YOUTH SUICIDE IN NORTH CAROLINA, 2010 - 2019

The North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS) is a CDC-funded statewide surveillance system that collects detailed information on violent deaths that occur in North Carolina including: homicide, suicide, unintentional firearm deaths, legal intervention, and deaths of undetermined intent. NC-VDRS triangulates information from death certificates, medical examiner reports, and law enforcement reports to understand and aid in the prevention of violent deaths. For more information, please visit https://www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov/About/ncVDRS.htm.

• From 2010 to 2019, 3,866 North Carolina residents ages 10 to 24 died as a result of violence. Of these violent deaths, 1,673 (43.3%) were suicide.

• Males consistently had a higher number of suicides than females, regardless of age.

• The number of suicide deaths peaked for males at age 22 (188 suicides) and for females at age 23 (42 suicides).

• Seventy percent of all youth suicide victims were identified as non-Hispanic (NH) white, 17.5% as NH Black, 7.2% as NH Hispanic, and 5.0% as belonging to other racial/ethnic groups.

• Overall, the most common method of suicide among youth was firearms (52.3%), followed by hanging/strangulation/suffocation (36.8%) and poisoning (5.5%).

• Only 5.4% of suicides involved a method other than firearms, hanging/strangulation/suffocation, or poisoning.

Method of Youth Suicides: NC-VDRS, 2010 - 2019

- Firearm: 52%
- Hanging: 37%
- Poisoning: 5%
- Other*: 5%

*Other includes falls, drowning, motor vehicle, fire/burns and other causes of suicide.
Precipitating Circumstances of Youth Suicide by Sex:  
NC-VDRS, 2010 - 2019

*Circumstances are known for 91% of males (n=1238) and 96% of females (n=301)

- Fifty-three percent (53.2%) of female and 39.8% of male suicide victims were characterized as having a current mental health problem when they died by suicide.

- A similar trend was seen for mental health treatment. Females (43.5%) were more likely than males (30.0%) to be receiving treatment for a current mental health problem at the time of suicide.

- Thirty-five percent (34.9%) of female and 29.9% of male suicide victims had an intimate partner problem.

- Fifty-two percent (51.5%) of female and 48.4% of male suicide victims had experienced a recent crisis.

- Thirty-three percent (32.6%) of female and 27.2% of male suicide victims had disclosed their suicide intent to someone else before they died.

- Females (37.2%) were more likely to leave a suicide note than males (27.1%).

* State Resource Partners
  - N.C. Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services
    https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/mhddsas
  - North Carolina Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
    https://www.ocme.dhhs.nc.gov/
  - N.C. Injury and Violence Prevention's Youth Suicide Prevention Website
    https://www.itsok2ask.com/

* National Resources
  - The Suicide Prevention Resource Center
    http://www.sprc.org/
  - The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
    https://afsp.org/
  - The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
    (for suicide crisis calls) 1-800-273-8255

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N.C. Division of Public Health / www.publichealth.nc.gov / Injury Epidemiology & Surveillance Unit/ 919-707-5425
N.C. Violent Death Reporting System / 919-707-5432
State of North Carolina / Department of Health and Human Services / www.ncdhhs.gov
N.C. DHHS is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

2019 FINAL DATA 8/16/21

Please see the NC-VDRS 2018 Annual Report for additional data and technical information:

https://www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov/DataSurvellance/ViolentDeathData.htm