

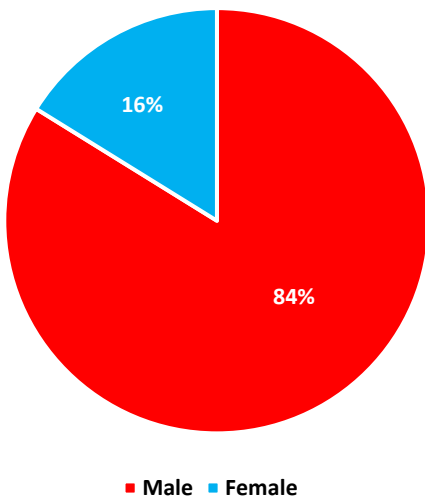
BACKGROUND

Berks County, Pennsylvania is an urban county with a total combined population of 1.25 million (620,000 males and 640,000 females) from 2016-2018. During those three years, Berks County had 204 suicide deaths (171 males and 33 females) at a rate of 16.3 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, more than 5 suicide deaths occurred every month.

Characteristics of Suicide Victims

Sex of Victims:

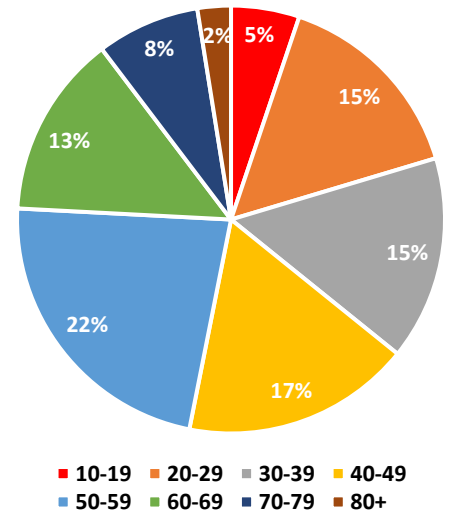


- In Berks County, males were 5 times more likely to die by suicide than females.
- Berks male residents, ages 50-59 were 1½ times more likely to die by suicide compared to Pennsylvania male residents, ages 50-59.
- Overall, suicide rates in Berks County were higher than the state average:

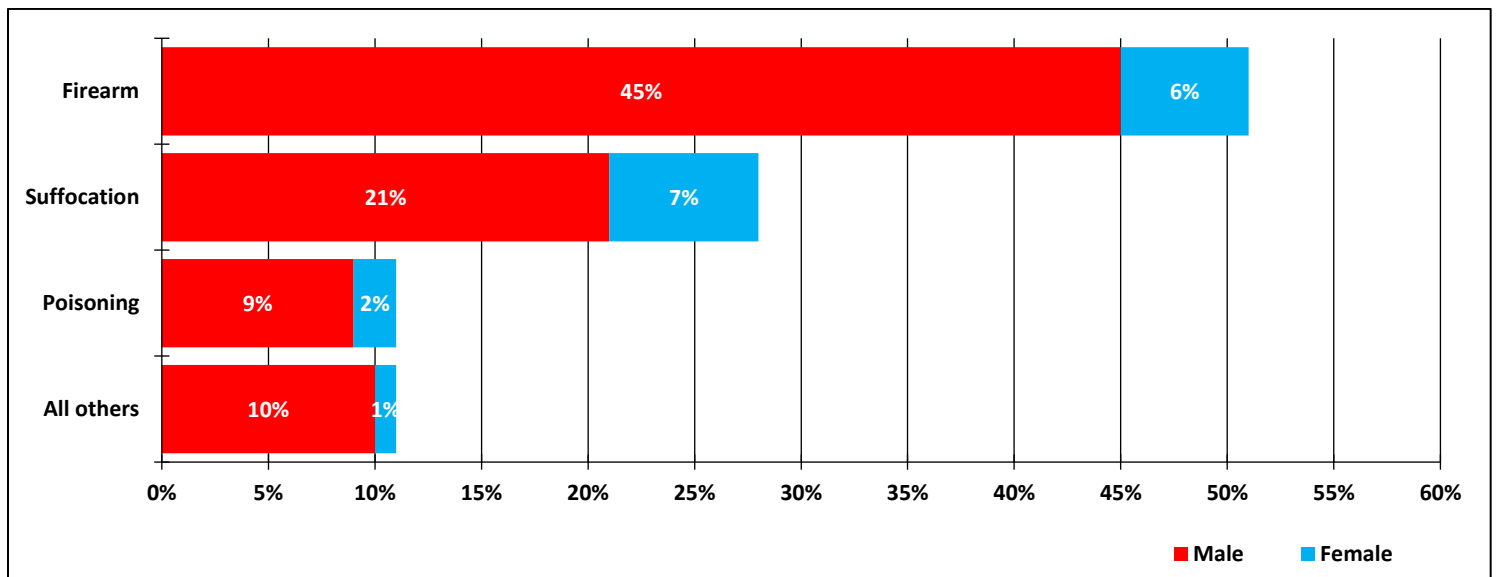
Berks Rates: 16.3 deaths per 100,000 residents (males 27.7 and females 5.2).

Pennsylvania Rates: 13.9 deaths per 100,000 residents (males 21.9 and females 6.2).

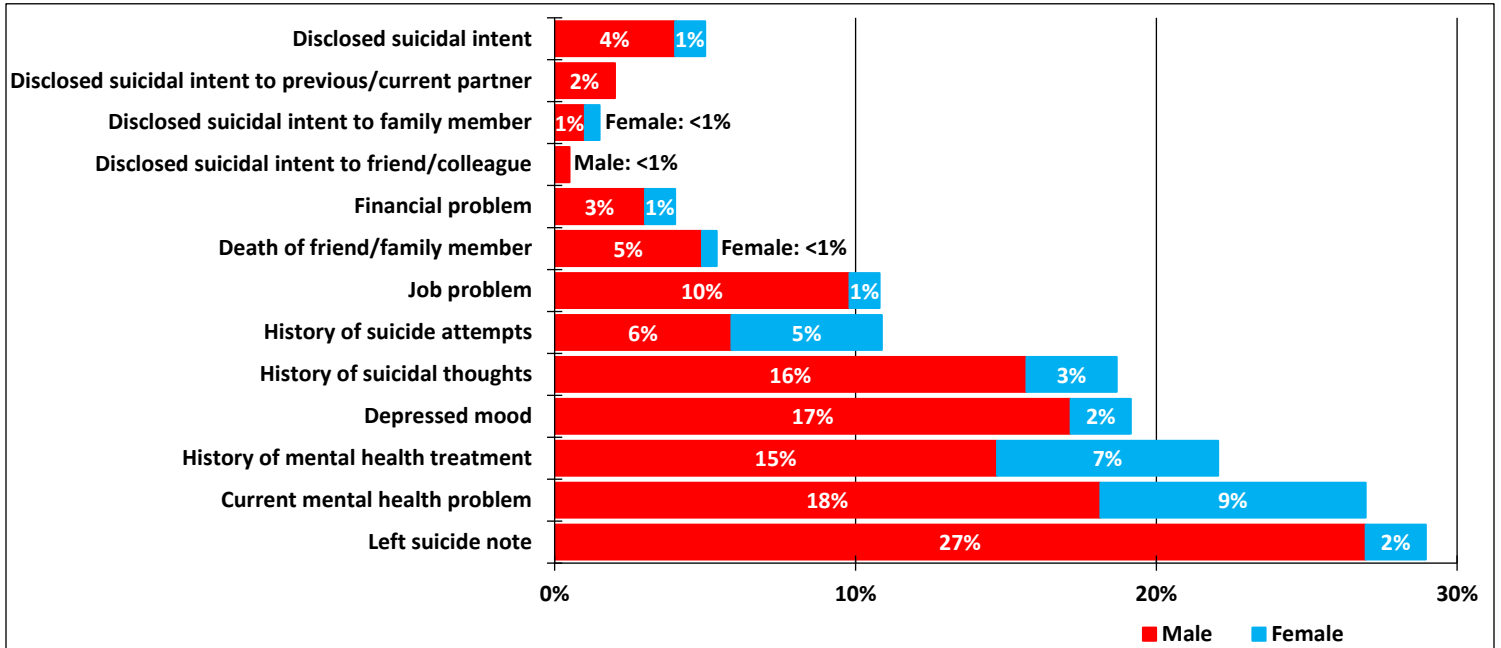
Age of Victims:



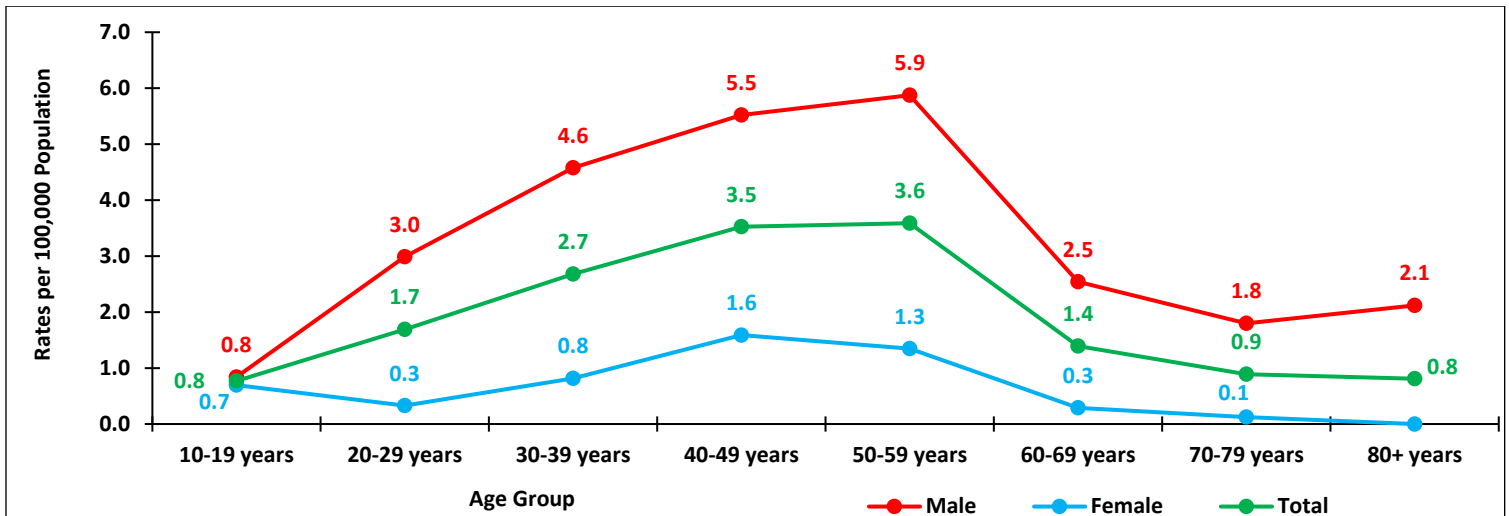
Leading Cause of Suicide Deaths by Sex:



Most Common Precipitating Circumstances:



Age-adjusted Rates:



Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

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

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