

Suicide Fact Sheet

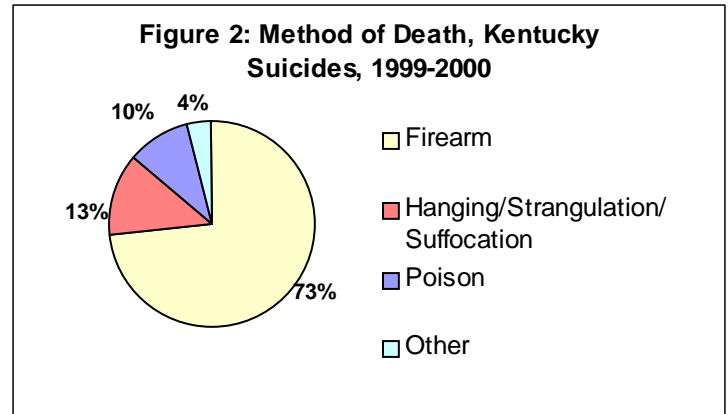
Kentucky Initiative for Suicide Surveillance (KISS)

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Kentucky's Suicide Rate Increases -- Intimate Partner Link

Kentucky's suicide rate increased 22% from 1999 (11.9 per 100,000) to 2000 (13.1 per 100,000) while the national rate (10.7 per 100,000) remained the same (See Figure 1). Kentucky's rank for suicide deaths among individual states moved from 21st in 1999 to 16th highest in the nation in 2000.

Kentucky's suicide rate has been higher than the national rate each year for the past 12 years. Fire-arms were the major cause of death in 1999 and 2000 occurring in 72% and 74% of the cases respectively (See Figure 2). [In Figure 2, 'other' category includes deaths by drowning/submersion, smoke/fire/flames, sharp object, jumping from a high place, jumping or lying before a moving object, crashing a motor vehicle, other specified means, and unspecified.] In 1999 and 2000, suicide was the second leading cause of death for all Kentuckians aged 15 to 44. Four hundred and sixty-seven and 506 suicide deaths occurred in Kentucky in 1999 and 2000.

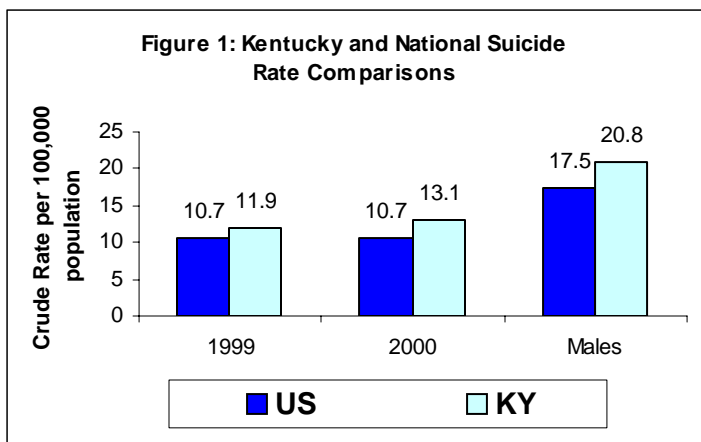


Men aged 35-44 were, and continue to be, at most risk for suicide. In 1999, eighty-two percent (382) of the decedents were male. In 2000, eighty-four percent (425) of suicide deaths were male. Men are nearly five times more likely to commit suicide than women. Male depression and/or suicide ideation is a lethality factor for adult and child victims of intimate partner violence - especially for homicide-suicide.

These statistics prompted researchers at KIPRC to further investigate and report on suicide in Kentucky -- risk factors, hospital utilization, mental health access, media portrayal, rural/urban comparisons, etc. KIPRC employees are involved in the initiative to develop a state-wide suicide prevention plan. KIPRC has been instrumental in the dissemination of suicide data to the media (newspapers, television, and radio) for the purpose of injury prevention.

Implementation of surveillance programs, the systematic ongoing collection of data, are vital to promotion of health and related program planning. These data are crucial to understanding the magnitude of suicide within communities and can help establish prevention programs. Currently, Kentucky does not have an established suicide surveillance system. Funding opportunities are being explored for the proper, comprehensive collection of Kentucky suicide data for improved intervention and prevention.

- Allison Huck



Findings on suicide were discovered as part of the CDC-funded Intimate Partner Violence Surveillance grant, a collaborative initiative between the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center and the Department for Public Health, Cabinet for Health Services. Research at the University of Kentucky Chandler Medical Center reveals that in 2000, 25% of women admitted for self-inflicted injuries were abused by an intimate partner. More than 20% of all suicide deaths were men with intimate partner relationship problems.