



Allegheny County Child Death Review: Suicide

The mission of the Allegheny County Child Death Review Team (ACCDRT) is to promote the safety and well-being of children and reduce preventable child fatalities.

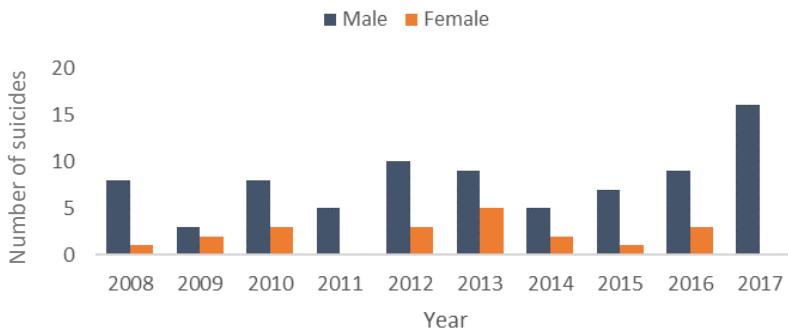
In the U.S., suicide is a significant public health problem. According to CDC, suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 15 and 19 years. (CDC)

In Allegheny County, 100 youth suicides occurred from 2008 through 2017, an average of 10 per year. The impact of suicide on victims, survivors, and social and familial networks is significant. Though suicide is a complex issue, it is preventable and requires a multi-faceted approach to identify risk factors, destigmatize suicide, and increase public awareness for youths at risk.

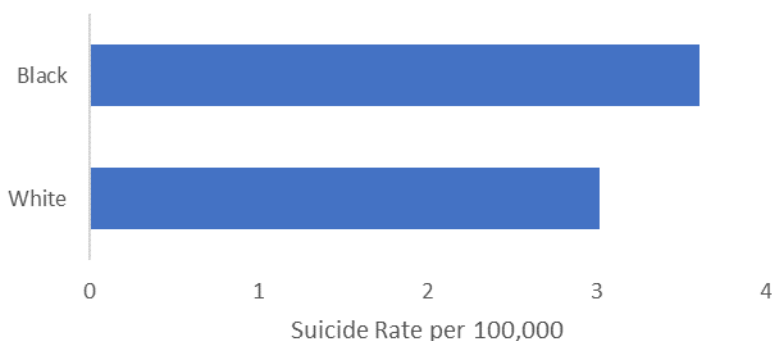
In Allegheny County from 2008 through 2017:

- 100 youths ≤ 21 years of age died from suicide.
- 80% of suicides were committed by males
- 60% of suicides were committed by white males
- Hanging (43%) and firearms (39%) were the two most common methods of suicide in youth.

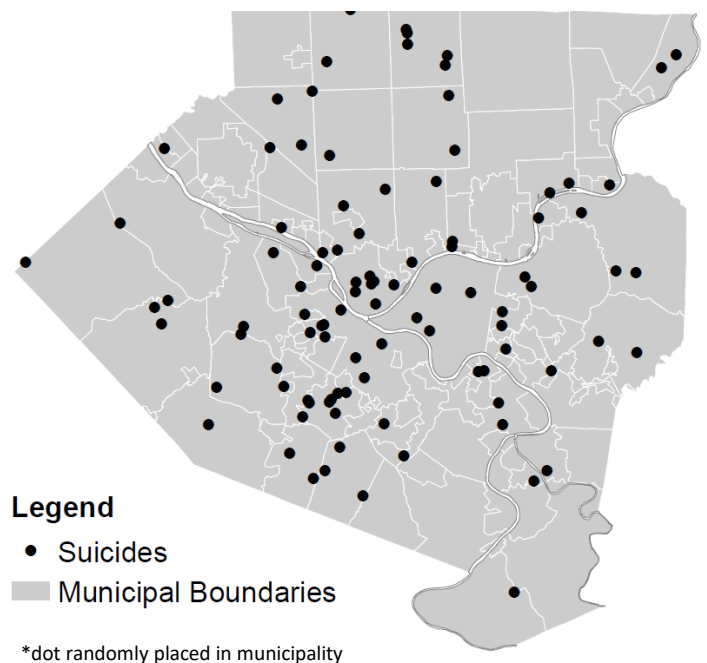
Suicides of Allegheny County Residents ≤ 21 Years by Sex, 2008-2017



Suicide Rate per 100,000 Allegheny County Residents ≤ 21 Years by Race, 2008-2017



Suicide Deaths Among Allegheny County Residents <21 Years by Municipality of Residence, 2008-2017



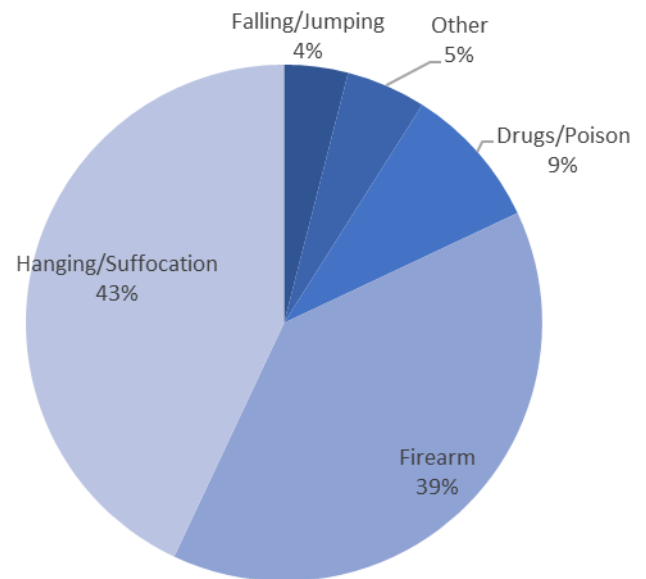


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AC CDRT Recommendations

- **Implement school-based interventions that destigmatize mental health disorders and promote resilience.**
- **Increase public awareness of mental illness and suicide prevention utilizing Youth Mental Health First Aid.**
- **Co-locate physical and behavioral health services to provide greater access.**
- **Increase the utilization of evidence-based interventions, such as Signs of Suicide (SOS) and Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM).**
- **Improve communication between health care providers, behavioral health care providers, school counselors, child welfare workers, and family members.**

Suicide by Manner in Allegheny County Residents
≤ 21 Years, 2008-2017



Suicide Risk Factors Identified by the ACCDRT, 2008 - 2017:

- **40% of cases had prior mental health services**
- **29% involved a history of chronic illness or disability**
- **12% had a history of substance abuse**
- **11% involved a prior suicide attempt**