

Information about Suicide from the Kentucky Violent Death Reporting System

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Suicide is the most common manner (69 percent) of violent death in Kentucky. Suicides are almost three times more common than homicide in Kentucky.

To better understand why violent deaths occur, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS), a nationwide state-based surveillance system designed to track trends and characteristics of violent deaths with the goal of reducing them. Kentucky is fortunate to be one of 17 states funded by NVDRS starting in 2005. Violent death information, including suicides, is collected

from the Kentucky State Police, 120 county coroner offices, medical examiner offices, forensic crime laboratories and toxicology laboratories and combined into the KVDRS. The following results represent the first full year of KVDRS data collection and analysis.

Age and Sex:

There are more male suicide deaths than would be expected from the number of males residing in Kentucky. Suicides in Kentucky occur predominantly in white (89 percent) males (78 percent) older than 25 (84 percent).

Weapon / Mechanism:

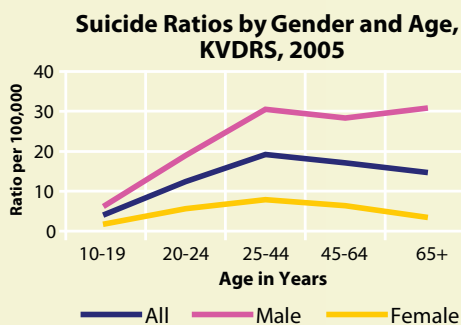
The majority of suicides in Kentucky involve a firearm (70 percent). Poisoning is a more common cause in women than men (26 percent and 8 percent), hanging is more common in minors versus adults (31 percent and 17 percent) and in nonwhites versus whites (27 percent and 17 percent).

Circumstances:

A case history is recorded by the coroner and available to the KVDRS in 78 percent of suicides.

- Current depressed mood (55 percent), current mental health problem (52 percent), and current treatment for mental health (52 percent) comprise the top three circumstances surrounding a suicide.
- In 29 percent of suicides the coroner notes an intimate partner problem as a contributing factor. In 44 percent of those cases, the decedent's partner is leaving, breaking up, separating, divorcing, or a divorce recently finalized—87 percent were men.
- 8 percent of suicides in 2005 were veterans. They were all males, 11 percent were ages 18-34, 48 percent, ages 35-59 and 41 percent were older than 60.

Future funding for NVDRS is still being debated by Congress. For more detailed information about the KVDRS, please visit its Web site at: <http://www.kvdrs.uky.edu/>



In 2002, the Kentucky Department for Mental Health, Developmental Disability and Addiction Services invited various community leaders to establish the **Kentucky Suicide Prevention Group (KSPG)**. Today, KSPG is made up of various community stakeholders including suicide survivors (those who have lost someone close to them to suicide), people who have attempted suicide, or know someone who has attempted, mental health professionals and others who have an interest in suicide prevention in the Commonwealth. Meetings are open to the general public.



For more information regarding the Kentucky Suicide Prevention Group, QPR gatekeeper training, or ways that you or your community can get involved in suicide prevention, call us at (502) 564-4456 or visit our Web site at www.KentuckySuicidePrevention.org.