

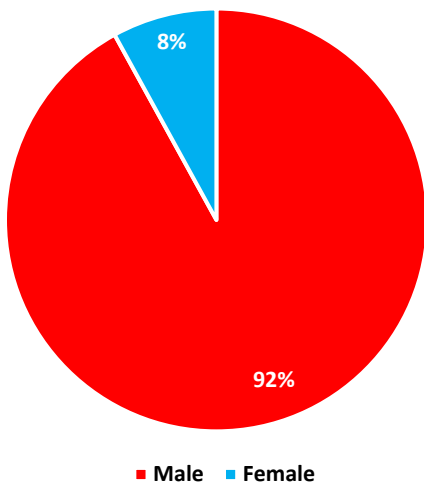
BACKGROUND

Berks County, Pennsylvania is an urban county with a population of 420,152 people (206,740 males and 213,412 females). In 2018, Berks County had 60 suicide deaths (55 males and 5 females) at a rate of 14.3 suicide deaths per 100,000 people. The Pennsylvania Violent Death Reporting System (PAVDRS) worked closely with the Bureau of Health Statistics and Registries, the Berks County Coroner’s Office, and Berks County law enforcement to gather detailed information about each violent death. Below are some results of those collaborations.

In Berks County, 5 suicide deaths occurred every month.

Characteristics of Suicide Victims

Sex of Victims:

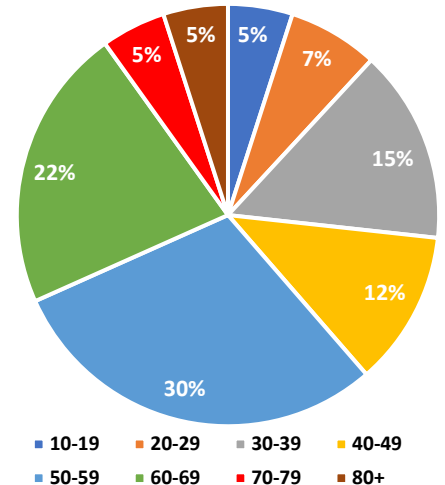


- In Berks County, male victims comprised 92% of suicide deaths in 2018.
- Among Berks residents, 87% of suicide deaths were white males.
- Overall, age-adjusted suicide rates in Berks County were higher than the state average:

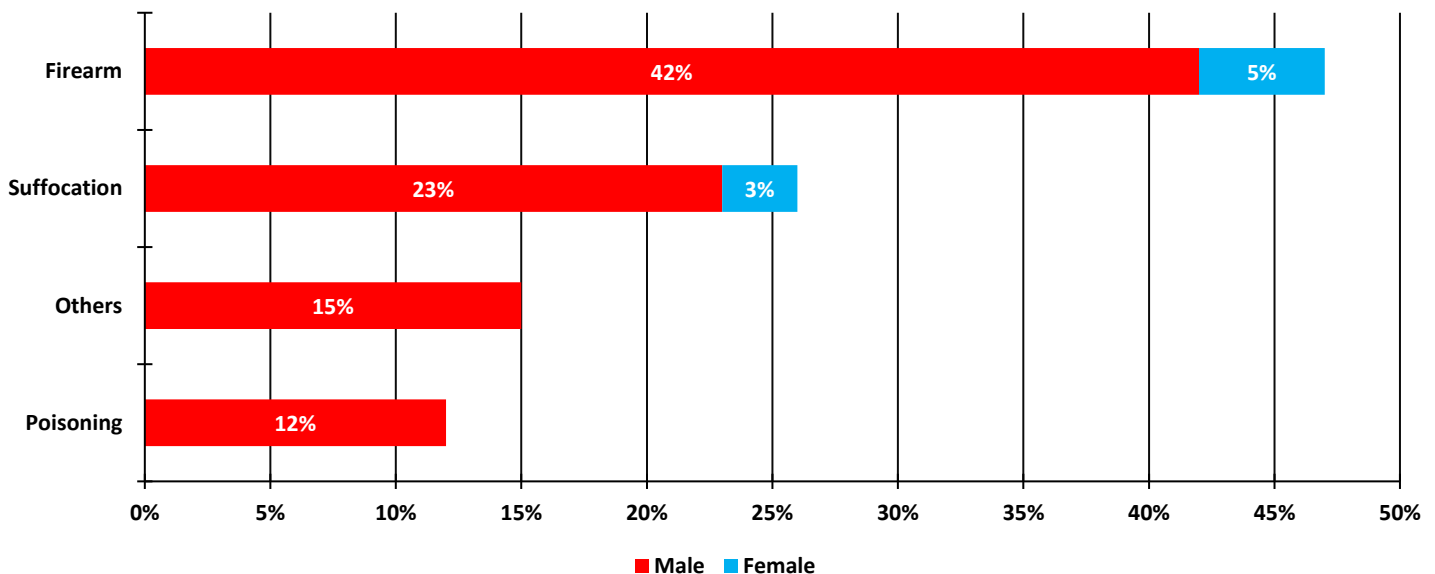
Berks Rates: 13.0 deaths per 100,000 residents (males 24.0 and females 2.5).

Pennsylvania Rates: 15.0 deaths per 100,000 residents (males 24.0 and females 6.5).

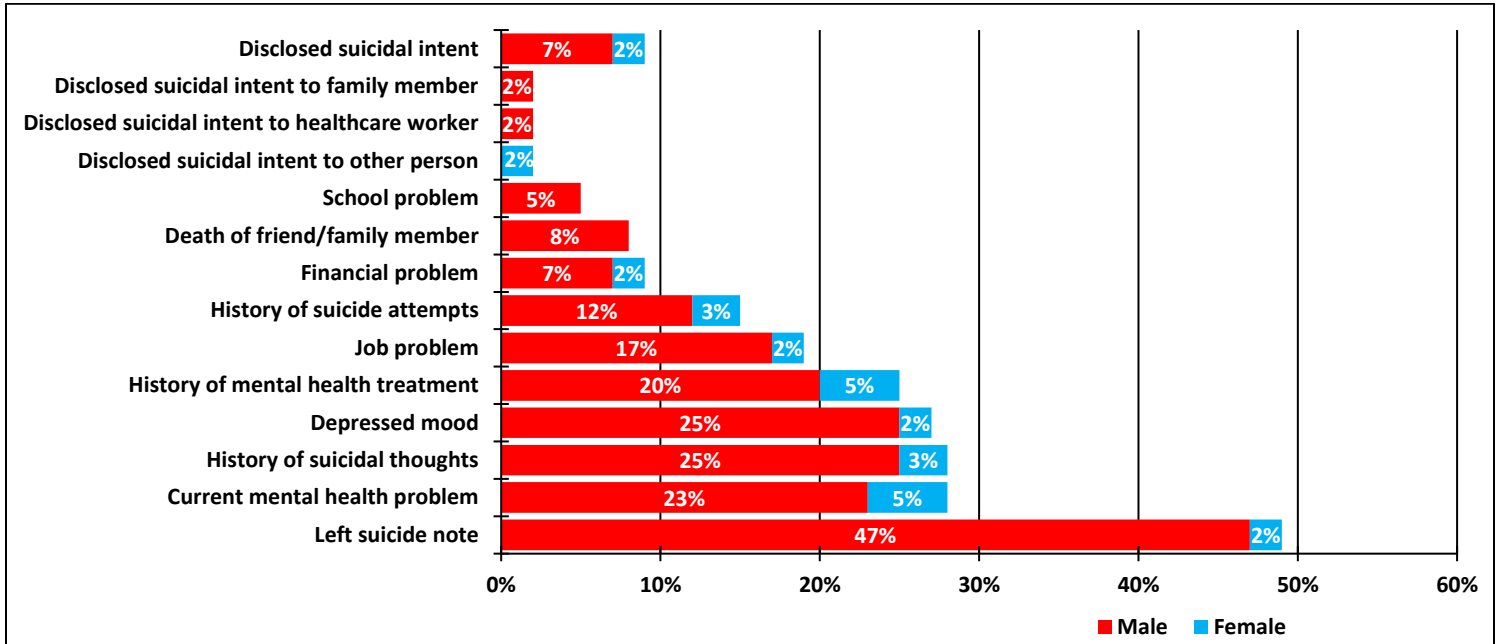
Age of Victims:



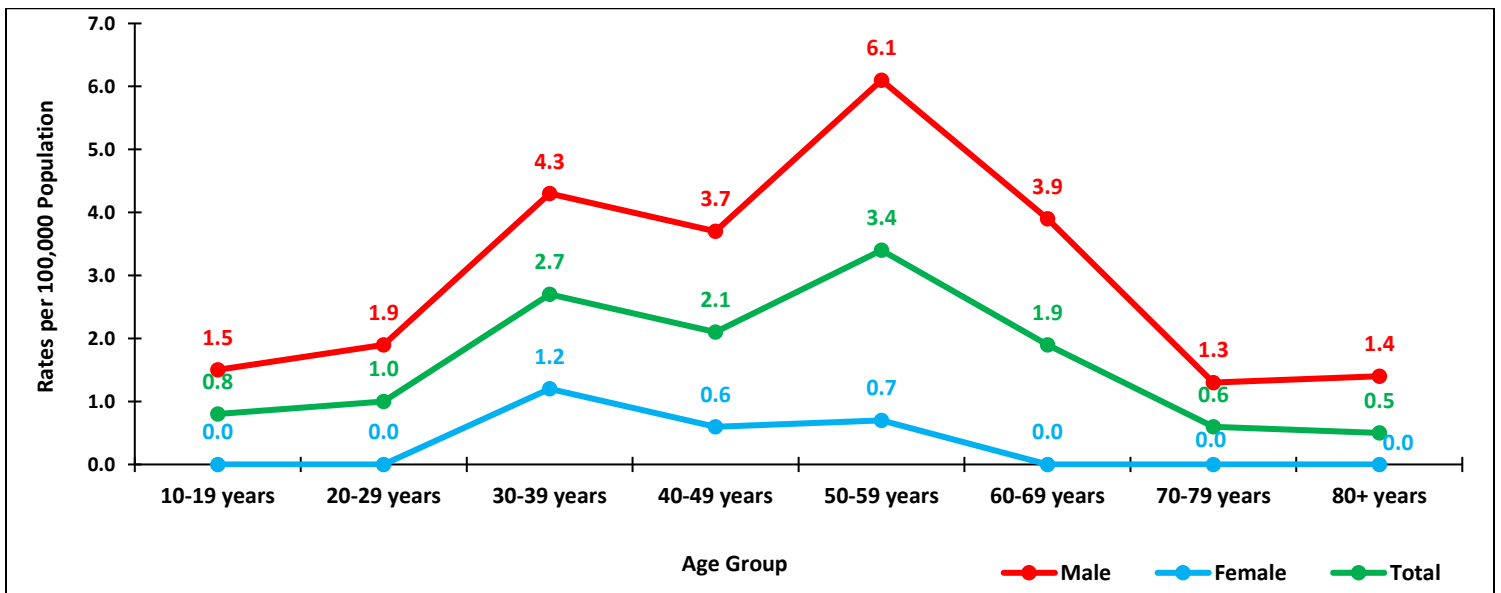
Leading Cause of Suicide Deaths by Sex:



Most Common Precipitating Circumstances:



Age-adjusted Rates:



The PAVDRS program is a state level surveillance system funded and overseen by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It is part of the larger National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS). There is a Violent Death Reporting System in all 50 states and some US territories. The PAVDRS program collects data on suicides, homicides, deaths of undetermined intent, and accidental firearm deaths. The program is required to collect data directly from death certificates, coroners/medical examiners, and law enforcement. These sources contribute to a comprehensive understanding of each violent death. The program tries to understand what was happening in the victim's life leading up to their death. PAVDRS/NVDRS data is used for research, policymaking, and, ultimately, to develop violence prevention programs and strategies that will enhance community safety. For more information about the PAVDRS program, please call 717-787-5900 or email RA-DHPAVDRS@pa.gov.