

DESCRIPTION

There is no single path that leads to suicide. Mental illness, substance abuse, social isolation, unemployment, health problems, personal loss, a sense of being a burden and other factors can all contribute to suicidal thoughts.¹ Firearms are the most common method used by Minnesotans who take their own lives, and suicide deaths via gunshot have become even more common the last couple of decades. The next most common methods are suffocation and poisoning.²

HOW WE ARE DOING

According to statistics from the Minnesota Department of Health, 1,453 Ramsey County residents died by suicide in the past 26 years with yearly numbers fluctuating between 39 to 79 deaths. In 2016, Ramsey County lost 65 residents to suicide- about 1 every six days. During that year, 25 of the 65 suicides in Ramsey County occurred among those 20-34 years of age. Suicides have been highest among this age group in recent years and have been on an upward trend. For all adults age 20 and above, the 2016 rate of suicide deaths was 15.3 for every 100,000 people.³ In 2016, the Ramsey County suicide rate was 11.1 deaths per 100,000 compared to the Minnesota rate of 13.5, neither of which meet the Healthy People goal of 10.2. With small numbers, rates can fluctuate quite a bit over time. In 1990, the Ramsey County suicide rate was 16.1 per 100,000, which then sunk to 7.5 in 2002, rose to 13.2 in 2015, and came back down to 11.1 in 2016.²

BENCHMARK INDICATOR

Healthy People 2020: Reduce the rate of suicides.

U.S. Target: 10.2 suicides for every 100,000 people.

DISPARITIES

Those dying by suicide in Ramsey County continue to be overwhelmingly white, middle-aged and male. Nearly 76 percent suicide deaths in 2016 were men, and the rate among whites was over 1.5 times the rate of other races. In the last ten years, the average number of female suicides was 14 per year, compared to an average of 43 per year among men.²

RISK FACTORS

Suicide is complex and the risk of suicide increases with multiple factors. Some risk factors include mental illness, substance abuse, extreme mood swings, sleep disorders, feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, isolation, rage or unbearable pain.⁴

WHAT RAMSEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT IS DOING

Ramsey County offers an array of mental health services to adults. Crisis services include walk-in access to psychiatrists, nurses, and social workers as an alternative to the emergency room and a 24/7 phone line offering support and referral. Ramsey County's Mental Health Center offers ongoing mental health care including assessment and referral, therapy, partial hospitalization day programming, and targeted case management. All services are offered on a sliding-fee scale for those without insurance coverage.

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Information to note

- In 2016, the Ramsey County suicide rate of 11.1 per 100,000 was lower than the Minnesota rate of 13.5 but does not meet the Healthy People 2020 target of 10.2.
- Those dying by suicide in Ramsey County continue to be overwhelmingly white, middle-aged and male.
- In 2016, Ramsey County lost one resident to suicide about every 6 days.

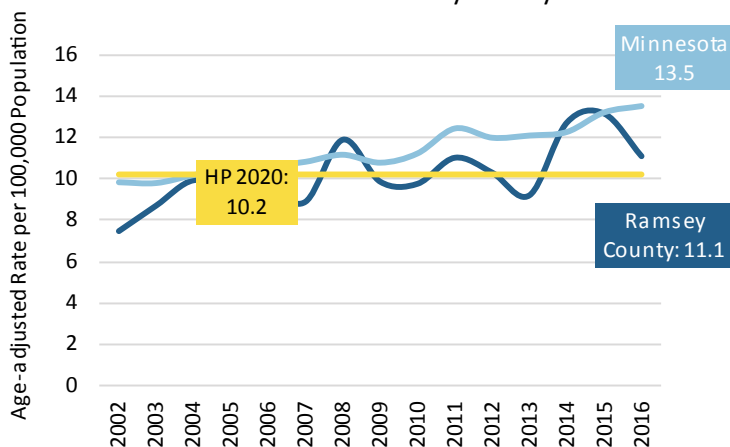
¹ 2012 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: Goals and Objectives for Action: A Report of the U.S. Surgeon General and of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK109906/#introduction.s5>. 2012. National Center for Biotechnology Information. Accessed July 31, 2017.

² Minnesota Department of Health. Health Statistics Portal. <https://pqc.health.state.mn.us/mhsq/frontPage.jsp>. Accessed April 30, 2018.

³ Minnesota Vital Statistics Interactive Queries. Minnesota Department of Health Website. <https://mhsq.web.health.state.mn.us/frontPage.jsp>. Accessed May 15, 2018.

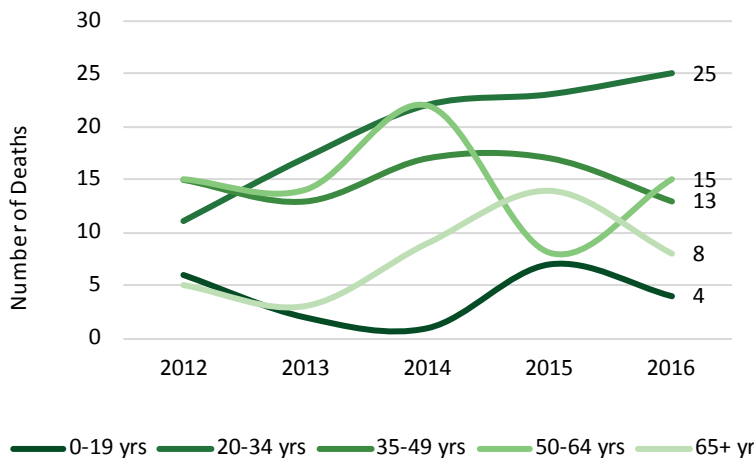
⁴ Increase in adult suicides shows need to connect Minnesotans to hope and help. Minnesota Department of Health. 2016. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/news/pressrel/2016/suicide090716.html>. Published September 7, 2016. Accessed July 31, 2017.

Suicide Rate Over Fifteen Years, Minnesota and Ramsey County



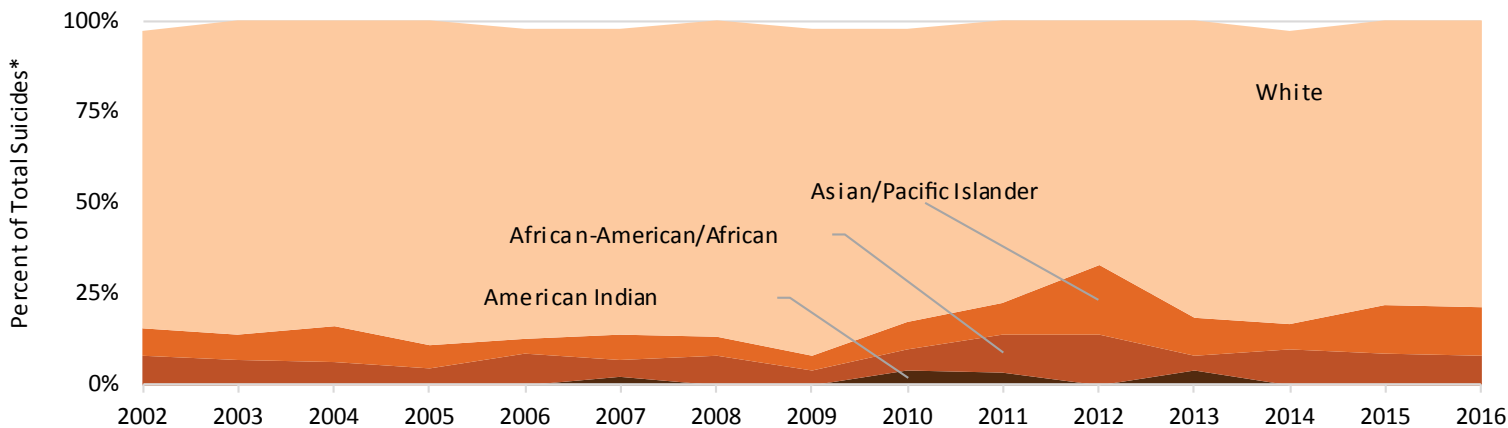
Source: Minnesota Department of Health.⁵

Suicide by Age Group, Ramsey County



Source: Minnesota Department of Health.⁵

Suicides by Race, Ramsey County



* may not equal 100% because of missing race
Source: Minnesota Department of Health.⁵

⁵ Minnesota Department of Health, Health Statistics Portal. <https://pqc.health.state.mn.us/mhsq/frontPage.jsp>. April 30, 2018.