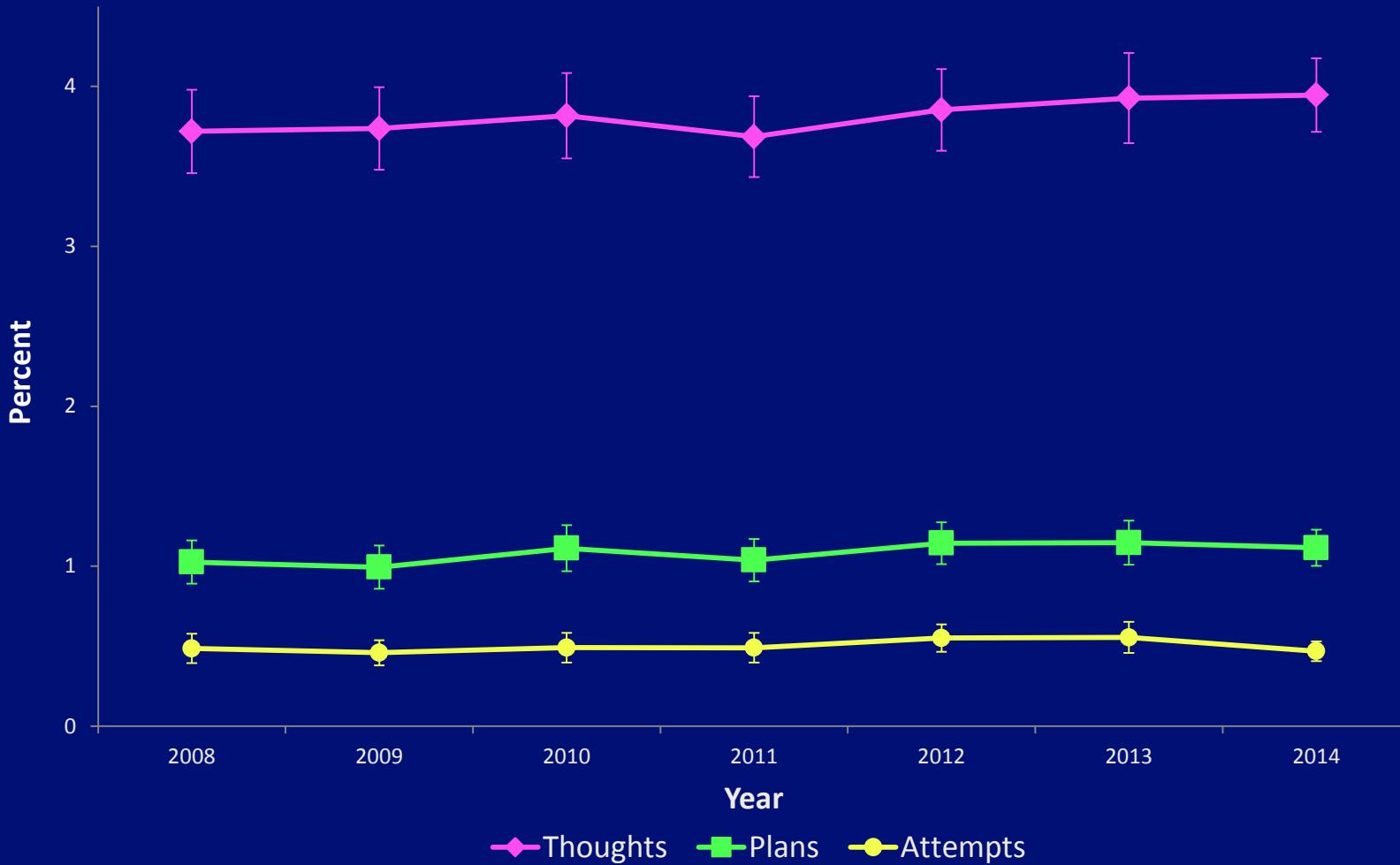
Methods

- **Focused on Mental Health section data**
 - Analyzed 7 years of available data (2008–2014)
- **Percent of adults reporting each behavior each year**
 - **Suicide thoughts**
 - **Suicide plans**
 - **Suicide attempts**
- **Stratified by sex, age group**

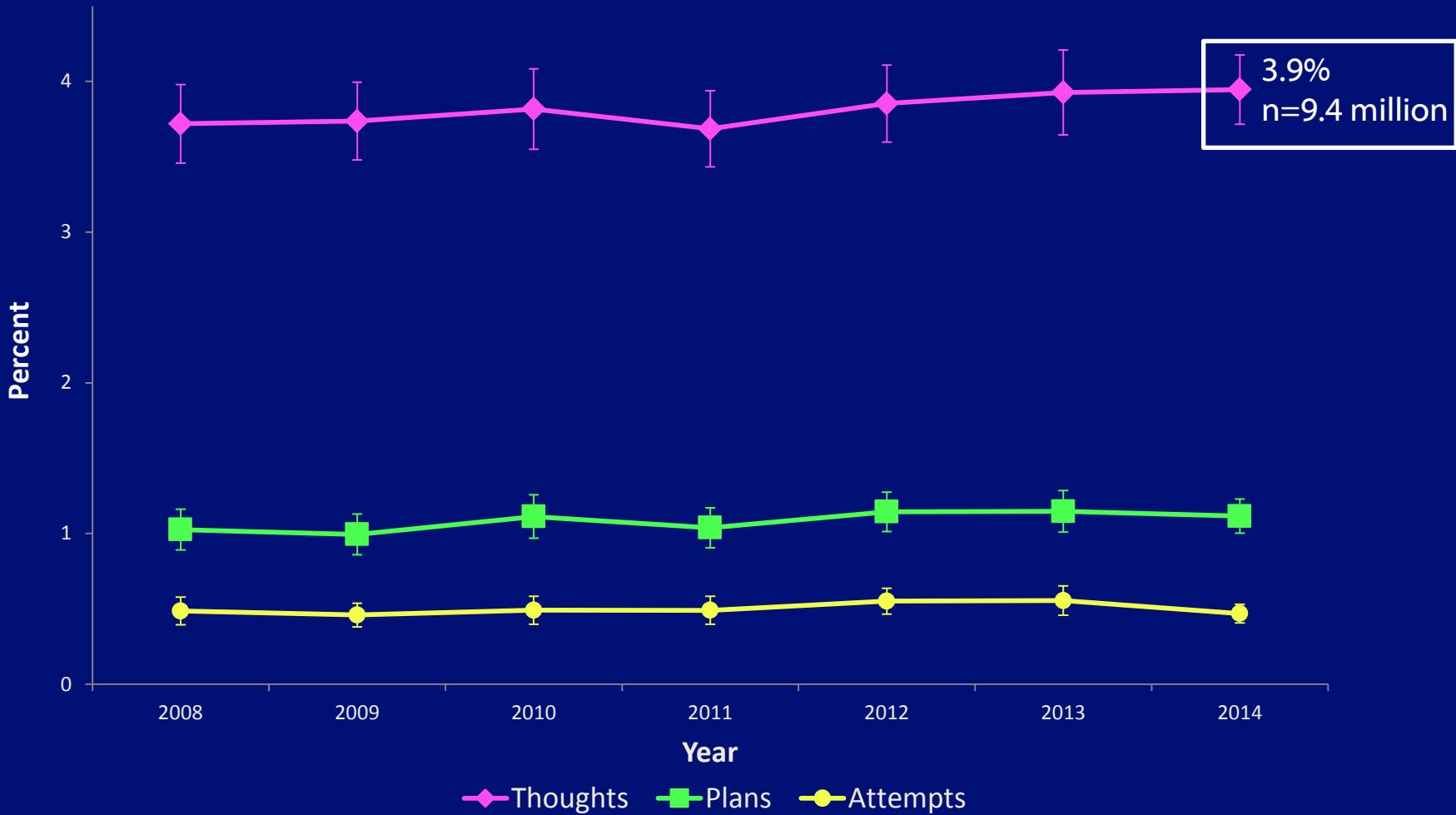
Methods

- **Pairwise t-tests for 2-estimate comparisons**
 - **Year-to-year**
 - **Across demographics**
- **Compared responses on questions across survey modules**
 - **Adult Mental Health module**
 - **Adult Depression module**

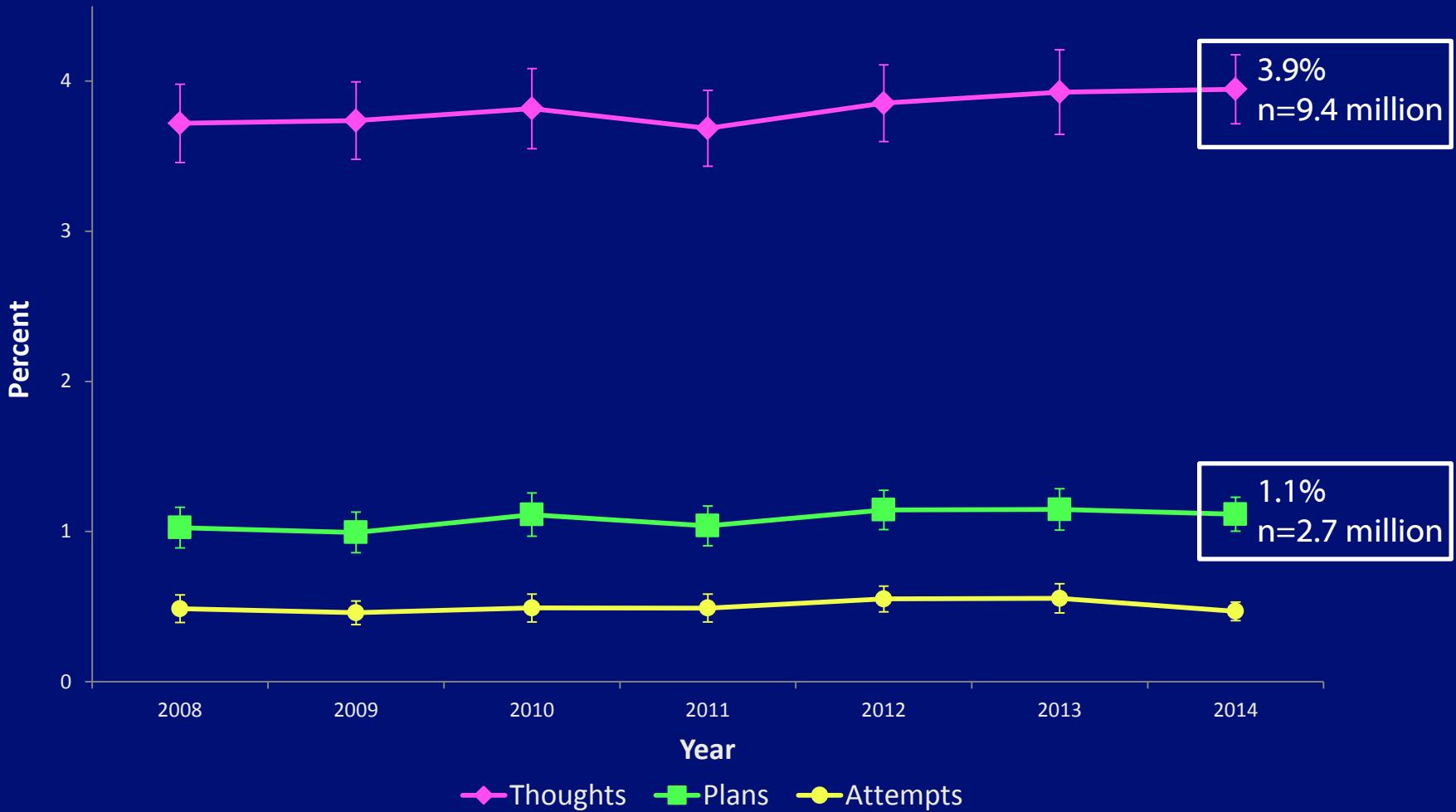
Percent of U.S. Adults Aged ≥ 18 Years Reporting Suicide Thoughts, Plans, and Attempts in Past Year, 2008–2014



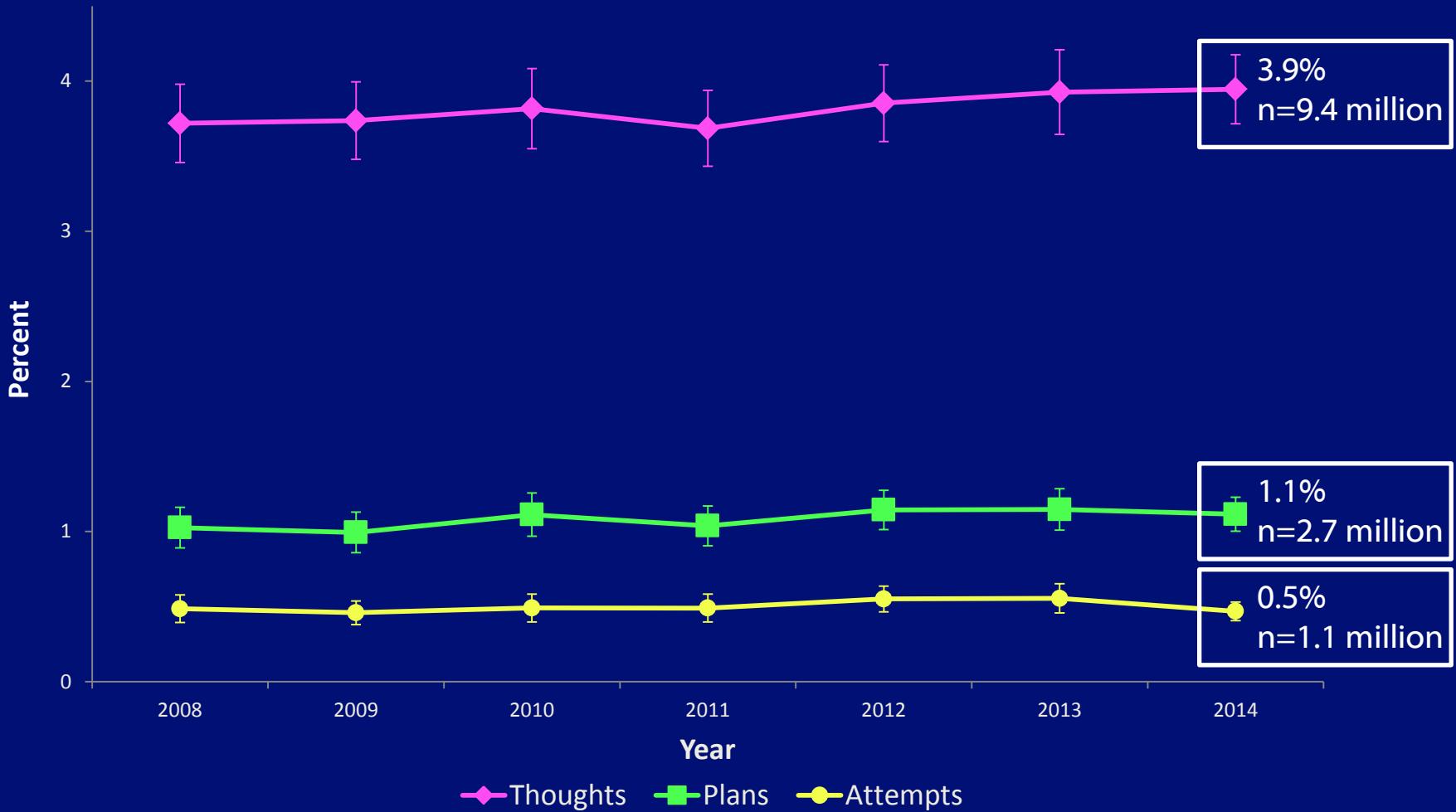
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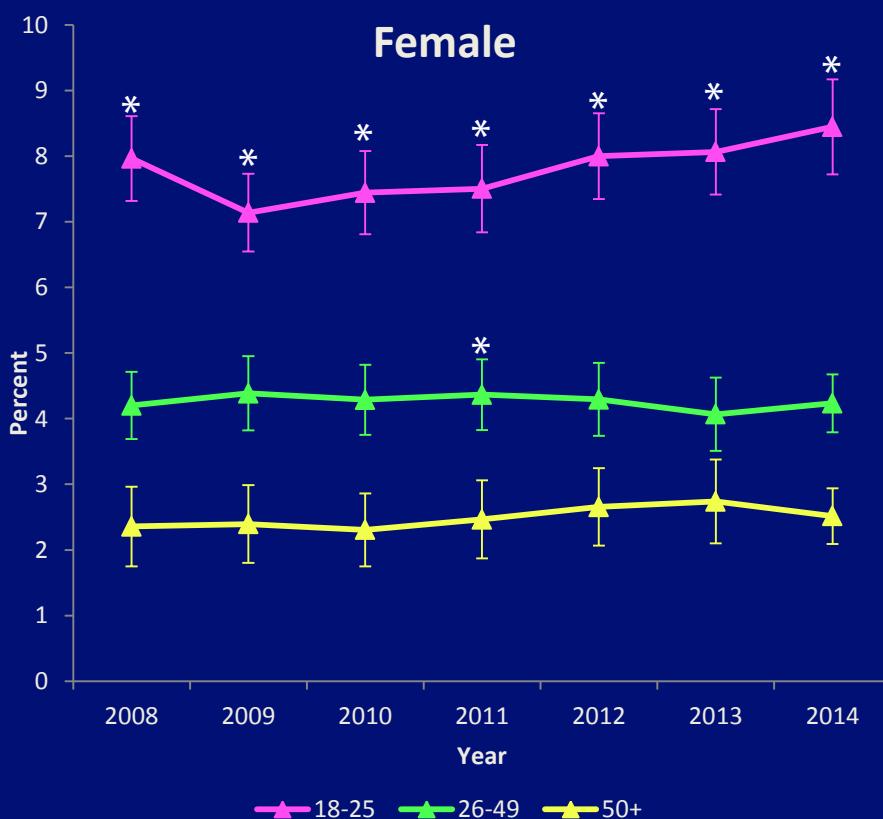
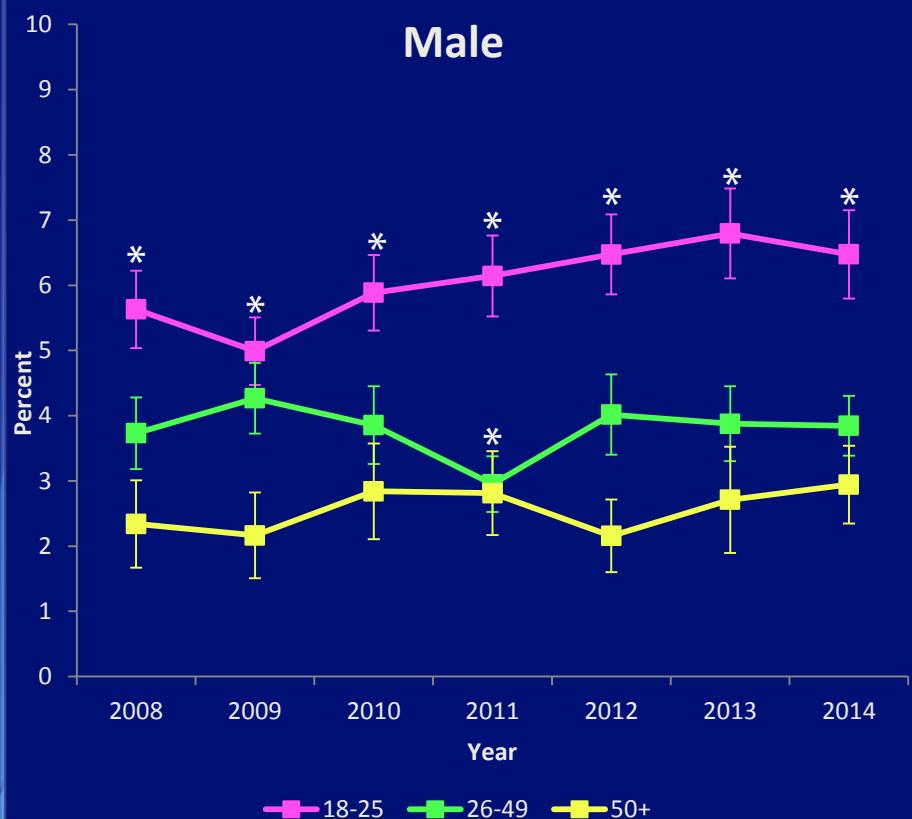
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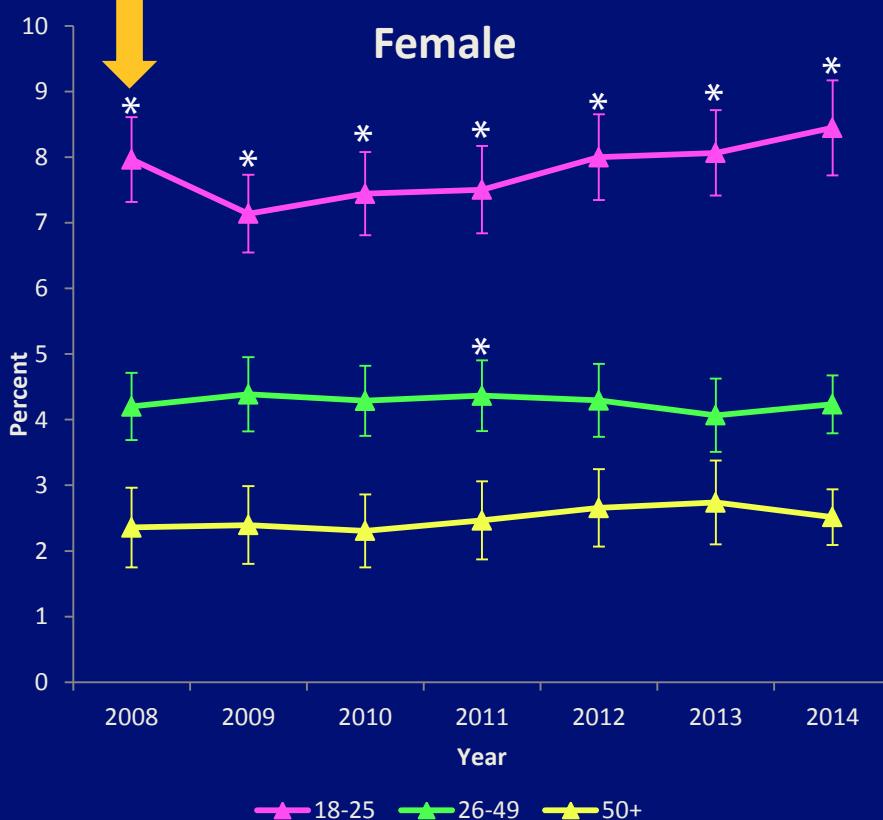
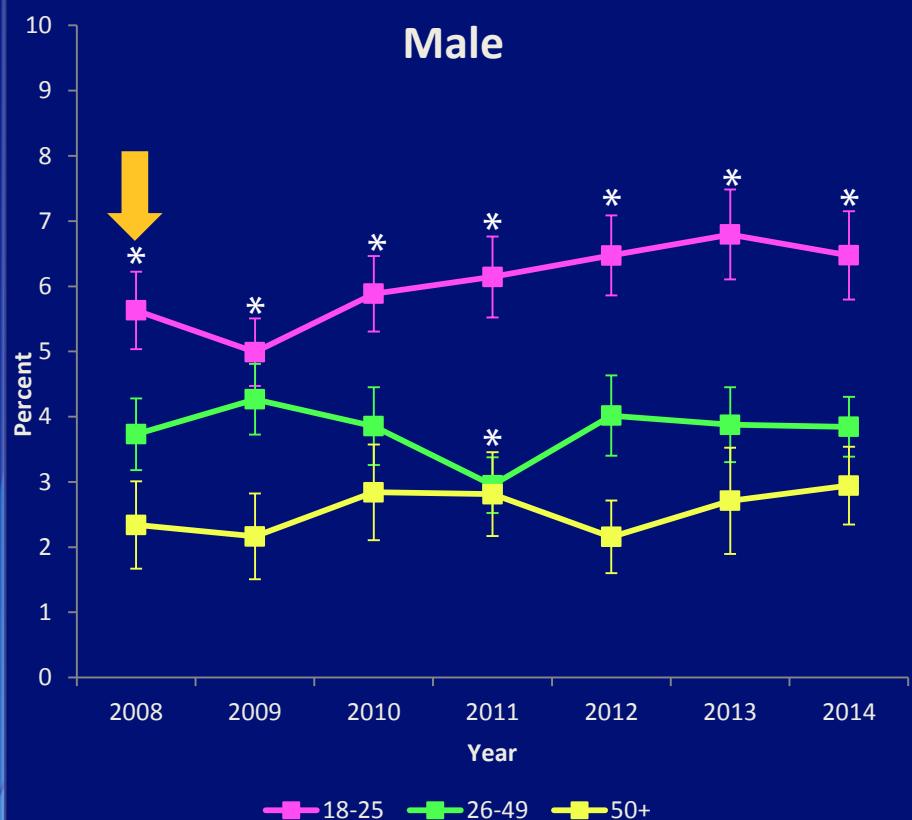
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Percent of U.S. Adults Aged ≥ 18 Years Reporting Suicide Thoughts in Past Year by Sex and Age, 2008–2014

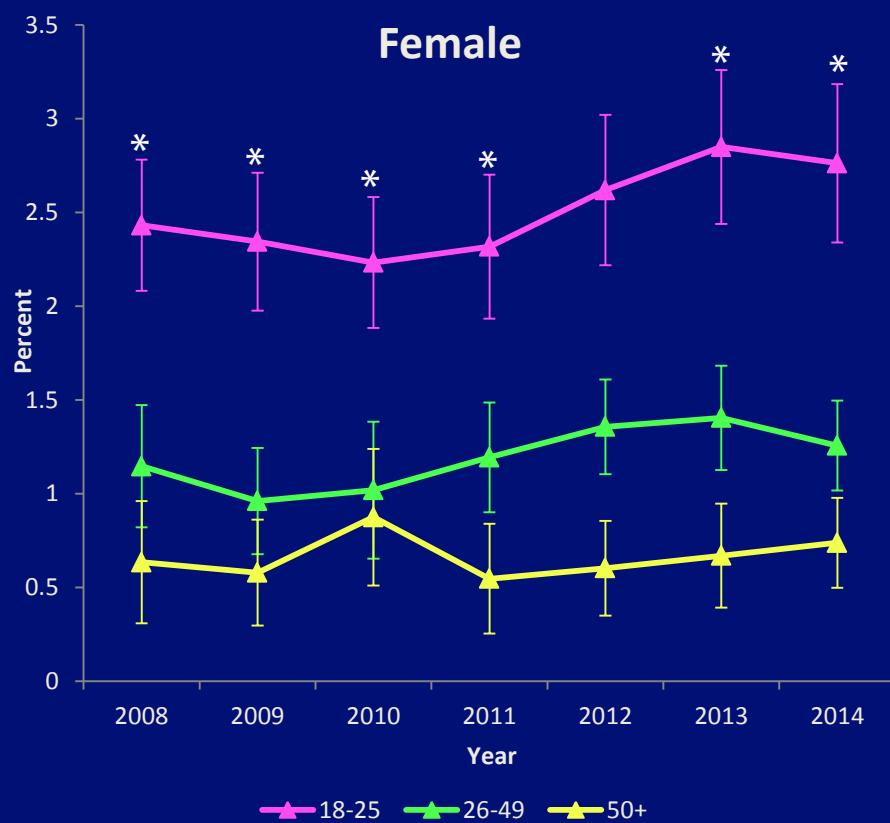
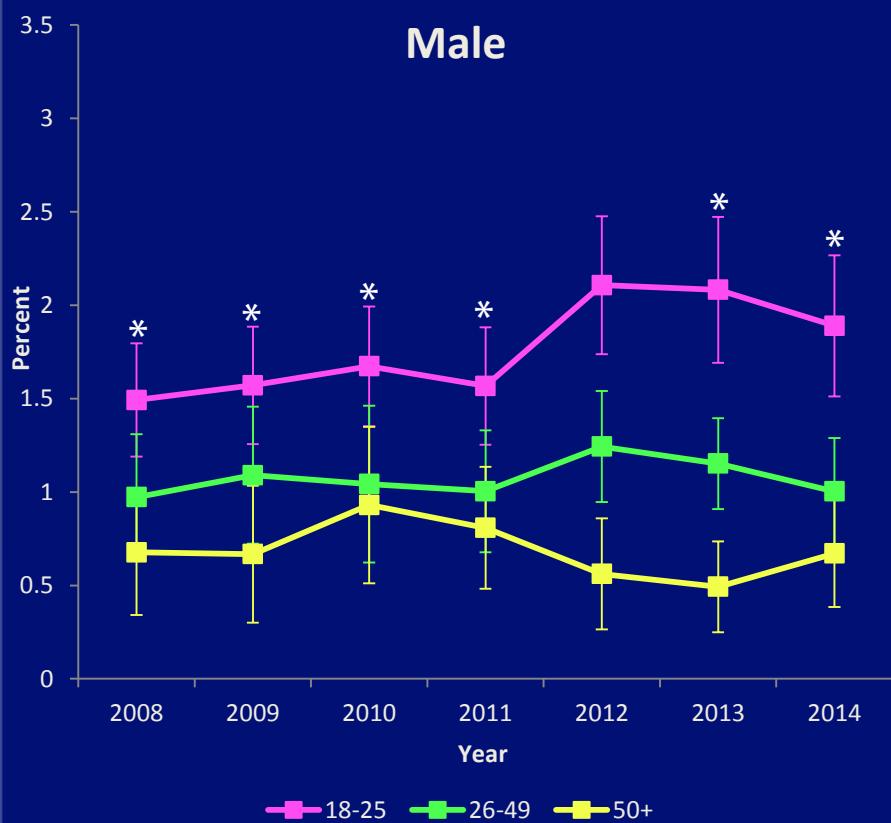


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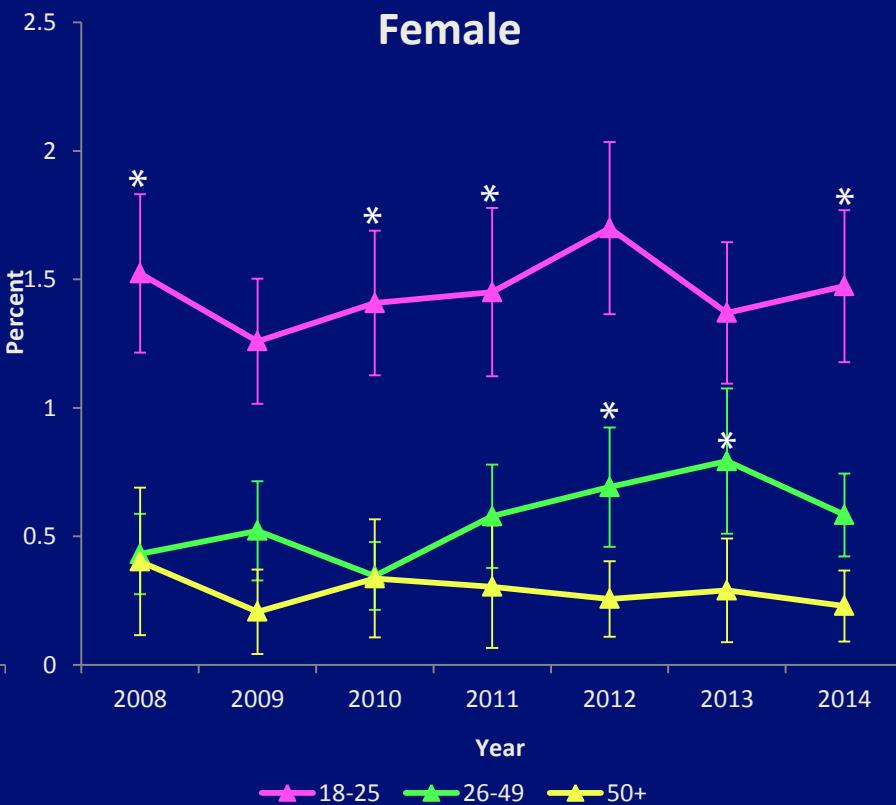
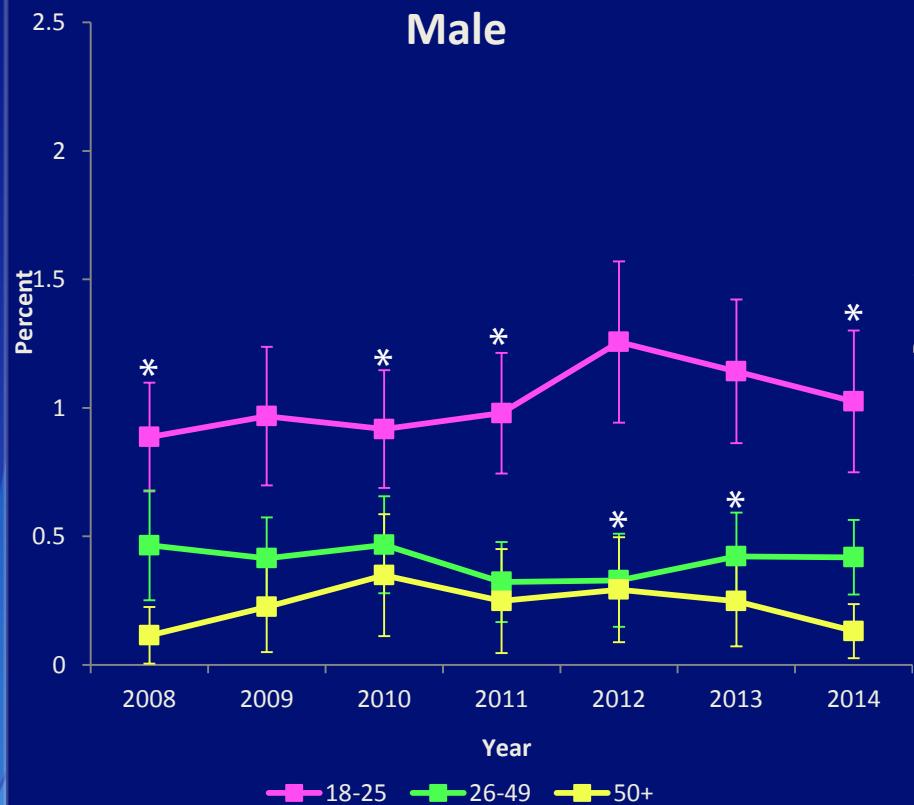


*p<0.05

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Percent of U.S. Adults Aged ≥ 18 Years Reporting Suicide Attempts in Past Year by Sex and Age, 2008–2014



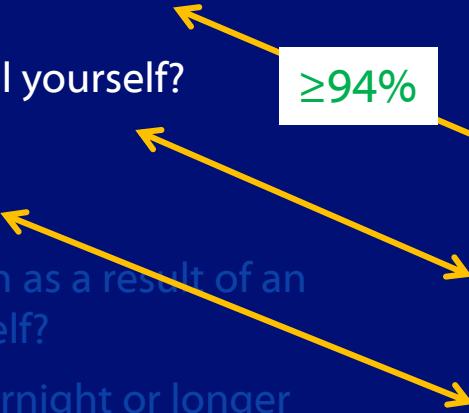
Comparison Across Survey Modules

Mental Health Module*	Adult Depression Module*
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Main Findings

- **Little change in overall national estimates over time**
- **Among 18–25 year-olds only, estimates of nonfatal suicidal behaviors higher among females than males each year**
 - **Younger adult females: targeted interventions**
- **High internal consistency of responses to suicidal behaviors questions**

Conclusions

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Conclusions

- **NSDUH was not designed for conducting suicidal behavior surveillance**
- **Stable survey with 7 years of data and growing**
- **High-quality, internally consistent data**
- **Ability to stratify by multiple demographics and drill down to state- and sub-state levels**
- **Continue thinking about ways in which to utilize NSDUH data in a surveillance capacity**

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