

DESCRIPTION

An injury that occurs when someone purposely hurts him or herself is a self-harm or self-inflicted injury; a behavior that indicates a lack of coping skills.¹ Several illnesses are associated with it, including depression, eating disorders, anxiety or posttraumatic distress disorder. Self-harm occurs most often during the teenage and young adult years, though it can also happen later in life.² When a person is not sure how to deal with emotions, or learned as a child to hide emotions, self-harm may feel like a release. A person who self-harms usually does not mean to kill himself or herself, but they are at higher risk of attempting suicide if they do not get help. Some people may engage in self-harm a few times and then stop. Others engage in it more often and have trouble stopping. A recent national analysis of Medicaid data found that adults treated for deliberate self-harm were 37.2 times more likely to die by suicide within 12 months than other adults.³ In adolescents, nonfatal self-harm is a common reason for hospital presentation and also occurs frequently in the community without coming to clinical attention.²

HOW WE ARE DOING

In both 2013 and 2016, 17 percent of Ramsey County students reported purposely hurting themselves in the past year; most were 14-year-old females who self-identified as Asian.⁴ In Ramsey County, self-inflicted injuries such as cutting, burning and overdose, are the second leading cause of emergency department (ED) visits and hospitalizations due to injury for children. Each year, over 100 Ramsey County children 10 to 14 and over 200 children 15 to 19 visit an ED or are hospitalized for self-inflicted injuries. Ramsey County's self-inflicted injury ED visit rate in 2015 (181/100,000 population) does not meet the Healthy People 2020 objective. Comparing 2014 hospital visits to 2015 visits does show slight movement in the right direction for several age groups.⁵

BENCHMARK INDICATOR

Healthy People 2020 Goal: Reduce the number of hospital emergency department visits for nonfatal intentional self-harm injuries.
U.S. Target: 112.4 per 100,000 population.⁶

DISPARITIES

A greater proportion of hospital visits for self-inflicted injury occur among females, teens and young adults. Female students in Ramsey County were about 2.5 times more likely to report self-harm than male students. Students of color were 1.3 times more likely than white students to report intentionally injuring themselves.⁴

RISK FACTORS

Those most at risk for self-harm are people who have experienced trauma, neglect or abuse and may be impacted by many social, personal, economic, biological and environmental factors.¹

WHAT RAMSEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT IS DOING

Early diagnosis and treatment can decrease the disease burden of mental health disorders

Information to note

- A person who self-harms usually does not mean to kill himself or herself, but they are at higher risk of attempting suicide if they do not get help.
- Hospital visits for non-fatal self-inflicted injuries among Ramsey County residents increased 49% between 2010 - 2015.
- Ramsey County youth ages 10-14 have the highest rate of self-inflicted injury in the 7-county metro area.

¹Self-Harm. National Alliance on Mental Illness. <https://www.nami.org/learn-more/mental-health-conditions/related-conditions/self-harm/>. Accessed May 7, 2018.

²Sulyman N, Kim M, Rampa S, et al. Self-inflicted injuries among children in United States-Estimates from a nationwide emergency department sample. PLoS ONE. 2013. <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0069874>. Published July 18, 2013. Accessed August 8, 2017.

³Olfson M, Wall M, Wang S, et al. Suicide following deliberate self-harm. The American Journal of Psychiatry. 2017;174(8):765-774. <https://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/doi/10.1176/appi.ajp.2017.16111288>. Published March 21, 2017. Accessed May 9, 2018

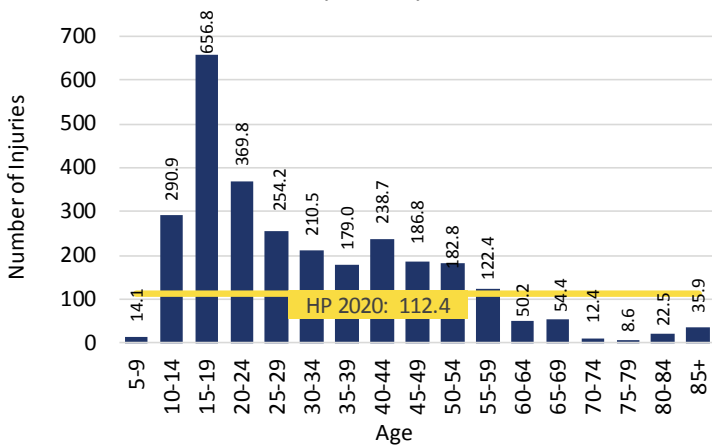
⁴Minnesota Student Survey. Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health data set.

⁵Minnesota Department of Health. MIDAS. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/injury/midas/injury/index.cfm>. Accessed May 7, 2018.

⁶Reduce nonfatal intentional self-harm injuries. Healthy People.gov. https://www.healthypeople.gov/node/4787/data_details. Accessed May 7, 2018.

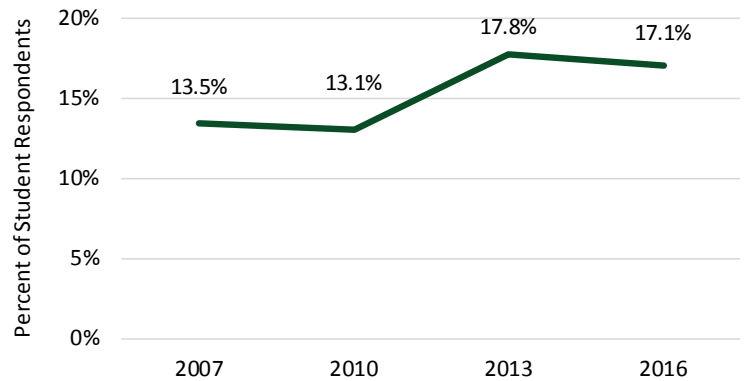
that contribute to self-inflicted injury as well as associated chronic diseases. Assessing and addressing mental health remains important to ensure that all Ramsey County residents lead longer, healthier lives. In 2018, 13 of the largest statewide health systems providing coverage for 80 percent of MN patients, came together to address major health issues in an effort called the Minnesota Health Collaborative. Together they will tackle major health topics, starting with mental health. The work will focus on how to better initiate care for those who present in acute crisis in EDs and can face long delays in accessing inpatient or community-based care. Also beginning in 2018, individuals and service providers in Ramsey County, calling from a cell phone, are able to call one number and have their call seamlessly forwarded to the county's mental health crisis team. The crisis team, made up of mental health professionals, can travel to an individual's location and assess the situation, provide stabilization and intervention services, crisis prevention planning, referral to other professionals and follow-up services. The crisis team is available by phone 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Ramsey County also provides urgent care for adult mental health offering walk-in appointments.

Rate of Self-Inflicted Injury* by Age Group, Ramsey County, 2016



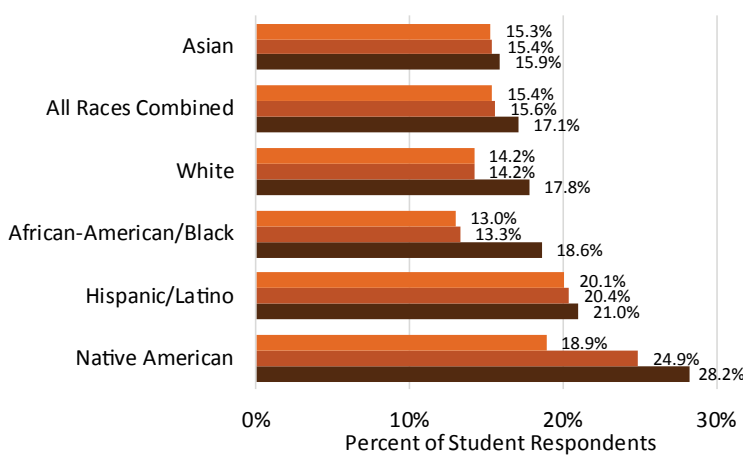
*non-fatal treated in hospital or emergency department
Source: Minnesota Department of Health.⁷

9th Grade Students Reporting They Purposefully Injured Themselves Without Wanting to Die in Past Year, Ramsey County



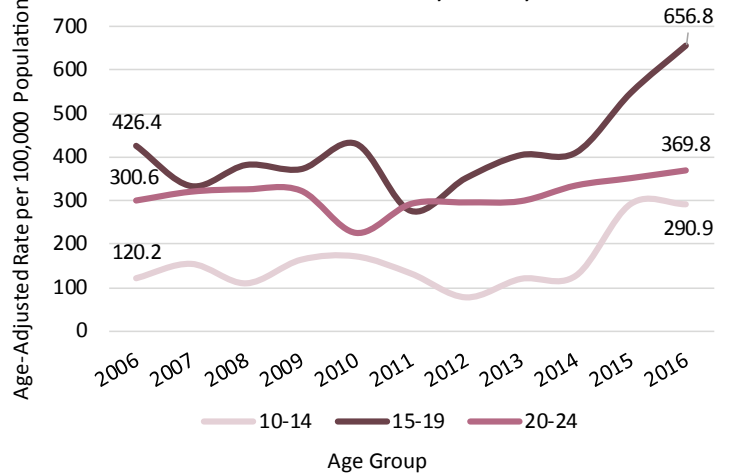
Source: Saint Paul - Ramsey County Public Health Minnesota Student Survey.

Students* Who Purposefully Hurt or Injured Themselves in Past Year, 2016



* 8th, 9th, 11th graders
Source: Saint Paul - Ramsey County Public Health Minnesota Student Survey.

Rate of Self-Inflicted Injury* Among Youth Over Time, Ramsey County



*non-fatal treated in hospital or emergency department
Source: Minnesota Department of Health.⁷

⁷ Minnesota Department of Health. MIDAS. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/injury/midas/injury/index.cfm>. Accessed May 7, 2018