

# SUICIDE IN IDAHO

Suicide was the eleventh leading cause of death in the U.S. in 2005 (latest year available); however, it was the eighth leading cause of death in Idaho from 2005 through 2007. Approximately 18 Idahoans died from suicide every month from 2005 through 2007. Over 83 percent of these were males. The U.S. suicide rate was lower than all of the states in the mountain states region, including Idaho, in 2005. Discharge of firearms remain the most common suicide mechanism by all age groups in the U.S. and Idaho. More than half (67.7 percent) of Idahoans who took their own lives from 2005 through 2007 used this mechanism.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Idaho from 2005 to 2007:

- Suicide was the 8<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death
- 663 suicides
  - 553 men (83.4 percent)
  - 110 women (16.6 percent)
- Males were five times as likely to die from suicide than females
- The average-annual age-adjusted suicide death rate was 15.4 deaths per 100,000 population
- 38.5 percent of those who died from suicide were aged 35-54
- Suicide was the second leading cause of death to Idahoans aged 10-34
- Firearms were used in 67.7 percent of all suicides
- 75-84 year olds and 85 and older tied for the highest suicide rate (25.7 deaths per 100,000 population)

### U.S. in 2005:<sup>1</sup>

- Suicide was the 11th leading cause of death
- 32,637 suicides
  - 25,907 men (79.4 percent)
  - 6,730 women (20.6 percent)
- Males were four times as likely to die from suicide than females
- The average-annual age-adjusted suicide death rate was 10.9 deaths per 100,000 population
- 41.5 percent of those who died from suicide were aged 35-54
- Suicide was the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of death to Americans aged 10-34
- Firearms were used in 52.4 percent of all suicides
- 75-84 year olds and 85 and older tied for the highest suicide rate (16.9 deaths per 100,000 population)

## AGE and GENDER

473 of the 663 suicide deaths (71.3 percent) in Idaho from 2005 to 2007 were to people younger than 55. Suicide was the second leading cause of death to Idahoans aged 10-34, exceeded only by accidents (unintentional injuries). Suicide accounted for 18.4 percent (103 deaths) of all deaths to males aged 35-44 years old, compared with 6.1 percent (23 deaths) for females in the same age group. The highest age-specific suicide rate for females was among the 45-54 year olds, however among males in the same age group, it was the fourth-highest rate.

Number and Age-Specific Suicide Rates by Gender  
Idaho, 2005-2007

Age	Females		Males	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Total, all ages	110	5.0	553	25.0
10-14	1	0.6	7	4.2
15-19	7	4.3	37	22.0
20-24	7	4.7	52	30.4
25-34	21	7.1	86	27.1
35-44	23	8.0	103	34.9
45-54	32	10.5	97	31.9
55-64	12	5.2	71	31.1
65-74	4	2.9	41	31.6
75-84	2	2.1	42	56.3
85+	1	2.2	17	67.3

Rates are per 100,000 population in specified gender or age group.

Suicide was the sixth and thirteenth leading cause of death to Idahoan males and females, respectively, from 2005 through 2007. The number and rate of suicide deaths was higher for males than females in every age group category from 2005 to 2007. The suicide rate among Idahoans aged 20-24 was 84.6 percent lower for females than males. Similarly, males aged 75-84 were more than 26 times as likely to commit suicide than females aged 75-84. There are nearly twice as many women as men in the 85 and older age group, but all but one of the suicides among Idahoans aged 85 and older were to males from 2005 through 2007.

# IDAHO COUNTIES

Idaho Resident Suicide Deaths  
2005-2007

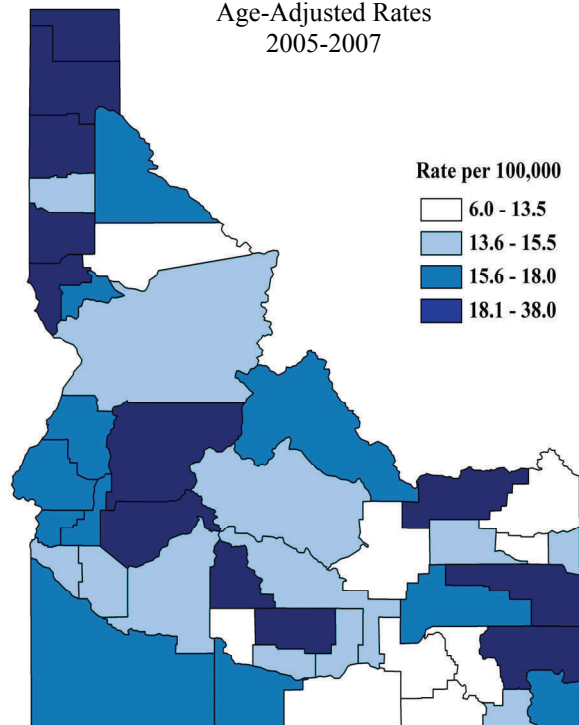
Residence	Total Deaths	Average-Annual Age-Adjusted Rates (per 100,000 population) <sup>2</sup>
IDAHO	663	15.4
District 1	130	20.6
Benewah	4	14.0
Bonner	26	20.1
Boundary	10	30.5
Kootenai	83	20.8
Shoshone	7	16.6
District 2	54	17.1
Clearwater	3	11.0
Idaho	7	14.0
Latah	20	18.7
Lewis	2	16.9
Nez Perce	22	18.4
District 3	99	14.6
Adams	2	17.7
Canyon	68	14.0
Gem	8	15.8
Owyhee	5	15.6
Payette	11	16.6
Washington	5	16.0
District 4	165	13.8
Ada	144	13.5
Boise	5	21.0
Elmore	11	13.8
Valley	5	17.8
District 5	75	14.7
Blaine	9	13.5
Camas	1	28.9
Cassia	5	8.4
Gooding	4	9.6
Jerome	8	14.0
Lincoln	3	23.1
Minidoka	8	14.6
Twin Falls	37	17.4
District 6	62	13.4
Bannock	23	10.3
Bear Lake	3	16.3
Bingham	20	16.3
Butte	1	12.1
Caribou	7	33.5
Franklin	5	14.7
Oneida	1	8.0
Power	2	8.9
District 7	78	15.3
Bonneville	50	18.6
Clark	1	38.0
Custer	2	14.8
Fremont	4	11.5
Jefferson	9	14.7
Lemhi	4	15.9
Madison	5	6.0
Teton	3	13.5

Idaho's age-adjusted suicide rate for 2005 through 2007 was 15.4 per 100,000 population. The county and district-level rates varied greatly. Although Clark County had only one suicide from 2005 through 2007, their age-adjusted rate of 38.0 per 100,000 population was the highest of all the counties.

The counties with the three highest suicide rates were Clark, Caribou and Boundary. The three counties with the lowest suicide rates were Madison, Oneida, and Cassia counties. Every county had at least one suicide from 2005 through 2007.

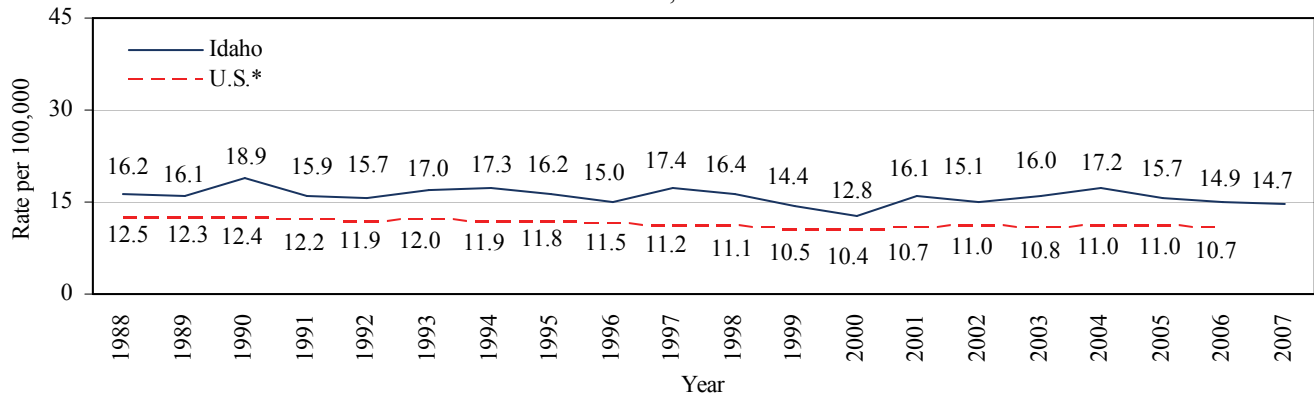
While District 4 had the largest percentage of suicides (24.9 percent) from 2005 to 2007 of all the districts in Idaho, the age-adjusted suicide rate was 10.4 percent lower than Idaho's rate. Although only 19.6 percent of all the suicides from 2005 to 2007 occurred to residents in District 1, the district had the highest age-adjusted suicide rate (20.6 per 100,000 population) in the state.

Idaho Resident Suicide Deaths  
Age-Adjusted Rates  
2005-2007



# IDAHO and the UNITED STATES

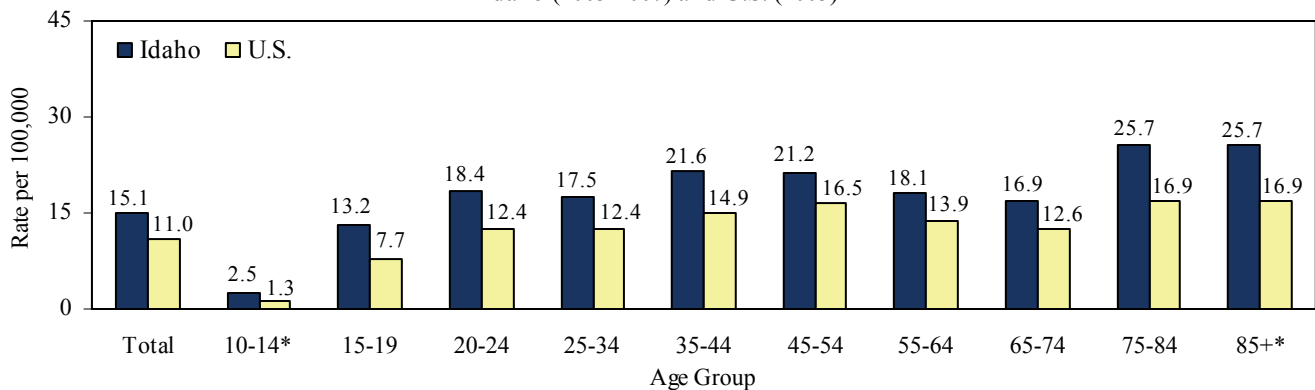
Suicide Death Rates  
Idaho and U.S., 1988-2007



Rates are per 100,000 population. \* U.S. 2006 data are preliminary. U.S. 2007 data are unavailable. U.S. and Idaho statistics for 1988 to 1998 have been revised using Modified ICD-9 codes and comparability ratios. Source 1998-2005 U.S. data: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, WONDER on-line database, May 2008. Source 2006 U.S. preliminary data: "Deaths: Preliminary Data for 2006," National Center for Health Statistics, Vol. 56, No. 16, June 11, 2008.

The U.S. crude death rate decreased in a relatively steady manner over the past twenty years, decreasing fourteen percent from 12.5 in 1988 to 10.7 deaths per 100,000 population in 2006. Idaho's suicide rate fluctuated greatly over the past two decades, and it has consistently been higher than the suicide rate for the United States. Idaho's rate ranged from a low of 12.8 deaths per 100,000 population in 2000 to a high of 18.9 deaths per 100,000 population in 1990.

Age-Specific Suicide Rates  
Idaho (2005-2007) and U.S. (2005)



\* Rates for Idaho are based on <20 deaths. Caution is advised when interpreting rates based on small numbers. Source U.S. data: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) WONDER on-line database, May 2008.

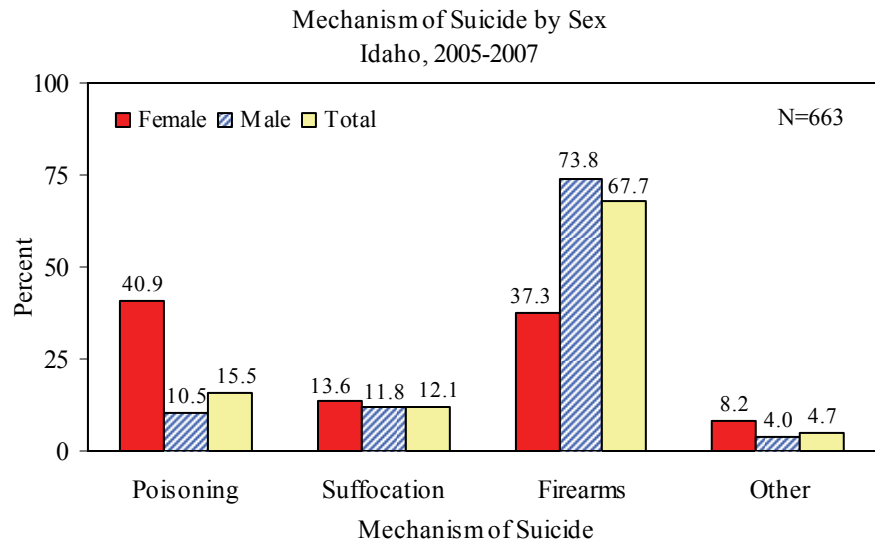
Idaho's average-annual suicide rate for 2005-2007 (15.1 per 100,000 population) was 36.9 percent higher than the 2005 U.S. rate (11.0 per 100,000 population). Idaho's age-specific suicide rates were higher than the U.S. in each age group category. The largest difference was in the 10-14 year old age category, Idaho's rate (2.5 per 100,000 population) was two times higher than the U.S. rate (1.3 per 100,000 population). The smallest difference occurred in the 45-54 year old age category, however, Idaho's rate (21.2 per 100,000 population) was still 28.8 percent higher than the U.S. rate (16.5 per 100,000 population).

The ten states with the highest suicide rates per 100,000 population, ranked in order, in 2005 were Montana (22.0), Nevada (19.9), Alaska (19.8), New Mexico (17.8), Wyoming (17.7), Colorado (17.2), Idaho (16.0), Arizona (15.9), South Dakota (15.6), and Oregon (15.4). Seven of these ten states are located in the mountain states region, which includes Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming.

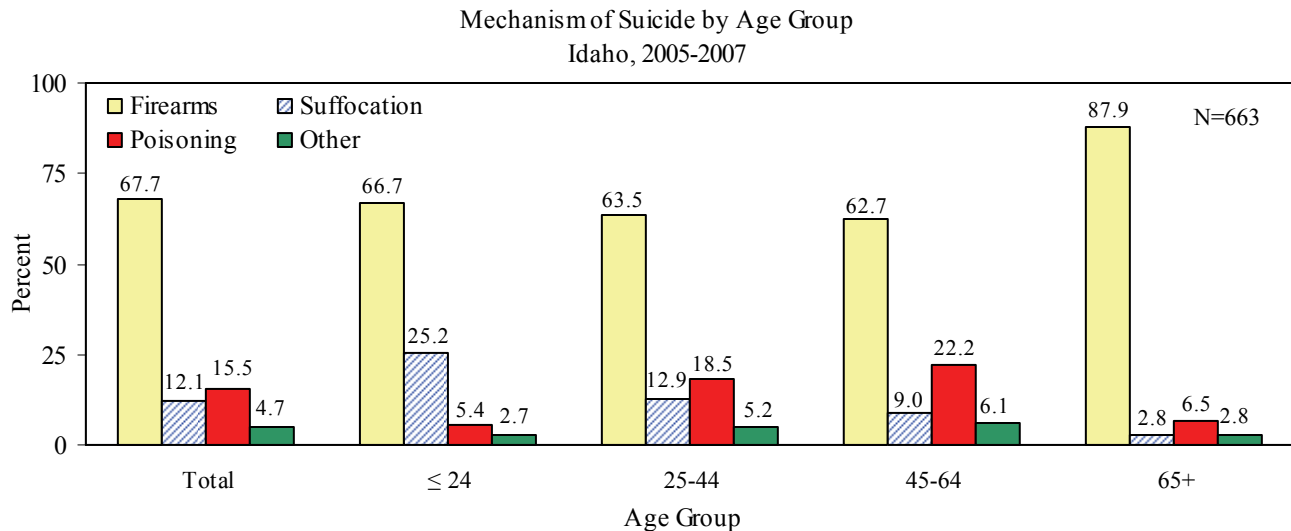
# MECHANISM of SUICIDE

Firearms were used in nearly 68 percent of the suicides among Idahoans from 2005 through 2007; males (73.8 percent) were nearly two times more likely to use firearms than females (37.3 percent).

Women were almost four times more likely to use poisoning as a suicide mechanism than men. Poisoning includes drug overdoses and exposure to gas vapors. Suffocation (hanging) was used in 11.8 percent of the suicides among males, compared with 13.6 percent among females.



Firearms were used in the majority of all suicides from 2005 through 2007 for all ages. However, other suicide mechanisms varied greatly by age. For example, among Idahoans aged 24 and younger, 25.2 percent used suffocation as the mechanism; however, only 2.8 percent of Idahoans aged 65 and older used this mechanism. Similarly, 22.2 percent of Idahoans aged 45-64 used poisoning as the mechanism while only 5.4 percent of Idahoans aged 24 and younger used poisoning. Firearms were used in 87.9 percent of the suicides among Idahoans aged 65 and older. Males, who typically use firearms as the mechanism, accounted for 93.5 percent of the suicides among Idahoans aged 65 and older.



- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, WONDER on-line database, September 2008.
- Age-adjusted rates are artificial measures developed to eliminate the bias inherent in differing age compositions, thus allowing comparisons between geographic regions. Average-annual age-adjusted mortality rates by county and district were adjusted to Idaho's three-year average-annual rate (standardized to the 2000 U.S. standard million) using the indirect method of standardization. Idaho's rate was standardized using the direct method. Age-adjusted rates based on fewer than twenty deaths are considered unreliable unless three or more years of data are combined.

**Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics (December 2008)**

Costs associated with this fact sheet are available from Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. HW-1206