Deaths from Suicide: A Look at 18 States

RHODE ISLAND, 2013-2014

- **Size**: Divided into five counties covering 1,000 square miles
- **Population**: 43rd most populated state with 1 million residents
- **Race/ethnicity of state population**: 74% White non-Hispanic, 8% Black, 14% Hispanic or Latino, 4% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% American Indian/Alaska Native; 3% two or more races
- **NVDRS participation**: Rhode Island Violent Death Reporting System (RIVDRS) joined NVDRS in 2003; first year of data collection in 2004

**TYPES OF VIOLENT DEATHS IN RHODE ISLAND**

- Nearly all (85%) violent deaths occurring in Rhode Island in 2013-2014 were classified as suicide or homicide.
- Suicide was the most common manner of violent death in Rhode Island (N=256, 69%), occurring 4.2 times more often than homicide (N=61, 16%).
- The remaining deaths from violence were attributed to undetermined manner (N=54, 14%) and legal intervention (N=<5, 1%). Rhode Island had no unintentional firearm deaths in 2013-2014.

**SUICIDE IN RHODE ISLAND**

- **State rates.** Rhode Island’s suicide rate* in 2013-2014 was 12.1/100,000, a 64% increase from 7.4 in 2004-2005 and a 1% increase from 12.0 in 2009-2010.
- **State/U.S. comparison.** The suicide rate in Rhode Island was 8% lower than the U.S. suicide rate (13.2) and was the fourth lowest of all NVDRS states.
- **Race/ethnicity.** Suicide victims were 87% White, 6% Hispanic, 4% Black, 1% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% two or more races, and <1% other/unknown.
- **Sex.** Males accounted for 75% of suicide victims (21.2/100,000 ages 10+) and females accounted for 25% (6.6/100,000 ages 10+). The suicide rate among males was highest for those ages 45-64 (29.2/100,000). For females, the suicide rate was also highest among those ages 45-64 (9.5/100,000).

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*All rates in this profile are occurrent ratios based on the number of resident and non-residents deaths that occurred in the state per 100,000 resident population.

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SUICIDE METHODS
- Hanging/strangulation/suffocation was the method used in 45% of suicides, followed by use of a firearm (21%) and poisoning (19%).
- Hanging/strangulation was the most common method for males (48%), and poisoning was the most common method for females (38%). Males ages 65+ had the highest firearm suicide rate (9.5/100,000). (See infographic)

ADDITIONAL SUICIDE DEMOGRAPHICS
- **Veterans.** Eleven percent (11%) of suicide victims were identified as veterans (served in the U.S. Armed Forces) on the death certificate, including 43% of victims ages 65+.
- **Sexual orientation.** Six (6) victims were identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.
- **Homeless status.** Ten (10) victims were identified as homeless at the time of death.
- **Marital status.** Thirty-five percent (35%) of victims were married, 42% were never married, 19% were divorced, 3% were widowed, and 2% had another or unknown marital status.
- **Education level.** Education level was unknown for 95% of victims ages 25+.

SUICIDE CIRCUMSTANCES
- In 96% of Rhode Island’s deaths by suicide, circumstances were documented in the records (N=247).
- The most frequently cited circumstances were current or past mental health treatment (61%), current mental health problem (59%), current depressed mood (42%), relationship problems (41%), intimate partner problem (31%), and suicide attempt history (28%). A suicide note was left in 32% of the incidents.
- The most frequent or notable circumstances by age group are shown in the chart below.