



## News Articles, Adolescent Health/Medicine, Firearms, Injury, Violence & Poison Prevention, Psychiatry/Psychology

### Death rates for children, teens rising

by Melissa Jenco, News Content Editor

Children and teens are dying from unintentional injuries, suicides and homicides at increasing rates, according to new research from federal health officials.

The trend "shows that persistent as well as emerging challenges remain," authors from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention wrote in their [study](#).

"While deaths were reduced from some of the longstanding and leading causes of injury death ... these trends have reversed recently and further reductions will require renewed focus and effort," they said.

Researchers analyzed death certificates for children and adolescents ages 10-19 from 1999-2016. They found the death rate dropped 33% from 1999-2013 but increased 12% since that time and now stands at 33 per 100,000 children.

The rate is twice as high for males as it is for females and three times higher for older adolescents than younger children. About 70% of deaths are caused by injuries, which are categorized by intent. The most common are unintentional, suicide and homicide.

#### Unintentional injury deaths

From 1999-2013, unintentional injury deaths fell 49% but increased 13% in the years that followed. The rate now stands at 12 per 100,000 children and is two times higher for males than females.

About 85% of these deaths in 2016 were due to motor vehicle traffic, poisoning or drowning with rates of 7.4, 1.9 and 0.9 deaths per 100,000 children, respectively.

Motor vehicle deaths had been falling, due in part to prevention efforts and reduced teen driving, according to the study. But they are up 12% since 2013.

#### Suicides

Suicides fell 15% from 1999 to 2007, but since that time they rose 56% and stand at 6 per 100,000 children, researchers found. Males are 2.6 times more likely to commit suicide than females. About 92% of suicides were from suffocation, firearms or poisoning.

#### Homicides

About 5 children per 100,000 were homicide victims in 2016, and firearms were used in 87% of those deaths, according to the study. Rates fluctuated during the study period, but have been on an upswing, rising 27% since 2014. Rates for males are five times that of females.

#### AAP efforts

The Academy has been working to reduce rates in all these categories. In March, it launched the [Gun Safety and Injury Prevention Research Initiative](#) as gunfire kills about 1,300 U.S. children and teenagers each year. It also recently endorsed updated guidelines for [identifying](#) and [treating depression](#) in adolescents. Families can find advice for keeping children safe from hazards of all kinds at the Academy's [HealthyChildren.org](#) website.



THE OFFICIAL NEWSMAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

# AAP News

**News Articles, Adolescent Health/Medicine, Firearms, Injury, Violence & Poison Prevention, Psychiatry/Psychology**