

Suicide in Iowa, 2015

The Iowa Violent Death Reporting System (IAVDRS) is a CDC-funded statewide surveillance system that collects information on deaths that occur in Iowa resulting from homicide, suicide, unintentional firearm deaths, legal intervention and deaths of undetermined intent. IAVDRS is a multi-source data system from death certificates and medical examiner and law enforcement reports. The goal of this effort is to aid researchers, policymakers and community interest groups in the development of public health prevention strategies to reduce violent deaths. Iowa began collecting data in 2015. *This report is based on preliminary data from the seven most populous counties in Iowa, including: Black Hawk, Johnson, Linn, Polk, Pottawattamie, Scott, and Woodbury.*

TYPES OF VIOLENT DEATHS IN IOWA

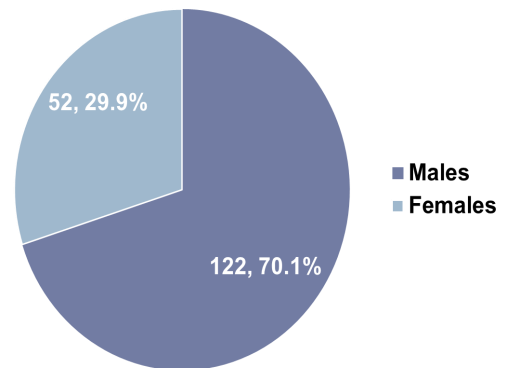
- A majority of violent deaths in Iowa in 2015 were classified as suicide, nearly 75% (N = 174).
- The remaining 60 deaths from violence in Iowa were attributed to homicide (18.4%), Undetermined (5.6%), Legal Intervention (1.3%), and Unintentional Firearm (0.4%).

SUICIDE IN IOWA

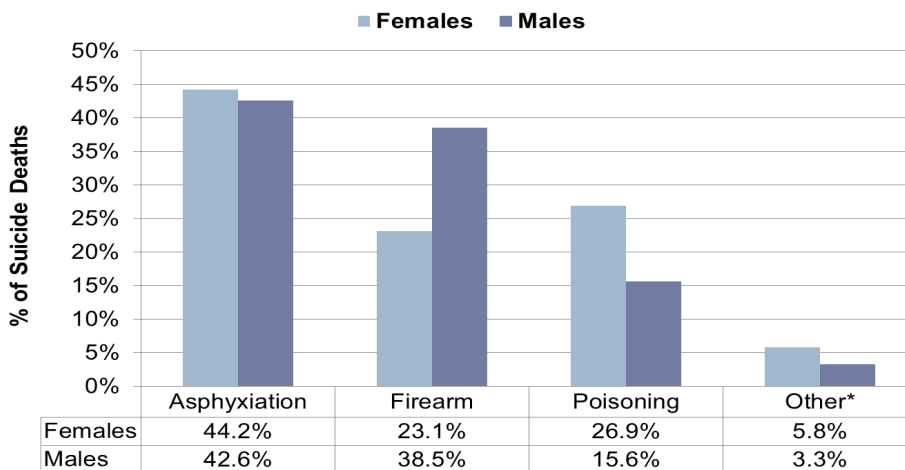
- **State Rates.** Iowa's suicide rate in 2015 was 13.95/100,000, a 9% increase from 12.78 in 2014.
- **State/U.S. Comparison.** The suicide rate in Iowa was 13.95/100,000, compared to the national average of 13.26/100,000.
- **Sex.** Males accounted for 70.1% of suicide victims and females accounted for 29.9% of suicide victims in 2015.

A Look at Overall Suicides For the 7 Most Populous Counties, 2015

Total Suicides by Sex



Suicide Method† by Sex



SUICIDE METHODS

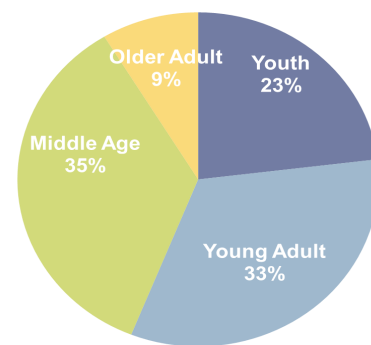
- Asphyxiation was the manner of death in 43.1% of suicides, followed by firearm use (33.9%), and poisoning (19.0%).
- Asphyxiation was the most common manner used by females (44.2%) and males (42.6%). Followed closely by firearm use in males (38.5%).

*Other includes: cut/pierce, fall, fire/flame, other specified, and not elsewhere classified

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SUICIDE DEATHS

- In 99% of Iowa's deaths by suicide, circumstances were documented in the records (N=173).
- The most frequently cited circumstances for all ages were depressed mood (83%), mental health problem (54%), history of mental illness treatment (42%), history of suicidal thoughts (37%), suicide note left (32%), intimate partner problem (29%), current mental illness treatment (28%), history of suicide attempt (27%), suicide intent disclosed (25%), and argument (24%).
- The age group with the largest proportion of suicide deaths was people ages 45-64 (35% of the deaths). Young adults (ages 25-44) comprised 33% of suicide deaths, and youth (ages 10-24) comprised 23%. Older adults (65 years or older) were 9% of all suicide deaths.
- Notable findings by age group include:
 - ◇ 43% of youth ages 10-24 disclosed their intent prior to the suicide, compared to only 25% in young adults and 20% in the middle-aged group. Older adults did not disclose an intent prior to the suicide.
 - ◇ 47% of older adults left a suicide note; whereas only 30% of youth did.
 - ◇ Intimate partner problems contributed to more circumstances among youth and young adults than to those in the other two age groups.

Suicide Deaths by Life Stage
Iowa 2015



Suicides are the majority of violent deaths that occur in Iowa and more than twice as many males die by suicide than females. The contributing factors for those at risk for suicide are depressed mood, existence of a mental health problem and history of treatment and suicidal thoughts, having an intimate partner problem, and a history of suicide attempts.

These data show that suicide is a complex problem that can affect any Iowan regardless of age, sex, race or any other demographics. Restricting the means to suicide, especially to the most lethal means, is an effective suicide prevention strategy. More data will be included in future reports that should provide additional insight for suicide prevention initiatives.



More information on suicide prevention efforts and resources can be found at Your Life Iowa (<http://www.yourlifeiowa.org>), 1-855-581-8111 (telephone) and 1-855-895-8398 (TEXT).



This publication was supported by Cooperative Agreement #5-U17-CE002599-04, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Department of Health and Human Services.

References

State Suicide Rates – Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. <https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/index.html>. Published August 1, 2017. Accessed August 10, 2017.

Fatal Injury Data Source – NCHS Vital Statistics System (for numbers of deaths). Bureau of Census (for population estimates).