



CHRONIC DISEASE BURDEN UPDATE

■ The Injury and Violence Prevention Program presents this update on youth suicide attempts.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “for youth between the ages of 10 and 24, suicide is the third leading cause of death. It results in approximately 4,600 lives lost each year in the U.S. The top three methods used in suicides of young people include firearm (45%), suffocation (40%), and poisoning (8%)¹.” In Illinois, it has been found that for every adolescent suicide completion there are an estimated 100 adolescent suicide attempts measured by self-inflicted injury.²

Suicide attempts that do not end in death increase the risk for future suicide attempts. Intervention at this stage is critical in the prevention of future suicide attempts or death. With suicide prevention, it is important to understand the other risk factors of suicide. Individuals with a family history of suicide, a history of depression or other mental illness, alcohol or drug abuse are at greater risk for committing or attempting to commit suicide¹. In addition, individuals experiencing any of the previous risk factors that are going through stressful life events, experienced a loss, have easy access to lethal methods or are exposed to the suicidal behavior of others are at even greater risk of suicide¹.

SUICIDE ATTEMPT METHODS

Poisoning is the most commonly chosen method for suicide attempt across all age groups. Cutting/piercing is the second most commonly used method of suicide attempt across all age groups.

Table 1. Suicide Attempt Methods by Age, Illinois, 2009-2012³

Attempt Method	All Ages	10-14	15-18	19-24
Firearms/Explosives	0.7%	0.1%	0.3%	0.5%
Hanging/Suffocation	3.2%	3.6%	3.0%	3.2%
Jumping	0.6%	0.2%	0.4%	0.5%
Poisoning	54.7%	48.9%	55.6%	48.1%
Submersion (drowning)	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Cutting/Piercing	28.8%	34.4%	28.3%	33.7%
Other	12.1%	12.8%	12.3%	13.7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 2. Poisoning Attempt Methods by Age, Illinois, 2009-2012³

Poisoning Method	All Ages	10-14	15-18	19-24
Barbituates	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
Tranquilizer/Psychotropic	38.9%	25.9%	30.8%	33.3%
Sedatives/hypnotics	3.3%	2.4%	1.5%	3.0%
Other Medical Substances	26.0%	30.4%	28.9%	25.9%
Other solid/liquid	5.1%	5.2%	4.7%	5.4%
Poisoning by solid or liquid substances	25.0%	35.3%	33.4%	31.4%
Gas in domestic use	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Gas/Vapor Poisoning	1.3%	0.7%	0.6%	0.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

TYPE OF POISONING ATTEMPT

Youth vary from the population in poisoning method. Although tranquilizer/psychotropics are the most common method among all attempts, they are only third among 10-to 14-year-olds. With age, this method increases to the second most common method of poisoning among 15-to 18-year-olds and is the most common method of poisoning among 19-to 24-year-olds.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

There were 33,919 suicide attempts from 2009 to 2012. Of these attempts, whites make up the highest percent (79.5%), blacks were second (13.8%), followed by other and Asians (11.8% and 0.9%). Non-Hispanics made more attempts than Hispanics (90.4% to 9.6%). Attempting suicide by poisoning is the most common attempt method for all races and ethnic groups, followed by cutting/piercing.

Table 3. Suicide Attempt Methods by Race And Ethnicity, All Ages, Illinois, 2009-2012³

Method	White (%)	Black (%)	Asian (%)	Other (%)	Non Hispanic (%)	Hispanic (%)
Firearms/explosives	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.5
Hanging/suffocation	2.8	3.8	1.6	3.2	3.2	2.9
Jumping	0.4	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.5	0.9
Poisoning	49.4	57.6	62.1	57.4	54.5	57.0
Submersion (drowning)	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.1	0.1	-
Cutting/piercing	32.7	22.7	23.7	28.5	28.8	29.5
Other	13.8	14.5	10.7	9.4	12.1	9.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4. Suicide Attempt Methods by Race And Ethnicity, Ages 10-14, Illinois, 2009-2012³

Attempt Method	White (%)	Black (%)	Asian (%)	Other (%)	Non Hispanic (%)	Hispanic (%)
Firearms/Explosives	-	-	-	0.5	0.0	0.3
Hanging/Suffocation	4.1	3.3	4.5	2.1	3.9	2.3
Jumping	0.2	0.3	-	0.5	0.2	0.5
Poisoning	47.2	54.8	40.9	50.1	47.8	54.2
Submersion (drowning)	-	0.3	-	-	0.0	-
Cutting/Piercing	35.1	26.5	50.0	38.3	34.4	34.4
Other	13.5	14.9	4.5	8.0	13.6	8.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Youth between the ages of 10 and 14 make up 7 percent (n= 2,444) of all suicide attempts from 2009-2012. Their attempt methods rank the same as the general population. When compared to all ages in Table 3, hanging/suffocation is higher among whites and Asians. Also, poisoning is lower and cutting/piercing is higher among Asians.

Table 5. Suicide Attempt Methods by Race And Ethnicity, Ages 15-18, Illinois, 2009-2012³

Method	White (%)	Black (%)	Asian (%)	Other (%)	Non Hispanic (%)	Hispanic (%)
Firearms/Explosives	0.3	0.4	-	0.6	0.3	0.3
Hanging/Suffocation	2.8	4.1	-	2.9	3.1	2.3
Jumping	0.4	0.3	-	0.7	0.4	0.5
Poisoning	54.1	58.4	61.2	59.4	54.6	54.2
Submersion (drowning)	0.1	-	1.0	-	0.1	-
Cutting/Piercing	29.6	22.8	27.6	27.8	28.7	34.4
Other	12.6	14.0	10.2	8.7	12.9	8.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Youth between the ages of 15 and 18 make up 21 percent (n= 7,108) of all suicide attempts. Their attempt methods rank the same as the general population. Poisoning is the most common method of suicide attempt for Asians. When compared to all ages in Table 3, poisoning is higher among whites for youth ages 15 to 18.

Table 6. Suicide Attempt Methods By Race And Ethnicity, Ages 19-24, Illinois, 2009-2012³

Method	White (%)	Black (%)	Asian (%)	Other (%)	Non Hispanic (%)	Hispanic (%)
Firearms/Explosives	0.4	0.3	-	0.4	0.4	0.5
Hanging/Suffocation	2.4	4.1	2.9	2.5	2.4	2.0
Jumping	0.6	0.9	1.4	0.7	0.6	0.9
Poisoning	54.6	54.2	60.0	54.7	54.6	52.9
Submersion (drowning)	0.2	0.1	-	0.2	0.2	0.0
Cutting/Piercing	31.2	24.5	21.4	31.0	31.2	34.6
Other	10.6	16.1	14.3	10.4	10.6	9.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Young adults between the ages of 19 and 24 make up 20 percent (n= 6,916) of all suicide attempts. Their attempt methods rank the same as the general population. Poisoning is the most common attempt method among Asians for young adults ages 19 to 24.

Source: ¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014; Accessed August 2014. http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pub/youth_suicide.html.

Source: ² Illinois Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan: Illinois Department of Public Health, 2007; Accessed July 2014.

http://www.idph.state.il.us/about/chronic/Suicide_Prevention_Plan_Jan-08.pdf

Source: ³ Illinois Hospital Discharge; Emergency Department Data: IDPH, 2009-2012.