Suicide Statistics


The following figures are based on the official U.S. suicide statistics for 2002:

- Almost 32,000 people commit suicide annually in the United States.
- Suicide ranks #11 as a cause of death in the U.S. (Homicide, by comparison, is #14). More people kill themselves than kill each other.
- The suicide rate for all ages combined is 10.7 per 100,000 people.
- Suicide, on average, claims the life of one person every 18 minutes.
- Men complete suicide 4.1 times more often than women. But women attempt suicide three times more often than men.
- In the U.S., there are an estimated 730,000 suicide attempts each year.
- The suicide rate among young people has tripled since the 1950s. Suicide is now the third leading cause of death among teenagers.
- Suicide is not an inheritable trait. However, the risk of suicide may be higher for family members.

Adapted from Suicide Is a Leading Killer in America (Suicide & Crisis Center) [Accessed April 18, 2006]

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) in England found through a study that suicide occurred more often on Monday than any other day of the week. Sunday ranked as the lowest. The research suggests that there is a “Monday-morning feeling” that contributes to a person's reasoning for committing suicide. The study also found that suicide attempts were lower before a holiday and higher than expected after the holiday, regardless of the day of the week.


The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report the following statistics concerning suicide:

- Males
  - Suicide is the eighth leading cause of death for all U.S. men (Anderson and Smith 2003).
  - Males are four times more likely to die from suicide than females (CDC 2004).
  - Suicide rates are highest among Whites and second highest among American Indian and Native Alaskan men (CDC 2004).
• Of the 24,672 suicide deaths reported among men in 2001, 60% involved the use of a firearm (Anderson and Smith 2003).

• **Youth**
  - Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people ages 15 to 24. In 2001, 3,971 suicides were reported in this group (Anderson and Smith 2003).
  - Of the total number of suicides among ages 15 to 24 in 2001, 86% (n=3,409) were male and 14% (n=562) were female (Anderson and Smith 2003).
  - American Indian and Alaskan Natives have the highest rate of suicide in the 15 to 24 age group (CDC 2004).
  - In 2001, firearms were used in 54% of youth suicides (Anderson and Smith 2003).

• **The Elderly**
  - In 2001, 5,393 Americans over age 65 committed suicide. Of those, 85% (n=4,589) were men and 15% (n=804) were women (CDC 2004).
  - Firearms were used in 73% of suicides committed by adults over the age of 65 in 2001 (CDC 2004)."

*Excerpted from Suicide: Fact Sheet, (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) [Accessed April 18, 2006]*