

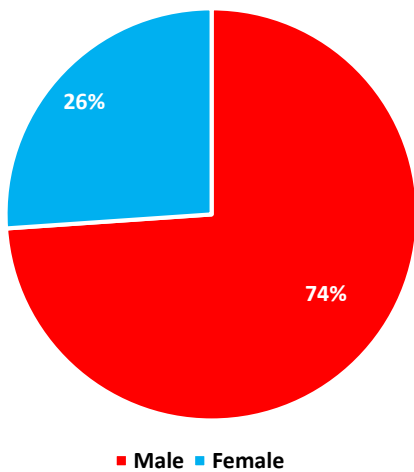
### BACKGROUND

Berks County, Pennsylvania is an urban county with a population of 417,854 people (205,681 males and 212,173 females). In 2017, Berks County had 69 suicide deaths (51 males and 18 females) at a rate of 15.4 suicide deaths per 100,000 people. The Pennsylvania Violent Death Reporting System (PAVDRS) worked closely with the Bureau of Health Statistics and Registries and the Berks County Coroner’s Office to gather detailed information about each violent death. Below are some results of those collaborations.

**In Berks County, approximately 5 suicide deaths occurred every month.**

### Characteristics of Suicide Victims

Sex of Victims:

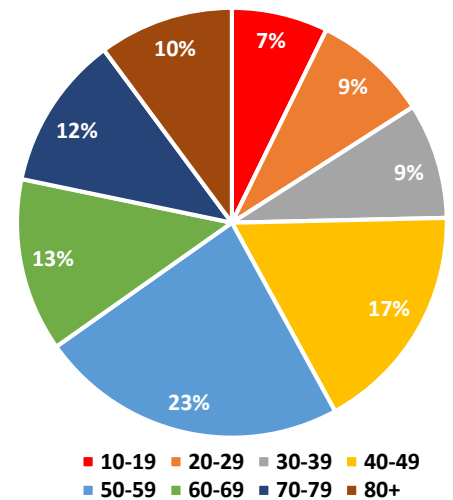


- In Berks County, males were about 3 times more likely to die by suicide than females.
- Berks residents, ages 80 years and older were about 2½ times more likely to die by suicide compared to Pennsylvania residents, ages 80 years and older.
- Overall, suicide rates in Berks County were higher than the state average:

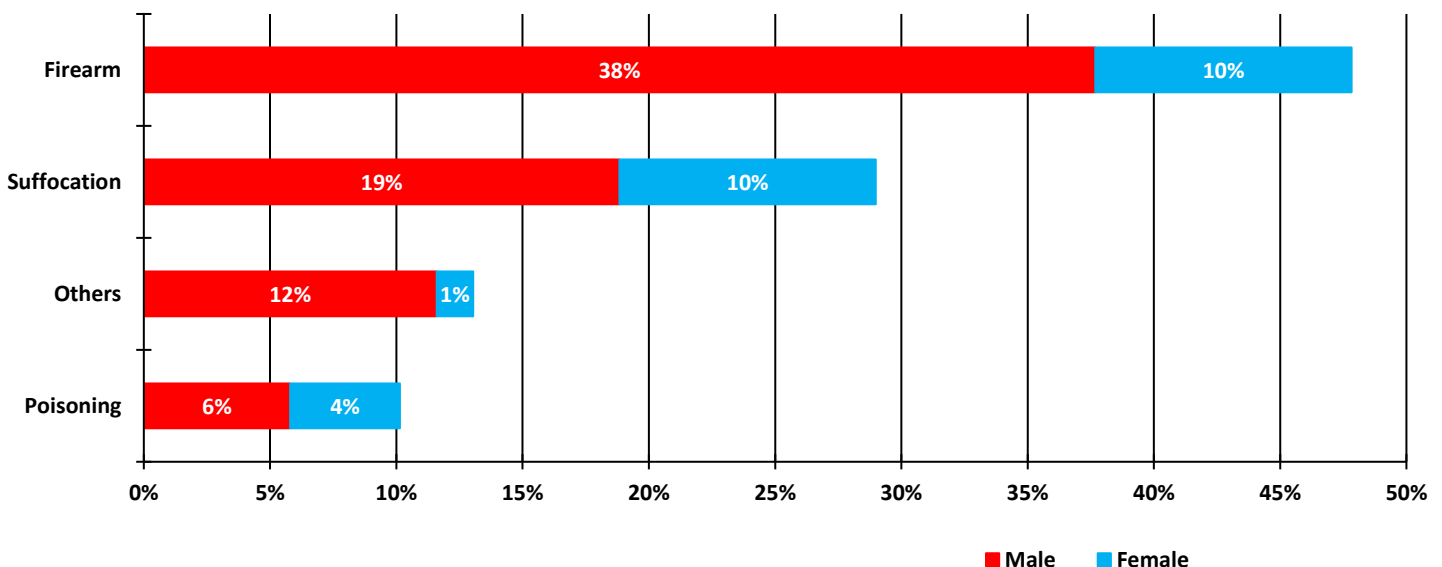
**Berks Rates:** 15.4 deaths per 100,000 residents (males 23.5 and females 8.4).

**Pennsylvania Rates:** 13.8 deaths per 100,000 residents (males 21.4 and females 6.6).

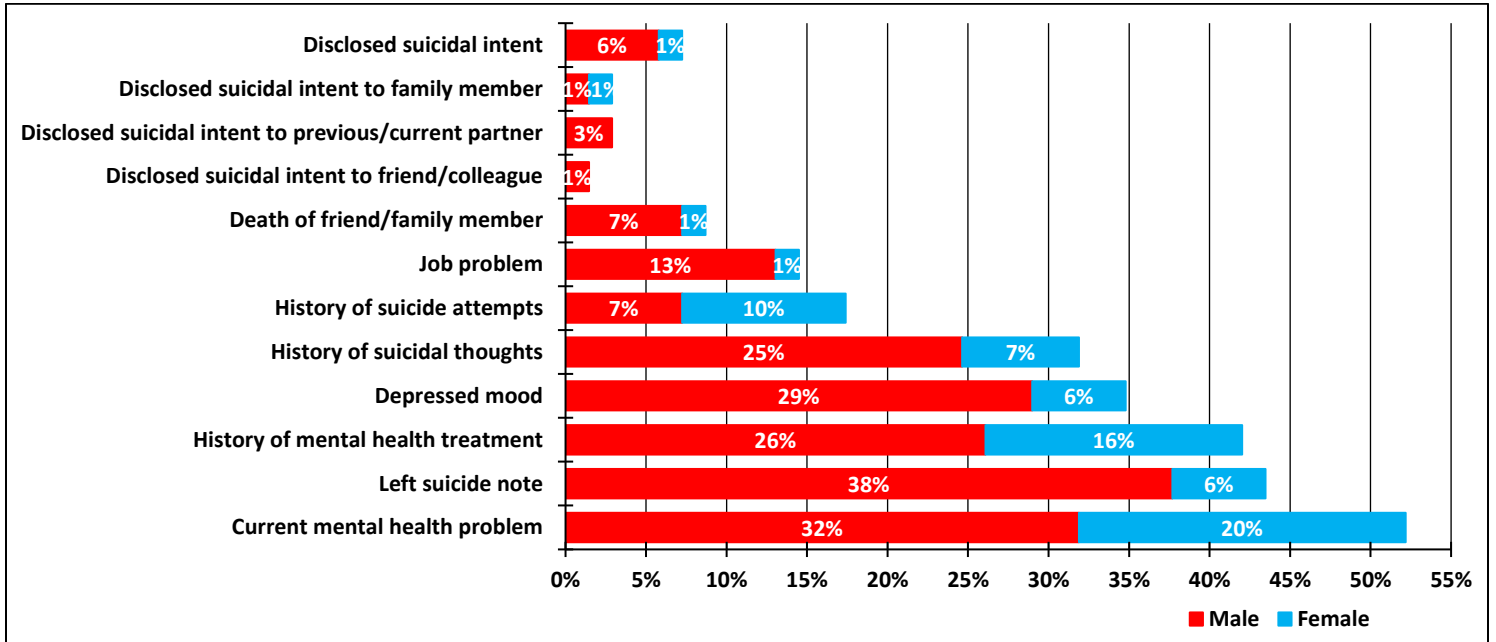
Age of Victims:



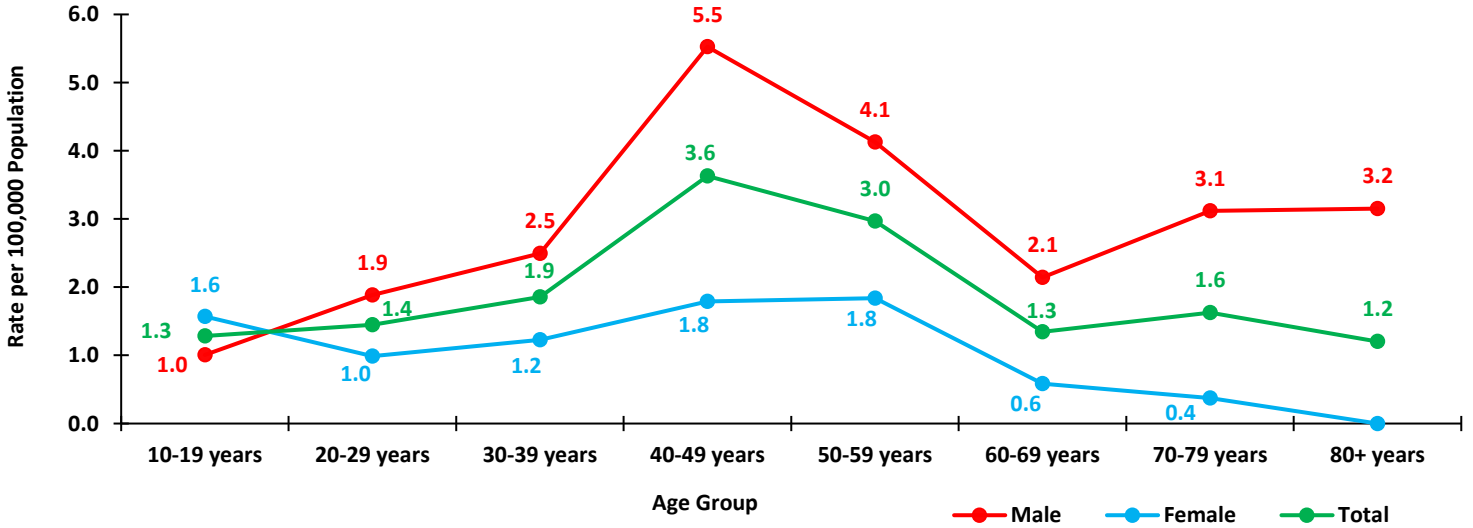
### Leading Cause of Suicide Deaths by Sex:



**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