

# Suicide in Utah, 2006-2010

## Youth (10-17 years)

### Introduction

An average of 402 Utahns die from suicide and 4,152 Utahns attempt suicide each year. Youth ages 10-17 comprise 12.4% of the Utah population, and:

- **3.7%** of all suicides in Utah, and
- **15.7%** of all suicide attempts\* in Utah.

More youth are hospitalized or treated in an emergency department (ED) for suicide attempts than are fatally injured (**Figure 1**).<sup>1</sup>

\*Suicide attempts include persons who are hospitalized or treated in an ED for self-inflicted injuries.

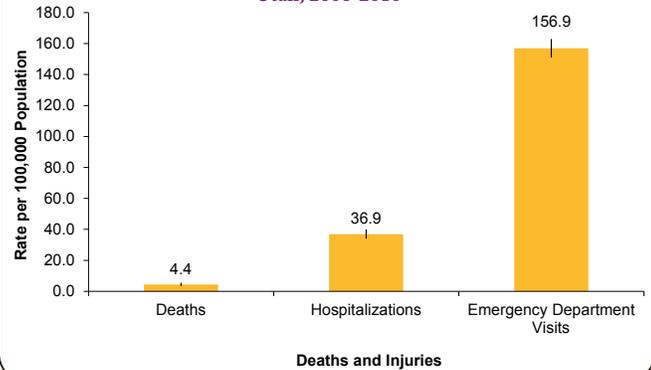
- **Two** youth are treated for suicide attempts **every day** in Utah.

All suicide attempts should be taken seriously. Those who survive suicide attempts are often seriously injured and many have depression and other mental health problems.

In 2011, Utah high school students reported:<sup>2</sup>

- **26.7%** felt sad or hopeless
- **14.3%** seriously considered attempting suicide
- **12.4%** made a suicide plan
- **7.2%** attempted suicide one or more times
- **3.1%** of students suffered an injury, poisoning, or an overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse due to a suicide attempt.

**Figure 1: Rate of Suicides and Suicide Attempts, Youth Ages 10-17, Utah, 2006-2010**



“ We had no clue that our son was having suicidal thoughts. We didn’t know how much he was hurting inside... the pain, depression, loneliness, and worthlessness he felt. There is no healing for the families left behind. ”

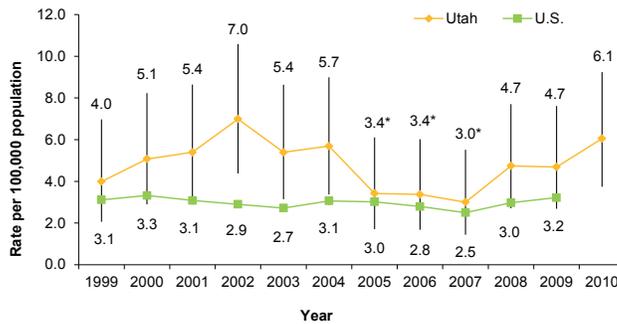
### Utah Trends

The 2010 Utah youth suicide rate was 6.1 per 100,000 population among 10- to 17-year-olds.<sup>1</sup> Suicide is the second leading cause of death for this age group.<sup>1</sup>

## Utah and U.S.

Utah's youth suicide rate has been consistently higher than the national rate for more than a decade (Figure 2). Utah had the 17<sup>th</sup> highest teen suicide rate in the U.S. for the years 1999-2010.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 2: Rate of Suicides by Year, Youth Ages 10-17, Utah and U.S., 1999-2010

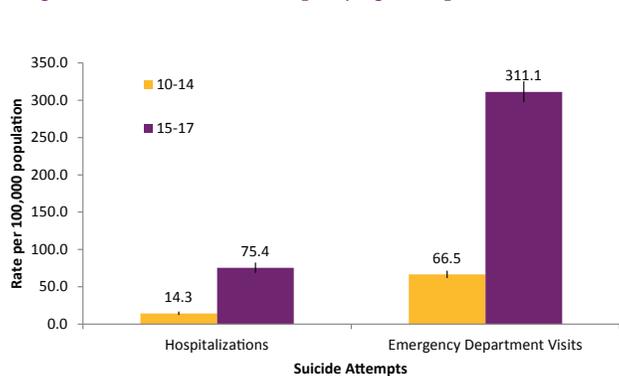


\*Insufficient number of cases to meet the UDOH standard for data reliability, interpret with caution.

## Age and Sex

Suicide rates increase significantly after age 14 (Figure 3).<sup>1</sup>

Figure 3: Rate of Suicide Attempts by Age Group, Utah, 2006-2010

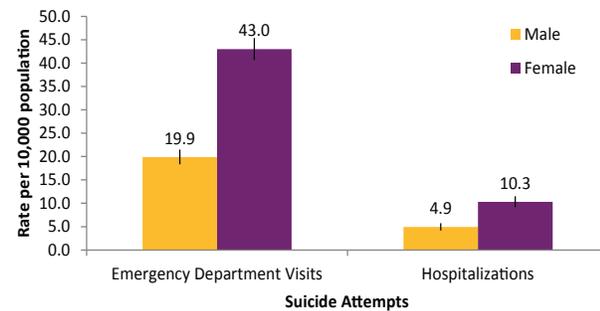


Males ages 10-17 (5.54 per 100,000 population) had a higher suicide rate

than females ages 10-17 (3.17 per 100,000 population).

More females attempt suicide than males. In Utah, youth females ages 15-17 had a significantly higher ED visit and hospitalization rate for suicide attempts compared to males ages 15-17 (Figure 4).<sup>1</sup>

Figure 4: Rate of Suicide Attempts by Sex, Ages 15-17, Utah, 2006-2010



## Location of Injury

The majority of youth suicides occurred at a home or an apartment (79.3%), followed by natural areas, such as fields or mountains (4.9%).<sup>4</sup>

Davis County had the highest percentage of 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who had made a suicide plan in the past year (10.9%).<sup>5</sup>

The following small areas had significantly higher rates than the state rate:

### Highest Youth Suicide Rates<sup>1</sup>

- Clearfield/Hill AFB\*

\*Insufficient number of cases to meet the UDOH standard for data reliability, interpret with caution.

### Highest Youth Hospitalization Rates for Suicide Attempts<sup>1</sup>

- Carbon/Emery Counties, Magna, Kearns, and Clearfield/Hill AFB

### Highest Youth ED Visit Rates for Suicide Attempts<sup>1</sup>

- Brigham City, West Valley East, Magna, Midvale, West Jordan/Copperton (2008 and before), Riverdale, Kearns, and West Valley West

## Method of Injury

Poisoning was the most common method of injury leading to youth ED visits and hospitalizations for suicide attempts.<sup>1</sup> Suffocation was the most common method of suicide death among youth.<sup>1</sup>

## Risk Factors

Risk factors for suicide may include:

- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Family history of suicide or violence
- Easy access to lethal methods (such as guns or pills)
- Stressful life event or loss
- Relationship or school problems

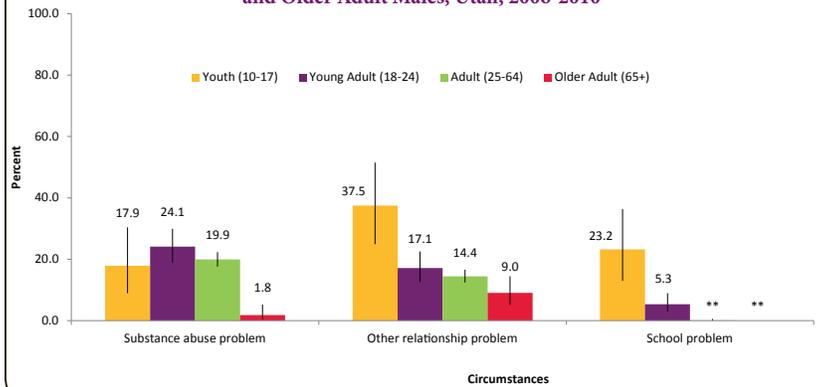
## Suicide Death Circumstances

Utah males ages 10 to 17 had significantly higher rates of the following when compared to at least one other

age group<sup>4</sup> (Figure 5):

- Other relationship problems (“Other” is anyone who is not a boy/girlfriend or intimate partner)
- School problems

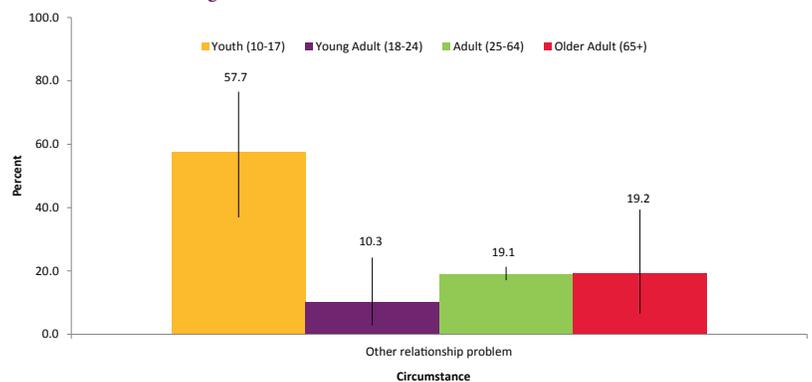
Figure 5: Percentage of Reported Suicide Circumstances by Youth, Young Adult, Adult, and Older Adult Males, Utah, 2006-2010



\*\*The percentage is suppressed because the estimate is unreliable.

Utah females ages 10 to 17 had significantly higher rates of other relationship problems<sup>4</sup> (Figure 6). “Other” is anyone who is not a boy/girlfriend or intimate partner.

Figure 6: Percentage of Reported Other Relationship Problems Suicide Circumstances by Youth, Young Adult, Adult, and Older Adult Females, Utah, 2006-2010

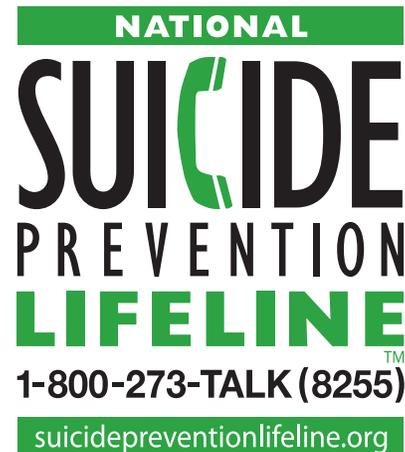


### Cost

The average total charges per year for ED visits and hospitalizations for suicide attempts was \$2.2 million for Utah youth.<sup>1</sup>

### Prevention Tips

- Call for help. Help is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. If you live in Utah, call the Statewide CrisisLine at **801-587-3000** or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-TALK**.
- Take any threat of suicide seriously.
- Do not leave the person alone.
- Listen to and don't judge anyone you think may be in trouble.
- Take action. Remove guns or pills to prevent a suicide attempt.



### Resources

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org) 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center [www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness Utah Chapter [www.namiut.org](http://www.namiut.org)
- Preventing Suicide: A resource for media professionals  
[www.who.int/mental\\_health/prevention/suicide/resource\\_media.pdf](http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/resource_media.pdf)

### References

- 1 Utah's Indicator Based Information System for Public Health (IBIS-PH), 2006-2010 data [cited 2012 July]
- 2 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (Youth online) [ONLINE]. (2011) National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, CDC (producer). [cited 2012 July]
- 3 CDC, Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS), 2005-2009 data [cited 2012 July]
- 4 Violence and Injury Prevention Program, 2006-2010 Utah Violent Death Reporting System, Utah Department of Health
- 5 Prevention Needs Assessment Survey, 2011, Utah Department of Human Services

**Last updated: September 2012**

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If your life has been affected by suicide, the Utah Department of Health wants to hear from you. Share your story with the Utah Health Story Bank at [www.health.utah.gov/bhp/sb/](http://www.health.utah.gov/bhp/sb/).

### Our Mission

VIPP is a trusted and comprehensive resource for data and technical assistance related to violence and injury. This information helps promote partnerships and programs to prevent injuries and improve public health.

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