

T^{een} Violent Deaths

Definition

The Teen Violent Death Rate is the number of deaths from suicide, homicide, accidents, and unclassified deaths, per 100,000 teens, ages 15 to 19. The data are reported by the youth's county of residence, rather than by where the death occurred.

Research Highlights

Suicides

- ❖ A study of 975 adolescents in New York revealed that those who attempted suicide were more likely to be greater users of illegal substances, have a greater number of drug-using friends, and have a lower level of familial social support than adolescents who had not attempted suicide.¹
- ❖ Factors associated with repeat suicide attempts among adolescents include substance abuse, a history of sexual abuse, chronic medical conditions, and nonaffective psychotic disorders (“those which had previously been diagnosed [and which were still clinically relevant] and disorders provisionally diagnosed”).²
- ❖ Adolescents and young adults who had experienced childhood neglect, physical abuse, or sexual abuse were three to four times more likely to become depressed or suicidal than those who had not. The risks of suicide were greatest for adolescents who had a history of being sexually abused.³
- ❖ A one-year study showed that 15,555 youths committed suicide in 34 of the wealthiest nations, that is, high- and upper-middle income countries. The U.S. accounted for 32 percent of the suicides. The majority of the suicides were committed by males (80.1 percent).⁴

Accidents

- ❖ In the U.S., approximately 78 percent of all injury deaths among teenagers in 1998 were caused by motor-vehicle crashes, making it the leading cause of injury mortality among 15- to 19-year-olds.⁵
- ❖ In 1999, U.S. teenagers accounted for 15 percent of motor-vehicle deaths. During that same year:
 - ❖ 55 percent of teenage motor-vehicle deaths occurred on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday;
 - ❖ 41 percent of teenage motor-vehicle deaths occurred between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m.⁶
- ❖ Research addressing reasons why teenagers are at high risk of death from motor-vehicle crashes shows that they are more likely than older drivers to:
 - ❖ speed;
 - ❖ run red lights;
 - ❖ make illegal turns;
 - ❖ ride with an intoxicated driver;
 - ❖ drive after using alcohol or drugs.⁷

Homicides

- ❖ In 1997, the U.S. number of homicides of juveniles, under the age of 18, reached its lowest level in 10 years--2,100 victims. Of these victims:
 - ❖ 33 percent were under age 6;
 - ❖ 17 percent were ages 6 to 14;
 - ❖ 50 percent were ages 15 to 17;
 - ❖ 30 percent were female;
 - ❖ 47 percent were black;
 - ❖ 56 percent were killed with a firearm.⁸

Teen Violent Deaths Continued

Teen Violent Deaths: 1997 - 1999*

(Deaths per 100,000 teens, ages 15-19)

County	1997		1998		1999		Average Teen Violent Death Rate 1997-1999
	Teen Violent Deaths	Population Ages 15-19	Teen Violent Deaths	Population Ages 15-19	Teen Violent Deaths	Population Ages 15-19	
Carson City	1	2,935	0	3,116	0	3,133	11
Churchill County	1	1,750	1	1,792	0	1,846	37
Clark County	49	72,897	66	78,832	41	81,753	67
Douglas County	2	2,947	1	3,162	2	3,006	55
Elko County	0	3,963	5	4,155	3	3,995	66
Esmeralda County	0	107	0	100	0	110	0
Eureka County	1	117	0	126	0	134	N.M.
Humboldt County	0	1,412	0	1,455	1	1,515	23
Lander County	0	627	4	597	3	591	N.M.
Lincoln County	0	393	2	393	0	440	N.M.
Lyon County	1	2,261	3	2,443	0	2,634	55
Mineral County	0	553	0	513	0	488	0
Nye County	5	1,982	1	2,158	2	2,218	126
Pershing County	1	514	0	617	1	596	116
Storey County	0	246	0	253	0	275	0
Washoe County	9	17,861	20	18,551	9	19,131	68
White Pine County	0	823	0	854	3	871	118
NEVADA**	70	111,388	103	119,118	65	122,736	67

Note: N.M. = Not Meaningful. Calculated rates based on very small numbers are not statistically reliable.

* Teen Violent Deaths includes homicides, suicides, accidents, and unclassified deaths.

** The sum of the counties may not equal the state total due to missing or incomplete county-reference data.

Source: State of Nevada Department of Human Resources, Health Division; Office of Vital Records and Statistics.

Teen Violent Deaths Continued

Nevada

Nevada's Teen Violent Death Rate from 1997 to 1999 was 67 deaths per 100,000 teens, ages 15 to 19. During this period, 238 teens died as a result of homicide, suicide, and accident. Eight deaths were considered "unclassified." According to the *2000 KIDS COUNT Data Book: State Profiles in Child Well-Being*, the 1997 rate for the U.S. was 58 per 100,000.⁹

Considering Teen Violent Deaths by cause, slightly more than one-half were accidents, 25.6 percent were homicides, 19.3 percent were suicides, and 3.4 percent were unclassified.

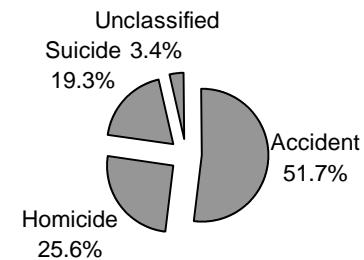
Findings from the 1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey show that 27.8 percent of Nevada high school students (35.9 percent female and 19.9 percent male) felt sad every day for two or more weeks in a row; 19.5 percent (26 percent female and 13 percent male) had seriously considered attempting suicide during the 12 months preceding the survey; and 16.1 percent (20.8 percent female and 11.4 percent male) had made a suicide plan during the 12 months preceding the survey.¹⁰

Counties

The Teen Violent Death Rate ranged from a low of 0 in Esmeralda, Mineral, and Storey counties to a high of 126 in Nye County. For the three counties in which the calculated rates were not meaningful because of small population numbers, only raw numbers are provided. Four counties had a Teen Violent Death Rate higher than the state rate of 67.

Nevada's 2000 National Rank¹¹: 30

Percentage of Teen Violent Deaths by Cause, Nevada: 1997-1999



Source: State of Nevada Department of Human Resources, Health Division; Office of Vital Records and Statistics.

"Today's teen is more likely to die of a gunshot wound than of disease or other natural causes, and for every fatal shooting there are three nonfatal shootings."¹²

*John J. Wilson
Acting Administrator, U.S. Department of Justice*

"Depression and suicidal feelings are treatable mental disorders. The child or adolescent needs to have his or her illness recognized and diagnosed, and appropriate treatment plans developed."¹³

American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry