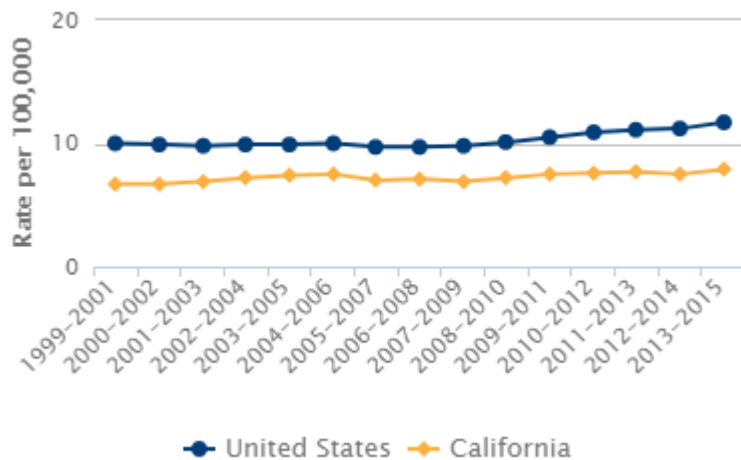


Youth Suicide and Self-Inflicted Injury in California

Suicide Rate Among Youth Ages 15-24



Definition: Number of suicides per 100,000 youth ages 15-24 (e.g., in 2013-2015, there were 7.9 suicides per 100,000 California youth ages 15-24).

Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, Death Statistical Master Files; CDC WONDER Online Database, [Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2015](#); California Dept. of Finance, [Race/Ethnic Population with Age and Sex Detail 1990-2009](#); Population Reference Bureau, [Population Estimates 2010-2015](#) (Sept. 2017).

Self-Inflicted Injury Hospitalization Rate: 2014

Locations	Rate per 100,000
United States	57.6
California	43.1
Alameda County	44.8
Contra Costa County	63.7
Fresno County	34.2
Kern County	49.3
Los Angeles County	47.8
Orange County	52.3
Riverside County	24.3
Sacramento County	42.8
San Bernardino County	30.8
San Diego County	33.4
Santa Clara County	56.7

Definition: Number of hospitalizations for non-fatal self-inflicted injuries per 100,000 children/youth ages 5-20 (e.g., in 2014, there were 43.1 hospitalizations due to non-fatal self-inflicted injuries per 100,000 California children/youth).

Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, [Patient Discharge Data](#); California Dept. of Finance, [Race/Ethnic Population with Age and Sex Detail, 1990-1999, 2000-2010, 2010-2060](#); CDC, [WISQARS](#) (Apr. 2016).

What It Is

Kidsdata.org provides indicators of suicidal ideation—the percentage of students who seriously consider attempting suicide—by [grade level](#), [gender](#), [level of school connectedness](#),* [parent education level](#), [race/ethnicity](#), and [sexual orientation](#). The [rate of suicide](#) per 100,000 youth ages 15-24, along with the number of youth suicides by [age](#), [gender](#), and [race/ethnicity](#), also are provided.

Data on self-inflicted injury hospitalizations are available as numbers and rates per 100,000 children and youth ages 5-20 [overall](#), and as numbers by [age](#). Non-fatal suicide attempts and self-mutilation both are included among self-inflicted injuries.

Why This Topic Is Important

Youth suicide and self-inflicted injury are serious social and public health concerns. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people ages 15-24 in the U.S. (1). A nationwide survey in 2015 found that more than 1 in 6 high school students reported seriously considering suicide in the previous year, and more than 1 in 12 reported attempting it (2). In addition, approximately 157,000 youth ages 10-24 are treated for self-inflicted injuries in emergency rooms every year (3). Self-inflicted injuries are not necessarily the result of suicide attempts; in fact, self-harm without the intent to die is more prevalent than self-harm with such intent (4). Across all ages, suicide and self-inflicted injury in the U.S. cost an estimated \$45 billion annually in medical expenses and work loss; actual costs may be higher as many suicides and attempted suicides are not reported due to social stigma (5, 6).

Some groups are at a higher risk for suicide than others. Males are more likely than females to commit suicide, but females are more likely to report attempting suicide (2, 3). Among racial/ethnic groups with data, American Indian/Alaska Native youth have the highest suicide rates (3). Research also shows that lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth are more likely to engage in suicidal behavior than their heterosexual peers (7). Several other factors put teens at risk for suicide, including a family history of suicide, past suicide attempts, mental illness, substance abuse, stressful life events, low levels of communication with parents, access to lethal means, exposure to suicidal behavior of others, and incarceration (3, 6).

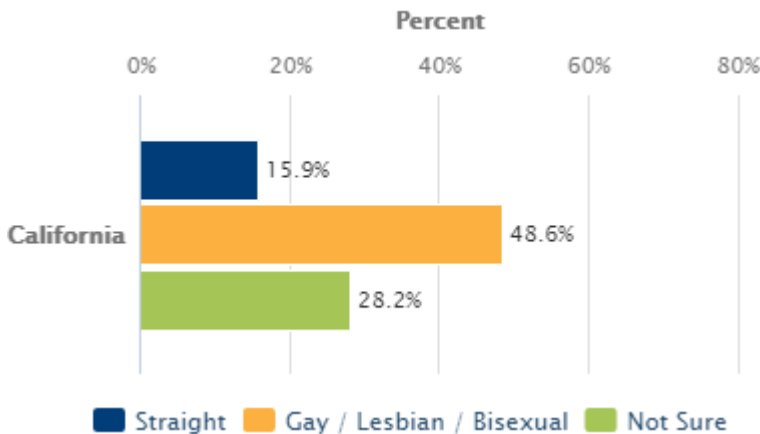
Students Who Seriously Considered Attempting Suicide in the Previous Year, by Gender: 2013-2015

California	Percent	
	Female	Male
Grade Level	Yes	Yes
9th Grade	26.5%	11.0%
11th Grade	22.4%	13.3%
Non-Traditional	32.5%	23.2%

Definition: Estimated percentage of public school students in grades 9, 11, and non-traditional programs who seriously considered attempting suicide in the previous year, by gender and grade level (e.g., in 2013-2015, an estimated 26.5% of female 9th graders in California seriously considered attempting suicide in the previous year).

Data Source: WestEd, *California Healthy Kids Survey*. California Department of Education (Jul. 2017).

Students Who Seriously Considered Attempting Suicide in the Previous Year, by Sexual Orientation: 2013-2015



Definition: Estimated percentage of public school students in grades 9, 11, and non-traditional programs who seriously considered attempting suicide in the previous year, by sexual orientation (e.g., in 2013-2015, an estimated 48.6% of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students in grades 9, 11, and non-traditional programs in California seriously considered attempting suicide in the previous year).

Data Source: WestEd, *California Healthy Kids Survey*. California Department of Education (Jul. 2017).

How Children Are Faring

In 2013-2015, an estimated 19% of 9th graders, 18% of 11th graders, and 26% of non-traditional students in California seriously considered attempting suicide in the previous year. Suicidal ideation was higher among females than among males, and highest for American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and multiracial students, among racial/ethnic groups with data. The proportion of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students who seriously considered attempting suicide was nearly one-half (49%), more than three times the estimate for their straight peers (16%).

In 2014, there were 3,575 hospitalizations for non-fatal self-inflicted injuries among children and youth ages 5-20 in California. While the statewide rate of self-inflicted injury hospitalizations has fluctuated over the last two decades, rates have risen in recent years, from a 22-year low of 34.3 per 100,000 in 2008 to 43.1 per 100,000 in 2014. Most counties with data saw a similar increase during this period. County rates ranged from 24.3 to 71.2 per 100,000 in 2014. Statewide, teens and young adults ages 16-20 account for the majority of youth hospitalizations for self-inflicted injuries: 61% of discharges in 2014 (2164 of 3575).

In 2015, 495 California children and youth ages 5-24 were known to have committed suicide: 23 ages 5-14, 171 ages 15-19, and 301 ages 20-24. Statewide, the rate of suicide among youth ages 15-24 was 7.9 per 100,000 in 2013-2015, down from 9.4 per 100,000 in 1995-1997. Since 1999-2001—the first time period for which national comparison data are available—California’s youth suicide rate has been lower than the U.S. rate, which has risen above 10 per 100,000 in recent years. Statewide and nationally, many more male than female youth commit suicide. In 2015, males accounted for more than three-quarters of youth suicides in California (371 of 472).

View references for this text and additional research on this topic:

<https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/34/youth-suicide-and-self-inflicted-injury/summary>



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