



*mi*Ottawa Department of  
**Public Health**

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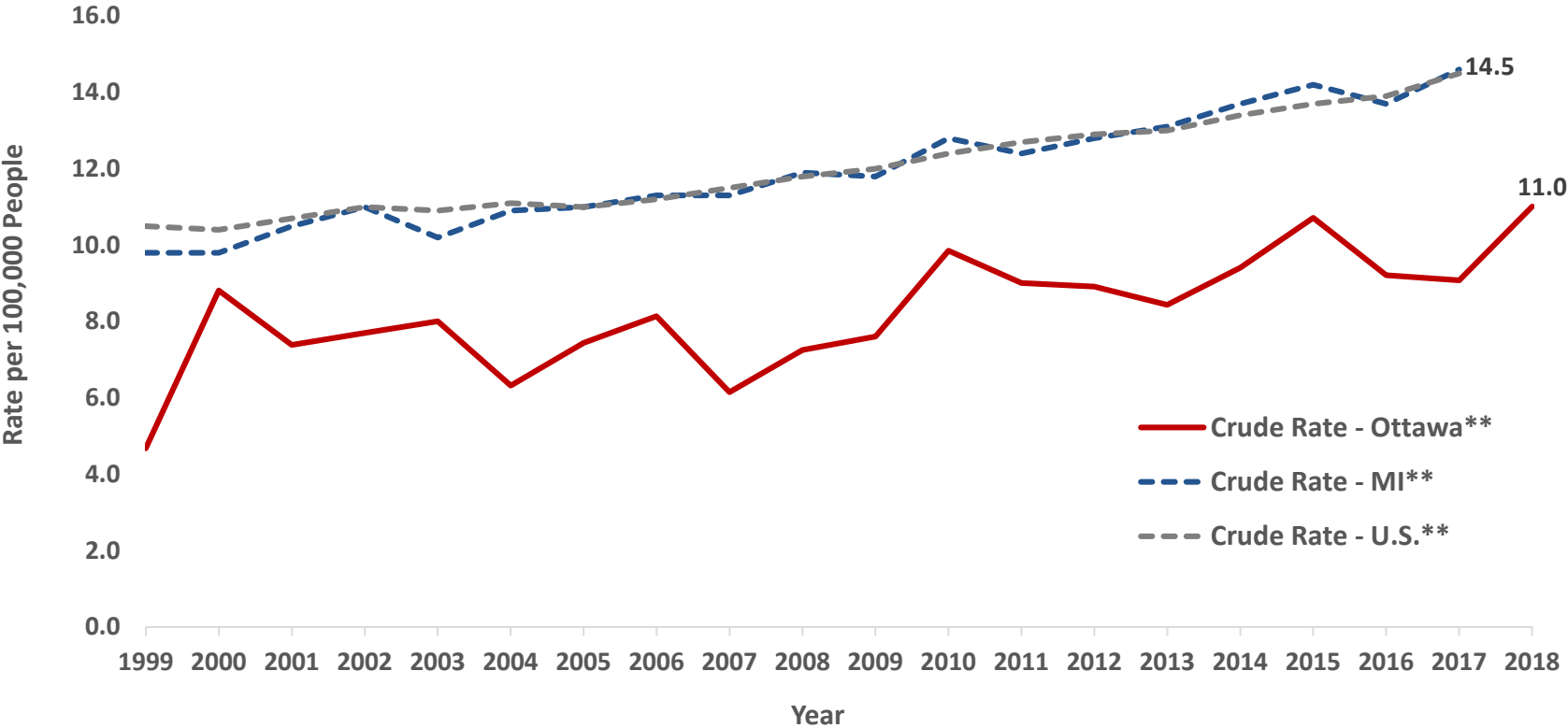
# Death by Suicide Ottawa County, MI

## 2010-2018

**Sources:** 2017 Ottawa County Youth Assessment Survey, 2017 Ottawa County Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, Michigan Vital Records, Ottawa County Medical Examiner's Office, a program of Ottawa County Department of Public Health (OCDPH)

Compiled December 2019 by Derel Glashower, OCDPH Epidemiologist

# Comparison of Suicide Rates from 1999-2018, All Ages

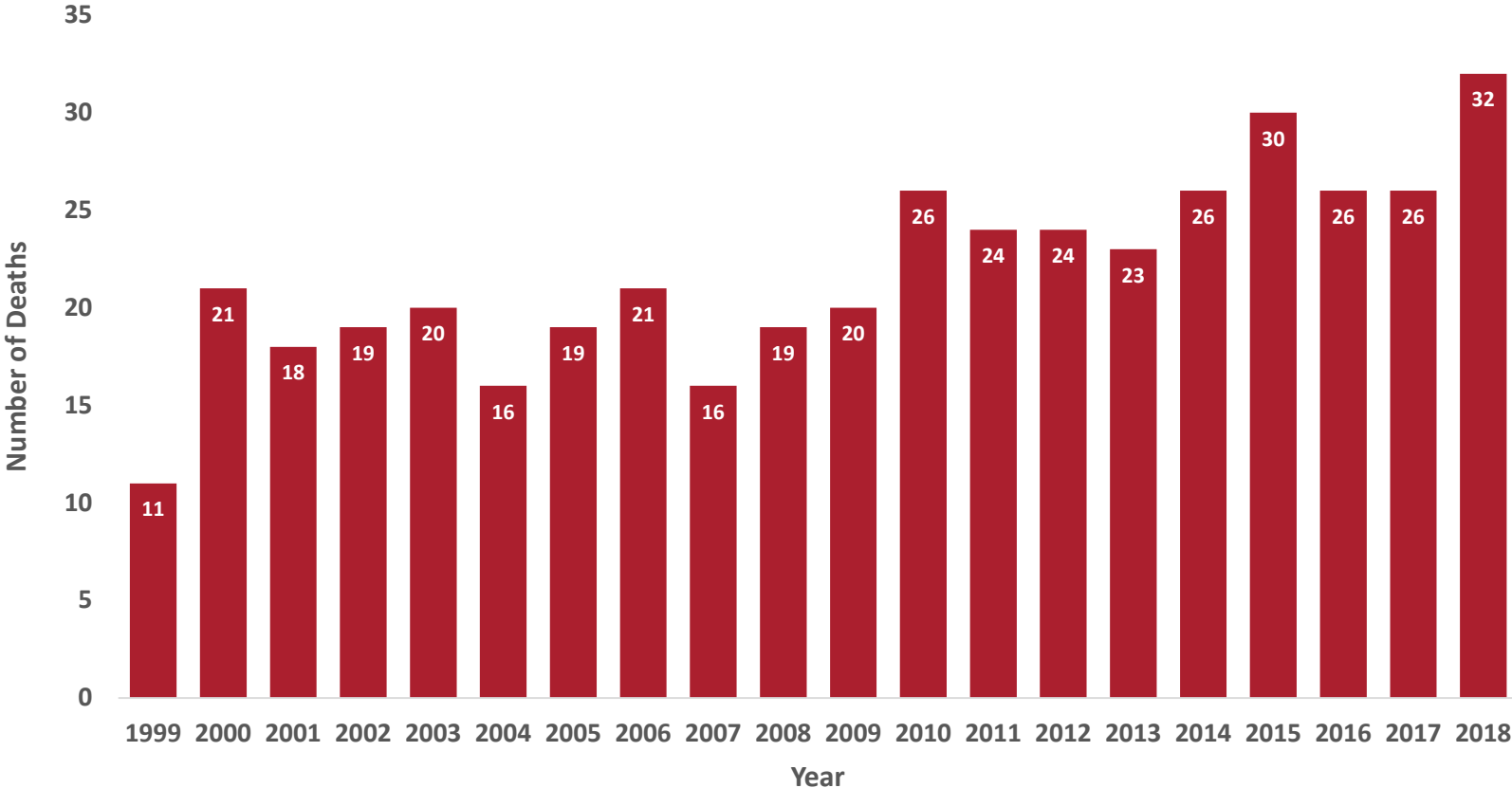


Source: \*\*MI and U.S. data from CDC Wonder. Ottawa data from CDC Wonder for 1999-2009 and from Michigan Vital Records from 2010-2018.

While the rate of death by suicide remains lower in Ottawa County than in the State of Michigan and the United States, data indicates that as of 2018, there was a significant increase in the annual number of suicides in Ottawa County over the past 30 years.

See Appendix A for technical notes.

# Number of Deaths by Suicide, Ottawa County, 1999-2018

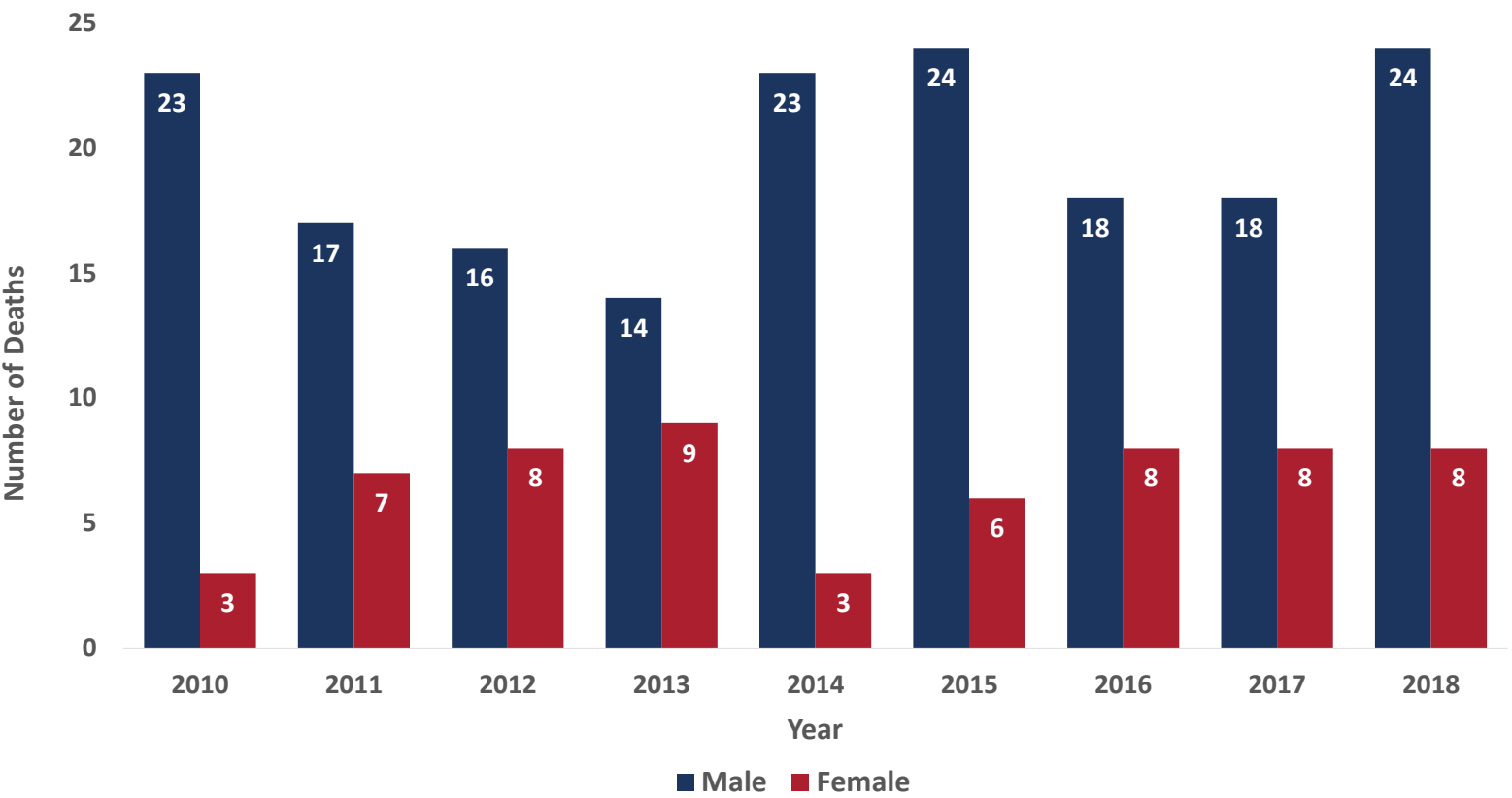


Source: Data from 1999-2009 was obtained from CDC Wonder; data from 2010-2018 was obtained from Michigan Vital Records.

**In 2018, there were 32 deaths by suicide among Ottawa County residents, the highest number in the last 20 years.**



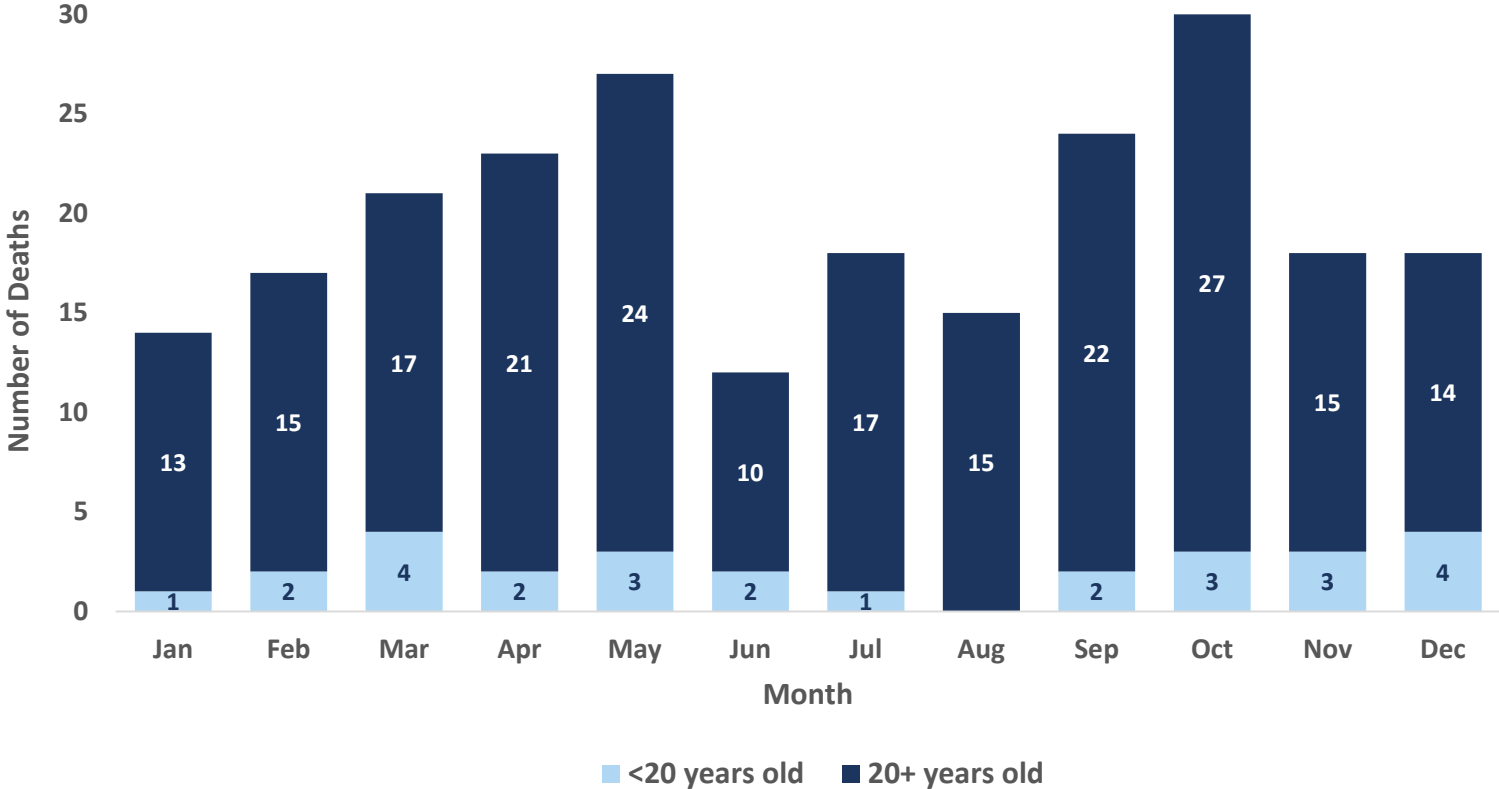
# Sex of Persons who Died by Suicide, 2010-2018



The vast majority of deaths by suicide (75%) among Ottawa County residents from 2010-2018 were among males, similar to national statistics. The variation among sexes is likely due to males selecting more lethal methods than females. Although more males *die* by suicide, in the United States both males and females report *suicidal ideation* at comparable rates\*.

\*Source: <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/health/statistics/suicide.shtml>

# Month of Death by Suicide, 2010-2018 (combined)



Over the last nine years, more deaths by suicide occurred in Ottawa County in May and October than any other months. Suicides among people of all ages tended to occur less frequently in the summer, and fewer suicides among Ottawa County residents occurred over the holiday season (December and January). Across the United States, the month with the *lowest* rate of suicide is December\*.

\*Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/holiday.html>  
See Appendix A for technical notes.



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# Teen Death By Suicide Ottawa County, MI

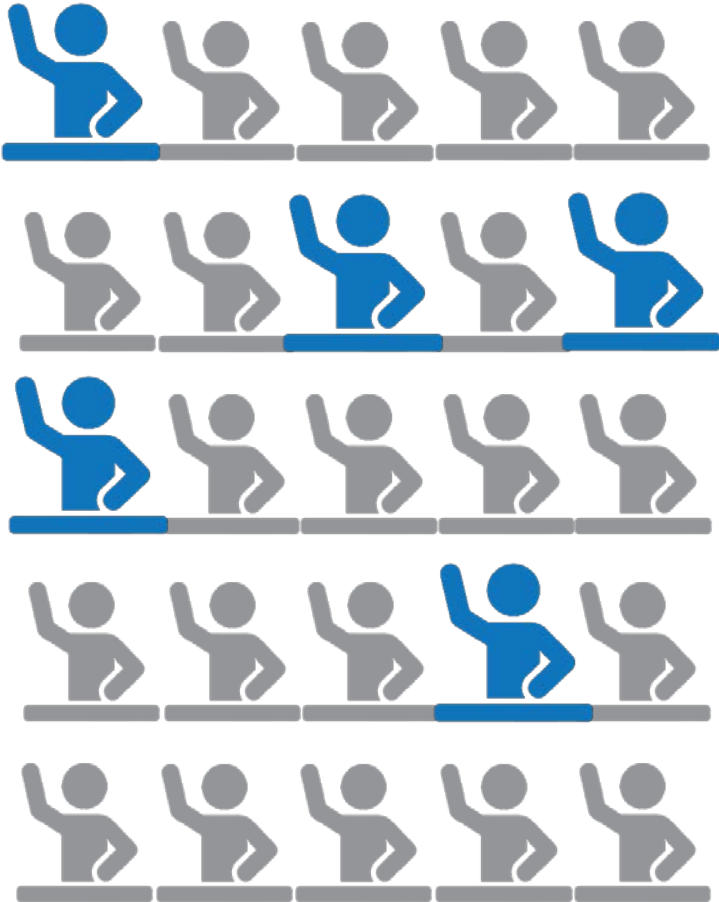
2010-2018

# In each classroom of 25 students...

**5**  
seriously thought  
about  
taking their  
own life\*

and **2** made one or more attempts\*

Among Ottawa County **adults**, only about **1** out of every  
**25** has thought about **taking their own life\*\***

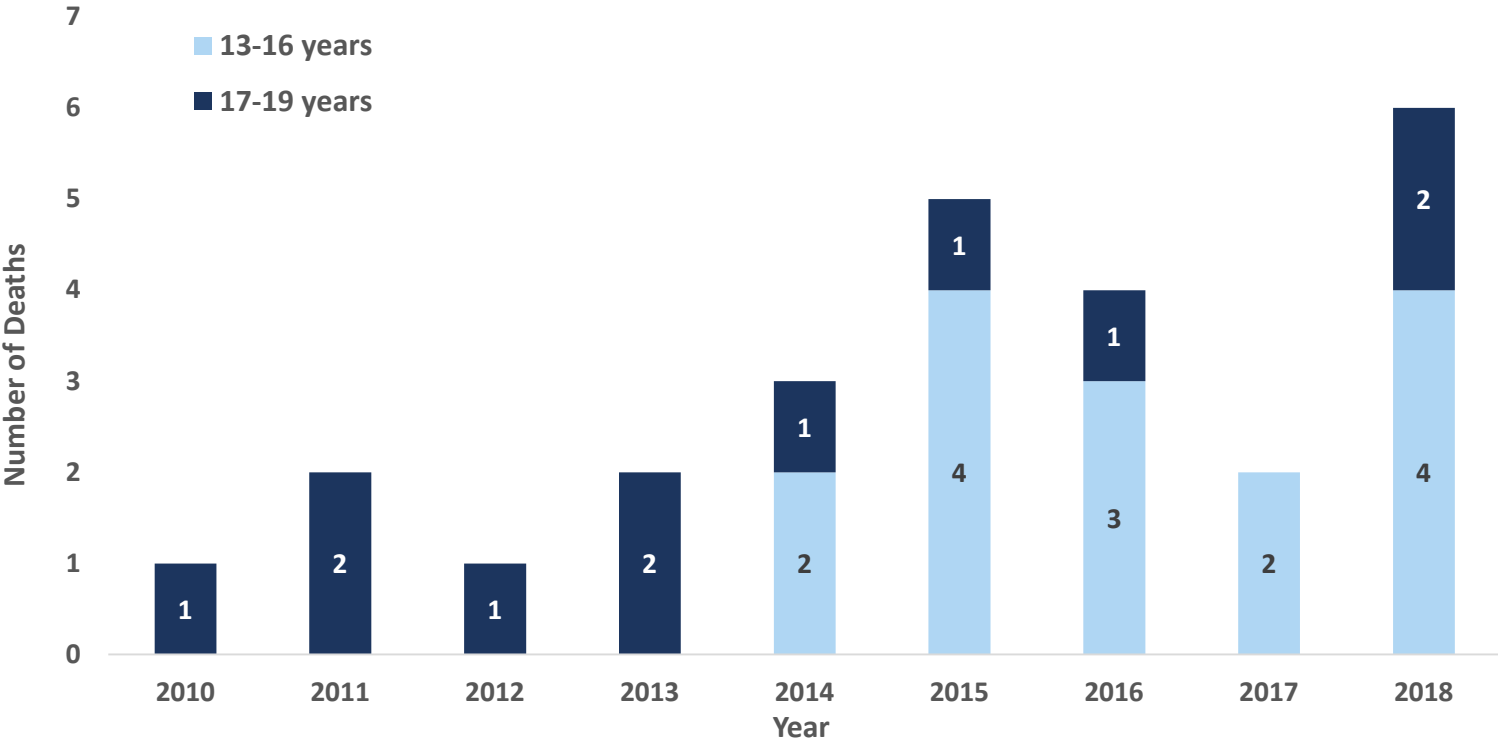


\*Source: 2017 Ottawa County Youth Assessment Survey, "Q53: During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously think about attempting suicide?"  
"Q55: During the past 12 months, how many times did you attempt suicide?"  
\*\*Source: 2017 Ottawa County Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (pg 86), [https://www.miottawa.org/Health/OCHD/pdf/data/2017\\_CHNA\\_Report.pdf](https://www.miottawa.org/Health/OCHD/pdf/data/2017_CHNA_Report.pdf)



# Suicide fatalities are occurring at younger ages

Suicide fatalities among Ottawa County teens

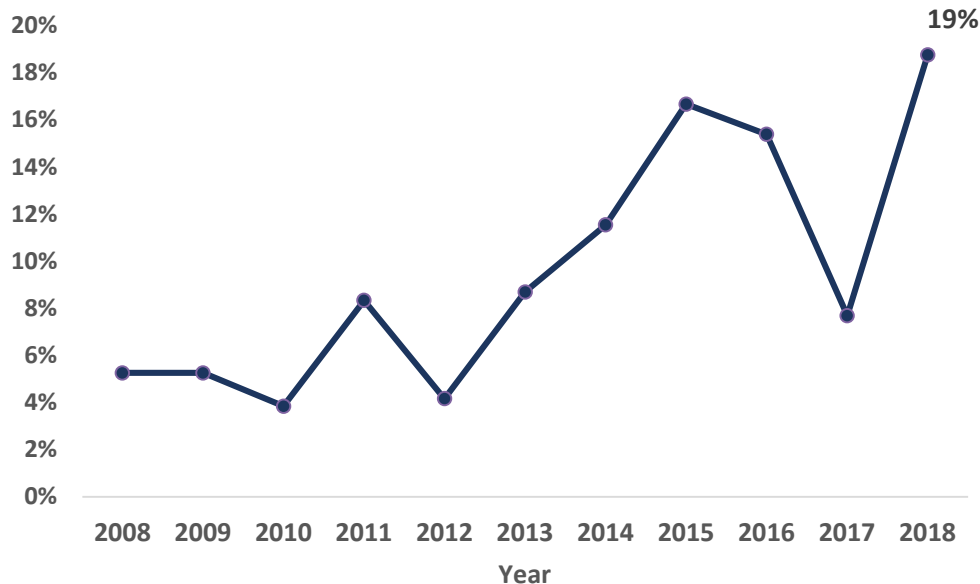


Since 2008, the rate of suicide among youth under 20 has increased over 150% in Michigan. The rate of suicide among Ottawa County teens may also be increasing. Of particular concern are suicides occurring at younger ages than previously seen. In 2018, 4 of 6 teens who died by suicide were 16 years old and younger, a phenomenon that started in 2014 and has continued into 2018.

See Appendix A for technical notes.

# The proportion of suicides occurring among teens is increasing

Among all suicides, the proportion that were younger than 20 years of age has been increasing



Source: Michigan Vital Records and CDC Wonder

Method of teen suicides, 2010 to 2018

TOTAL	15	10
Gun	6	1
Hanging	6	6
Overdose/Poison	2	2
Other	1	0
Unknown	0	2

The percentage of suicides under age 20 has also been increasing. Six of thirty-two (19%) suicide fatalities in 2018 were among Ottawa County youth ages 13-19 years. This is higher than would be expected for a given year. From 2008 to 2017, on average, only 9% of all suicides in a year occurred in that age group. Since 2010, boys account for 58% of teen suicides and 50% of teen suicides have occurred in the SW quadrant of Ottawa County (south of Fillmore and west of 96<sup>th</sup>).

See Appendix A for technical notes.

# Ottawa County Suicide Prevention Coalition

Because the overall rate of death by suicide has been increasing in Ottawa County, community partners have come together and organized the **Ottawa County Suicide Prevention Coalition**. The Coalition's mission is to decrease the number of suicides and the stigma associated with mental health in Ottawa County by educating the community about warning signs and prevention strategies, promoting existing suicide prevention and mental health resources, and identifying and addressing emerging issues regarding suicide and suicide prevention.

## Here are some of the Coalition's activities to date:

- Implemented Blue Envelope team response pilot program with Ottawa County schools.
- Facilitated a follow-up program between Ottawa County Victim's Advocates and local organizations to ensure families suffering tragic loss have access to resources.
- Created suicide fatality review team.
- Supported the implementation of be nice. action plans in Ottawa County.
- Supported QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) trainings.
- Educated over 95 healthcare providers on suicide prevention (from multiple health systems).

# Appendix A. Technical Notes

## Overall Report

- In 2018, new data sources were utilized. Thus, information herein may differ from previous reports. Also, data in future iterations may vary slightly as case counts are updated and surveillance methods are refined.

## Page 2

- Ottawa County death by suicide trend was assessed from 1990-2018 using Poisson regression with annual population offset to accommodate for population changes. Ottawa County data from 1990-1998 was obtained from the Ottawa County Medical Examiner. Year is associated with a positive increase in the annual number of suicides ( $p=0.001$ ). Using the same methods, but limiting to 1999-2018, Year remained significantly associated with an annual increase in the number of suicides ( $p=0.006$ ).
- Eighteen of the past 30 years had <20 deaths by suicide reported per year among Ottawa County residents, which may reduce the reliability of calculated rates and trend analyses.

## Page 6

- Statements of about months and seasons with more occurrences of deaths by suicide are descriptive; no statistical tests were conducted.

## Page 7

- Statements of about rate increases are descriptive; no statistical tests were conducted.

## Page 10

- Statements about the percentage of suicides increasing is descriptive; no statistical tests were conducted.

If you need help for yourself or someone else, please contact the

## National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Talk: **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

Chat: [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

(Adapted from the CDC)

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