

Suicide Mortality– Data Brief

Vermont Injury Prevention Program

Background

Suicide was the eighth leading cause of death among Vermont residents in 2013¹ and the tenth leading cause of death in the United States in 2013². Risk factors for suicide include depression and other mental health diagnoses or a substance-abuse disorder, often in combination with a mental health disorder. More than 90% of people who die by suicide have these risk factors. Other risk factors include: prior suicide attempt; firearms in the home; exposure to suicide behavior; family history of suicide, mental disorders or substance abuse; and family violence.³

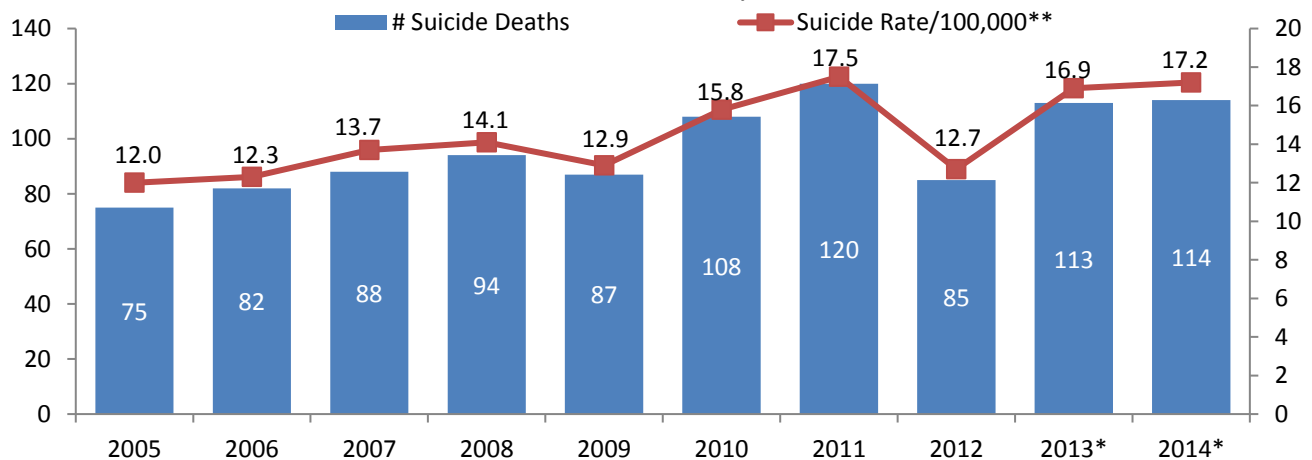
Years of Potential Life Lost

Years of Potential Life Lost (YPLL) is defined as the sum of the years of life lost by persons who suffered early deaths, for those whose death occurred before 74⁴. In 2014, the age adjusted YPLL due to suicide in Vermont was 599 years per 100,000 persons aged 0-74, statistically higher than the U.S. rate of 413 per 100,000. Suicide accounted for over 12% of total YPLL in Vermont in 2014.

Suicide Deaths

A Healthy Vermonters 2020 goal is to reduce suicide deaths from 15.8 per 100,000 in 2010 to 11.7 per 100,000 in 2020. After consistently increasing from 75 deaths in 2005 to 120 deaths in 2011, the number of deaths fell in 2012 to 85, before increasing to 113 and 114 in 2013 and 2014, respectively. The rate of suicide deaths among Vermont residents in 2014 was 17.2 per 100,000, statistically higher than that for the U.S. (12.9 per 100,000).

**Number of Suicide Deaths and Suicide Death Rate Per 100,000
Vermont Residents, 2005-2014**



*Data from 2013-2014 is preliminary

Vermont Vital Statistics

**Suicide rates are age adjusted to the U.S. 2000 population.

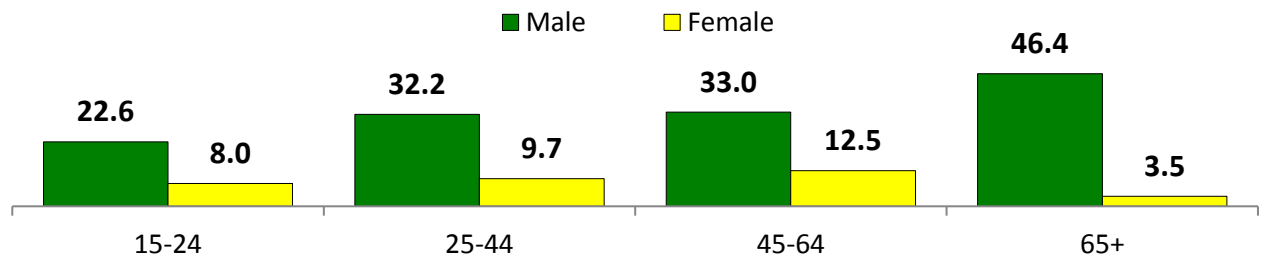
¹ Source: Vermont Vital Statistics, data from 2013 are considered preliminary. Vermont Death rankings from 2014 are not yet available.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [online] [cited 2016 August 11]. Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars>

³ Mann, J.J. (2002). *A Current Perspective of Suicide and Attempted Suicide*. *Annals of Internal Medicine* 136: 302-311.

⁴ Years of potential life lost (YPLL) is a standard measure of the extent of premature mortality in a population and is based on the life expectancy in the US. http://www.healthindicators.gov/Indicators/Years-of-potential-life-lost-before-age-75-per-100000_3/Profile

Suicide Death Rate per 100,000 Vermont Residents, 2013-2014

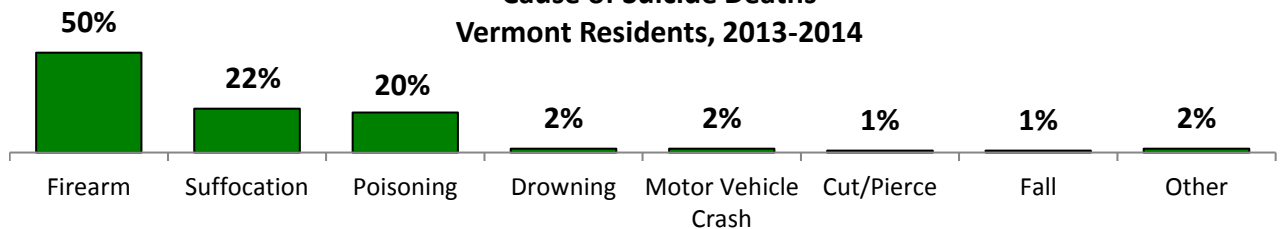


Male residents are much more likely to die by suicide than female residents. In 2013-2014 there were more than three and half times as many male deaths (174) as female deaths (53). Correspondingly, in 2013-2014, Vermont’s suicide rate was significantly higher among men than women (26.5 versus 8.3 per 100,000). Suicide rates were consistently and significantly higher among male residents than female residents, regardless of age. Among men the rate was highest in the 65+ year old age range, with a rate of 46.4 per 100,000. For women the highest rate was among the 45-64-year-old age range with a rate of 12.5 per 100,000.

Leading Cause of Suicide Deaths

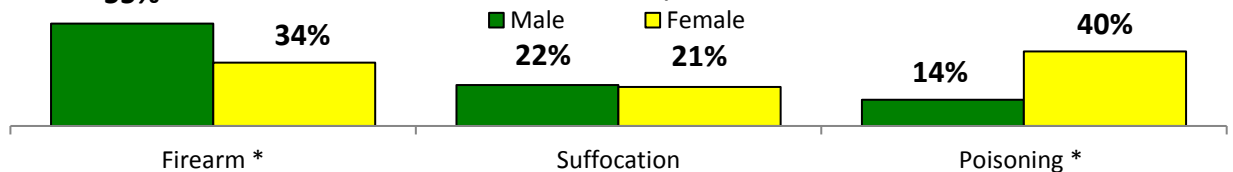
In 2013-2014 the most common cause of suicide death among Vermont residents was gunshot wound (50%). (Note, nearly all gunshot wound deaths in Vermont are a result of suicide, approximately 90% on average.) Suffocation⁵ accounted for 22% of suicides while one in five suicides was due to poisoning. Few suicides were the result of other causes, including, drowning, intentional motor vehicle crash, and falls.

Cause of Suicide Deaths Vermont Residents, 2013-2014



In 2013-2014, there were differences in the cause of suicide death by gender. Male residents were more likely to commit suicide using firearm (55% vs 34%), while female residents were more likely to commit suicide through poisoning (40% vs 14%). Suffocation as a mechanism for suicide was similar for men and women.

Suicide Deaths by Cause and Gender Vermont Residents, 2013-2014



*Differences by gender are statistically significant

Suicide prevention resources:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-TALK (8255); VT Suicide Prevention Lifeline: (802) 273-8255
- Dial 211 for a Counselor if you are in VT
- Confidential online chat: www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

For more information on Injury Surveillance Data or suicide data, please contact Leslie Barnard, MPH leslie.barnard@vermont.gov.

⁵ Suffocation includes intentional self-harm deaths from hanging, strangulation, or suffocation.