

# GUN VIOLENCE IN AMERICA

## AN ANALYSIS OF 2018 CDC DATA

February 2020



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# INTRODUCTION

Gun violence is a public health epidemic in the United States. In 2018, 39,740 Americans died by gun violence, including 24,432 by suicide and 13,958 by homicide. The number of gun deaths remained relatively steady from 2017 to 2018, with 33 fewer deaths in 2018 compared to 2017. Gun deaths continue to be a major cause of premature death.

This report outlines gun death data from 2018, the most recent year of data available, and shows trends over 10 years. The purpose of the report is to share data in an accessible and user-friendly format. All data were accessed using the Centers for Disease Control's *Underlying Cause of Death* database, part of the *Wide-ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research (WONDER)* database. The *Underlying Cause of Death* database contains data based on death certificates for United States residents. This report is an update to *Gun Violence in America: 2018 Data Brief* (released January 31, 2020 following the initial release of 2018 mortality data) and includes age-adjusted rates, demographics, and state-by-state breakdowns. Data tables are included in the appendix. Major findings include:

- 39,740 Americans died by gun violence in 2018, which is 33 fewer than in 2017. In other words, gun violence death totals remained relatively steady from 2017 to 2018.
- An average of 109 people died of gun violence each day in 2018, bringing the most recent five-year average (2014-2018) to 103 gun deaths per day.
- 13,958 Americans were murdered by firearm in 2018, more than 38 people every day. While firearm homicides have increased over the last decade, 2018 registered a notable 4.5% decrease in the firearm homicide rate compared to 2017.
- Black males ages 20-34 had a firearm homicide rate nearly 17 times higher than White males ages 20-34.
- 24,432 Americans died by firearm suicide in 2018, 67 people every day. This marks an increase of 578 deaths compared to 2017, continuing a trend of annual increases in firearm suicide deaths since 2006. For the first time, the number of firearm suicide deaths in a year exceeded 24,000 and the age-adjusted rate exceeded 7 deaths per 100,000.
- 3,342 children and teens (ages 0-19) died by gun violence in 2018 -- 9 each and every day.

While gun death data are the most reliable type of gun violence data currently available (and are the focus of this report), it is important to emphasize that gun deaths are only the tip of the iceberg of gun violence. In addition to gun deaths, many more people are shot and survive their injuries, are shot at but not hit, or witness gun violence. Many experience gun violence in other ways, for example by living in impacted communities, losing loved ones to gun violence, or being threatened with a gun. It is our mission to share the most accurate and recently available data related to gun deaths while we advocate to get more and better data related to nonfatal gun violence. Ultimately, we strive to apply these data to create and implement life-saving policies and programs that will end the gun violence epidemic.

# GUN DEATHS FAST FACTS 2018

## GUN DEATHS, 2018

Gun violence is a uniquely American problem. In 2018, 39,740 Americans were killed by gun violence, including 13,958 who were murdered, 24,432 who died by suicide, 458 who died unintentionally, 539 who died by legal intervention, and 353 who died by an undetermined intent. Every day in 2018, nearly 109 Americans were killed by guns, including 38 Americans who were murdered and 67 who died by suicide.

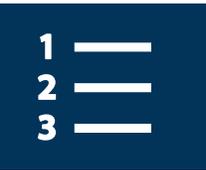
	<b>Gun deaths, 2018</b>	<b>Average daily gun deaths, 2018</b>	<b>Gun death rate, 2018</b>
Homicide	13,958	38	4.44
Suicide	24,432	67	7.04
Unintentional	458	1	0.14
Legal Intervention	539	1	0.19
Undetermined Intent	353	1	0.10
Overall	39,740	109	11.90

Note: Rates listed are age-adjusted in order to allow for accurate comparisons between populations with differing age distributions.

## CHILDREN AND TEEN GUN DEATHS, 2018

No one is immune from gun violence in America, including children. Every day in 2018, an average of 9 children and teens (ages 0-19) were killed by gun violence, including 5 who were murdered and more than 3 who died by suicide.

	<b>Children and teen gun deaths, 2018</b>	<b>Average daily children and teen gun deaths, 2018</b>	<b>Children and teen gun death rate, 2018</b>
Homicide	1,831	5	2.23
Suicide	1,297	3	1.58
Unintentional	116	<1	0.14
Legal Intervention	26	<1	0.03
Undetermined Intent	72	<1	0.09
Overall	3,342	9	4.08



# GUN DEATHS

## FAST FACTS

### 5-YEAR AVERAGES

Using the most recent CDC data, the following averages are based on years 2014-2018.

#### GUN DEATHS, 2014-2018

Every year, an average of 37,603 Americans are killed by guns, including 13,380 who are murdered and 22,926 who die by suicide. This equates to 103 gun deaths every single day.

	<b>Average annual gun deaths, 2014-2018</b>	<b>Average daily gun deaths, 2014-2018</b>	<b>Overall gun death rate, 2014-2018</b>
Homicide	13,380	37	4.29
Suicide	22,926	63	6.71
Unintentional	478	1	0.15
Legal Intervention	510	1	0.17
Undetermined Intent	310	1	0.09
Overall	37,603	103	11.42

Note: Rates listed are age-adjusted in order to allow for accurate comparisons between populations with differing age distributions.

#### CHILDREN AND TEEN GUN DEATHS, 2014-2018

On average, 3,062 children and teens (ages 0-19) are killed by guns every year, including 1,743 who are murdered, 1,129 who die by suicide, and 110 who are killed unintentionally. This equates to more than 8 children and teens who die by gun violence every day.

	<b>Average annual children and teen gun deaths, 2014-2018</b>	<b>Average daily children and teen gun deaths, 2014-2018</b>	<b>Overall children and teen gun death rate, 2014-2018</b>
Homicide	1,743	5	2.12
Suicide	1,129	3	1.37
Unintentional	110	<1	0.13
Legal Intervention	27	<1	0.03
Undetermined Intent	53	<1	0.06
Overall	3,062	8	3.73



# GUN DEATH IN ALL ITS FORMS

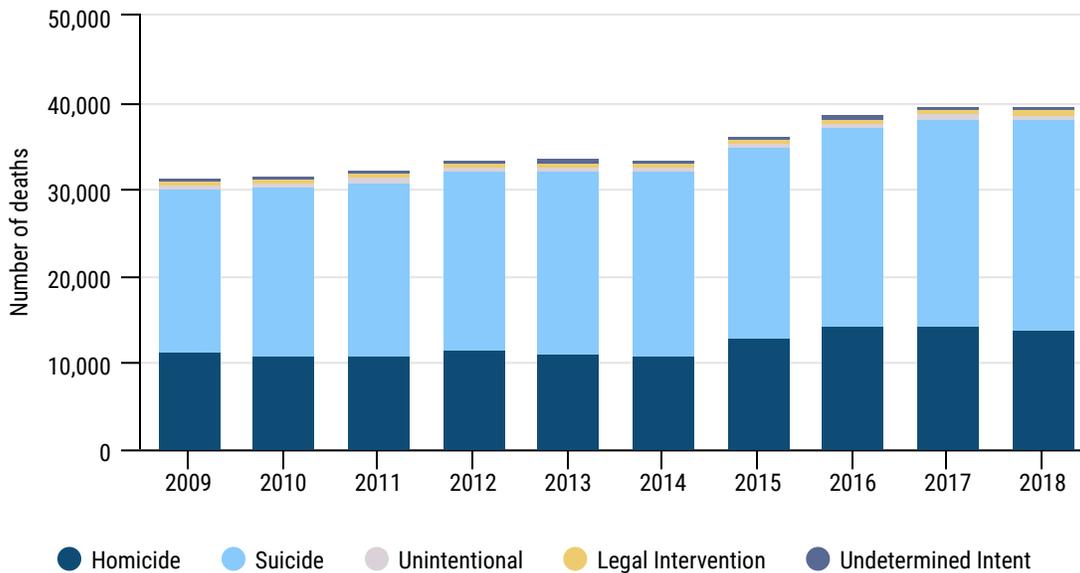
## GUN DEATHS

In 2018, 39,740 Americans died by gun violence, a decrease of 33 deaths from 2017.

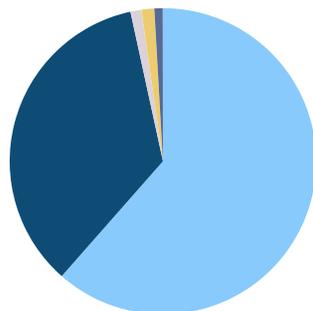
In total in 2018:

- 13,958 Americans were murdered with a firearm
- 24,432 Americans died by firearm suicide
- 458 Americans were killed unintentionally with a firearm
- 539 Americans were killed by legal intervention with a firearm
- 353 Americans were killed with a firearm, intent undetermined

### GUN DEATHS IN THE UNITED STATES, 2009-2018



### GUN DEATHS, 2018



- 61.48% suicide
- 35.12% homicide
- 1.15% unintentional
- 1.36% legal intervention
- 0.89% undetermined intent



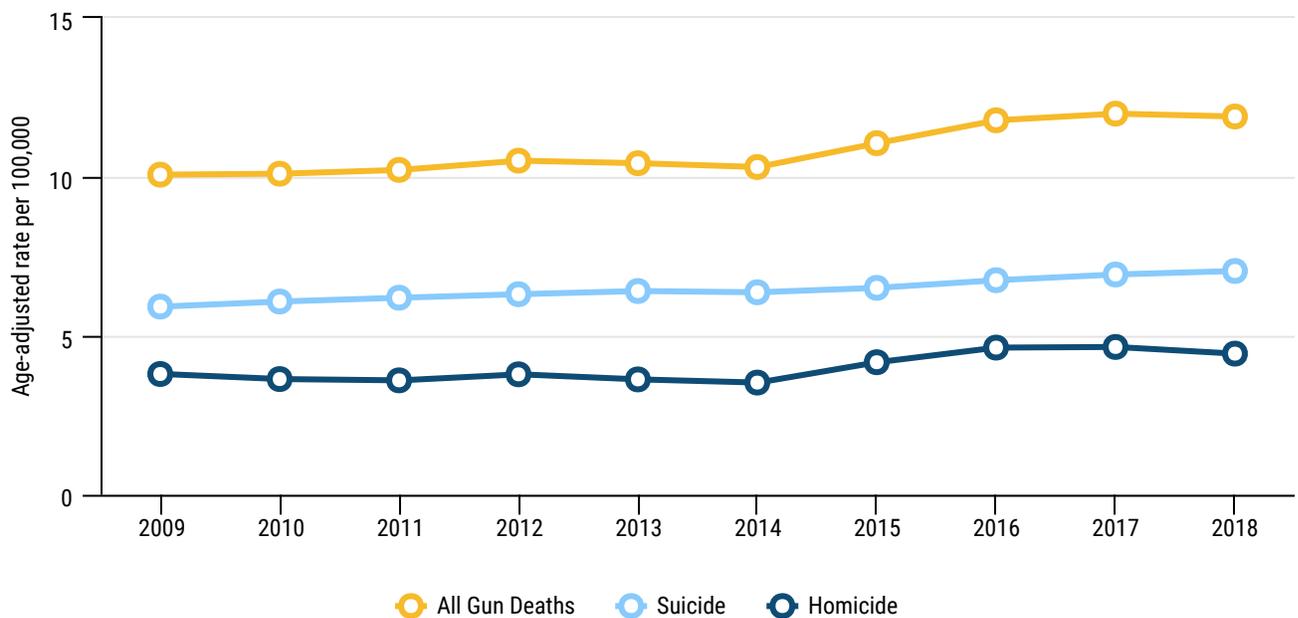


## GUN DEATH RATES

In 2018, the overall gun death rate was 11.90 deaths per 100,000 population; a less than 1% decrease from 2017 to 2018 (from 11.99 to 11.90 gun deaths per 100,000, respectively). Taking a closer look, the firearm homicide rate decreased 4.5% (from 4.65 to 4.44 firearm homicides per 100,000) while the firearm suicide rate increased nearly 1.6% (from 6.93 to 7.04 firearm suicides per 100,000) from 2017 to 2018. 2018 was the first year when the firearm suicide rate rose above 7 deaths per 100,000 people.

Over the last 10 years (2009-2018), the overall gun death rate increased 18% (from 10.07 to 11.90 gun deaths per 100,000). Increases in both homicide and suicide rates contributed to the overall change over the course of the decade; in that time period, the firearm homicide rate increased nearly 17% (from 3.80 to 4.44 firearm homicides per 100,000, respectively) and the firearm suicide rate increased 19% (from 5.92 to 7.04 firearm suicides per 100,000, respectively).

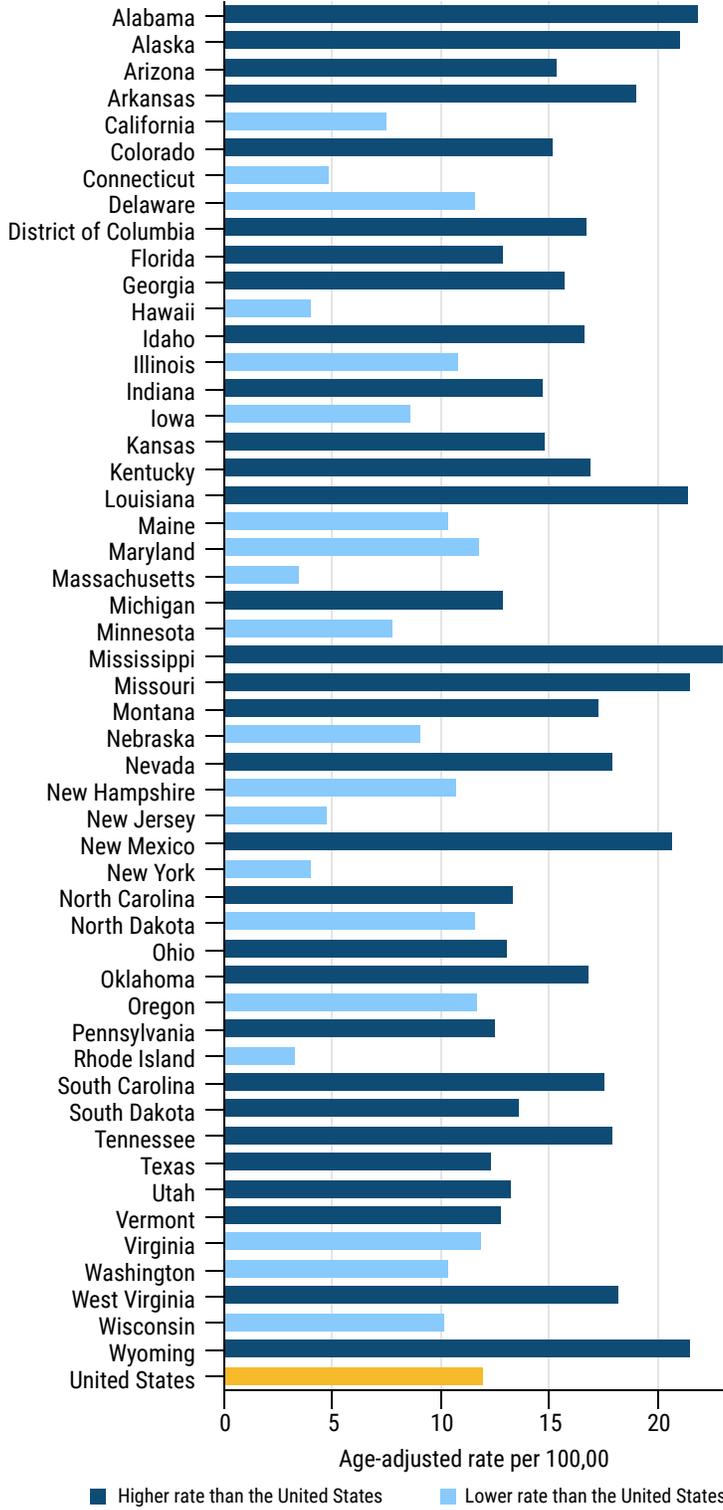
### GUN DEATH RATES IN THE UNITED STATES, 2009-2018



Note: All rates listed are age-adjusted in order to allow for accurate comparisons between populations with differing age distributions.

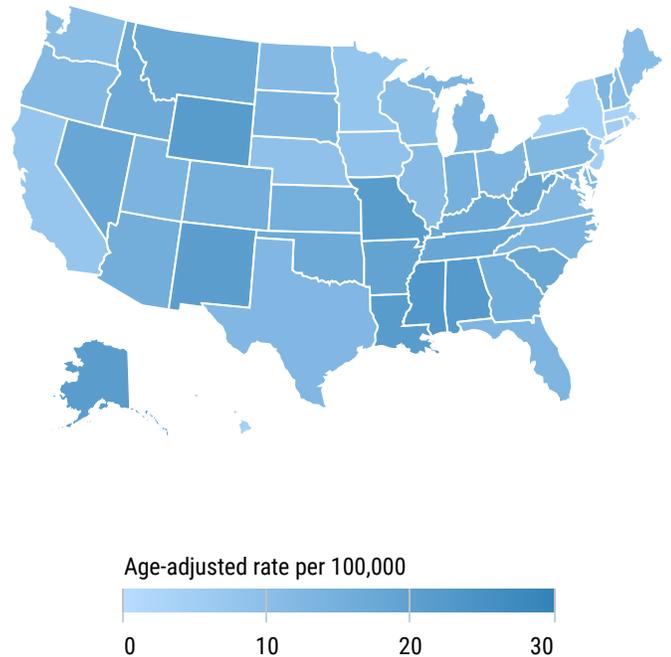


# GUN DEATH RATES BY STATE



Gun violence is an epidemic that reaches communities large and small, but it is more common in some places than others. Among the states in 2018, Mississippi had the highest gun death rate (22.94 per 100,000 people), followed by Alabama, Wyoming, and Missouri (21.84, 21.50, and 21.47 per 100,000, respectively). Conversely, Rhode Island had the lowest gun death rate (3.26 per 100,000 people), followed by Massachusetts, Hawaii, and New York (3.47, 4.04, and 4.07 per 100,000, respectively).

## GUN DEATH RATES BY STATE 2018

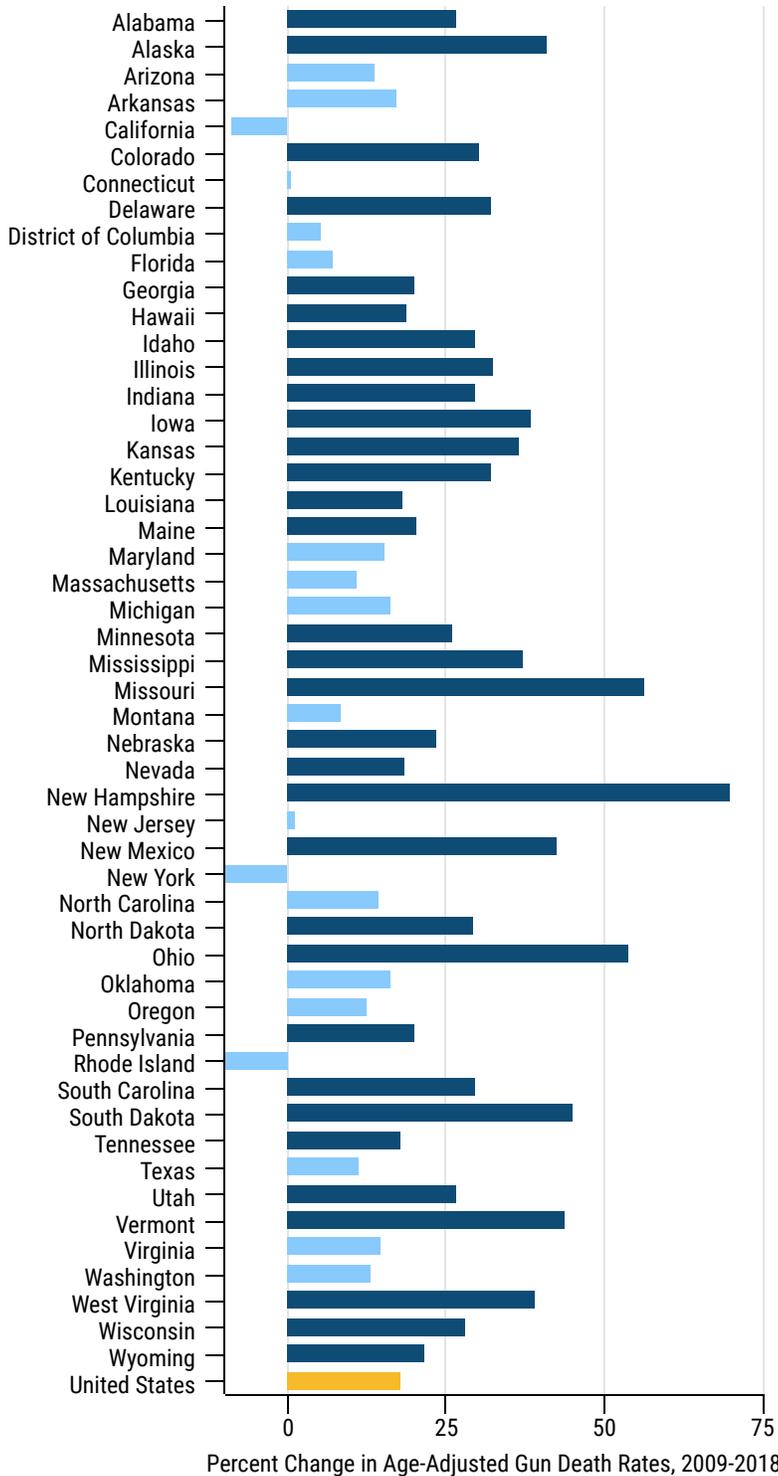


Note: All rates listed are age-adjusted in order to allow for accurate comparisons between populations with differing age distributions.



# CHANGES IN GUN DEATH RATES BY STATE

## 2009-2018



In the United States, age-adjusted gun death rates increased 18% over the last decade (2009-2018). This increase is generally reflected at the state level as well, though with great variation:

- Overall gun death rates increased by at least 5% in 45 states and the District of Columbia from 2009-2018.
- The greatest increase was in New Hampshire (+70%), followed by Missouri (+56%), and Ohio (+54%).
- The only states that saw decreases in overall gun death rates were Rhode Island (-35%), New York (-15%), and California (-9%).
- Rates remained steady in Connecticut (+1%) and New Jersey (+1%).

Note: Due to technical limitations, decreases greater than 10% were unable to be displayed. From 2009-2018, the age-adjusted gun death rates in Rhode Island and New York decreased by 35% and 15%, respectively.

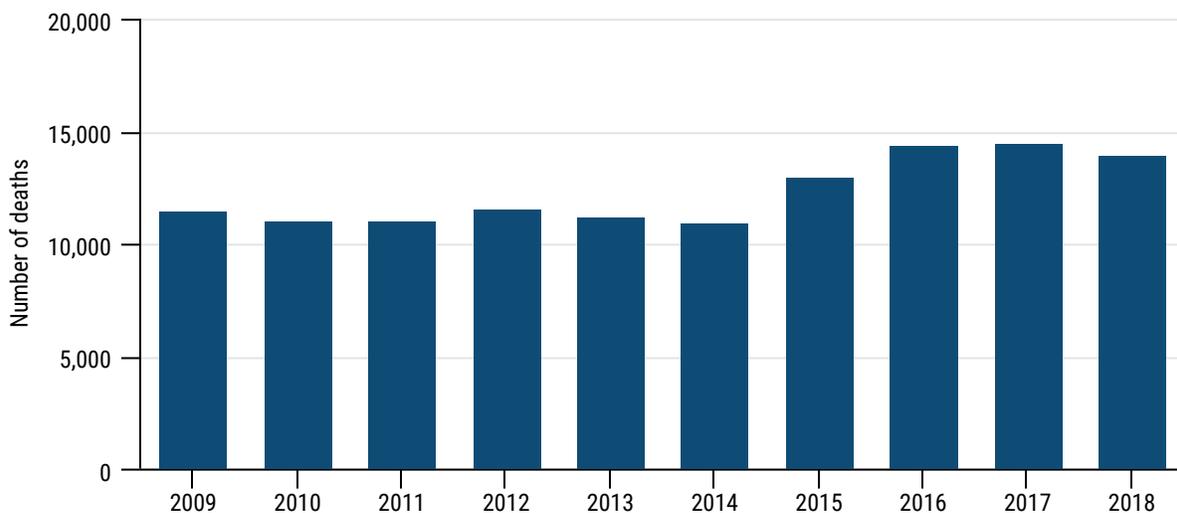


# FIREARM HOMICIDE

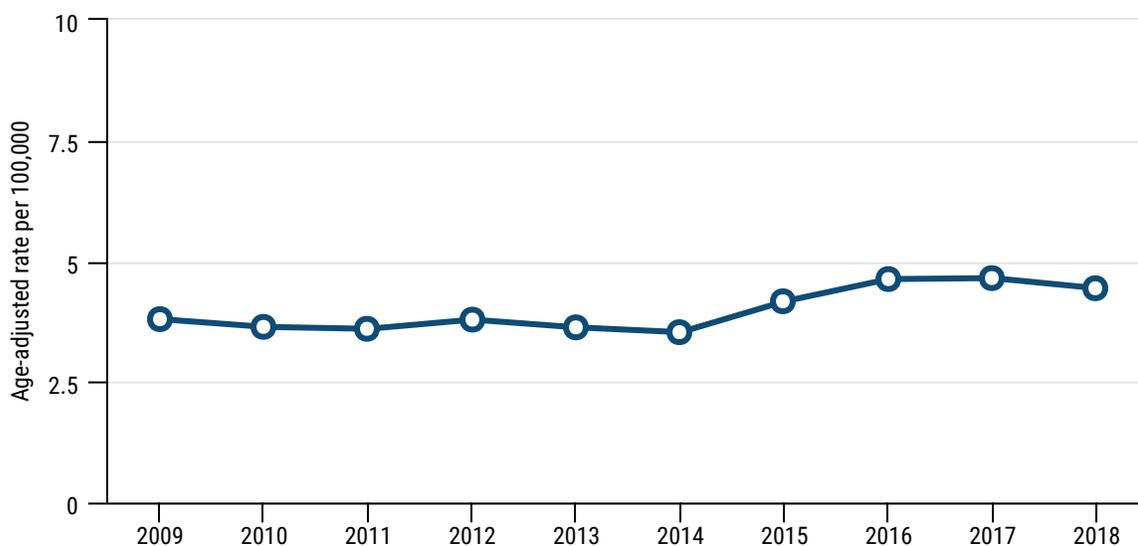
In 2018, 13,958 Americans were murdered by firearm, representing 35% of all gun deaths and 74% of all homicides. On average, more than 38 people were murdered by firearm every day in 2018.

The number and rate of firearm homicides has increased over the decade (the firearm homicide rate increased 17% from 2009-2018, from 3.80 to 4.44 firearm homicides per 100,000 people, respectively); however, 2018 is the first year since 2014 where the firearm homicide rate has decreased from the previous year. Five hundred eighty-four fewer people died by firearm homicide in 2018 than in 2017, such that the firearm homicide rate decreased 4.5% (from 4.65 to 4.44 firearm homicides per 100,000 people, respectively).

## FIREARM HOMICIDE DEATHS IN THE UNITED STATES, 2009-2018



## FIREARM HOMICIDE RATE IN THE UNITED STATES, 2009-2018



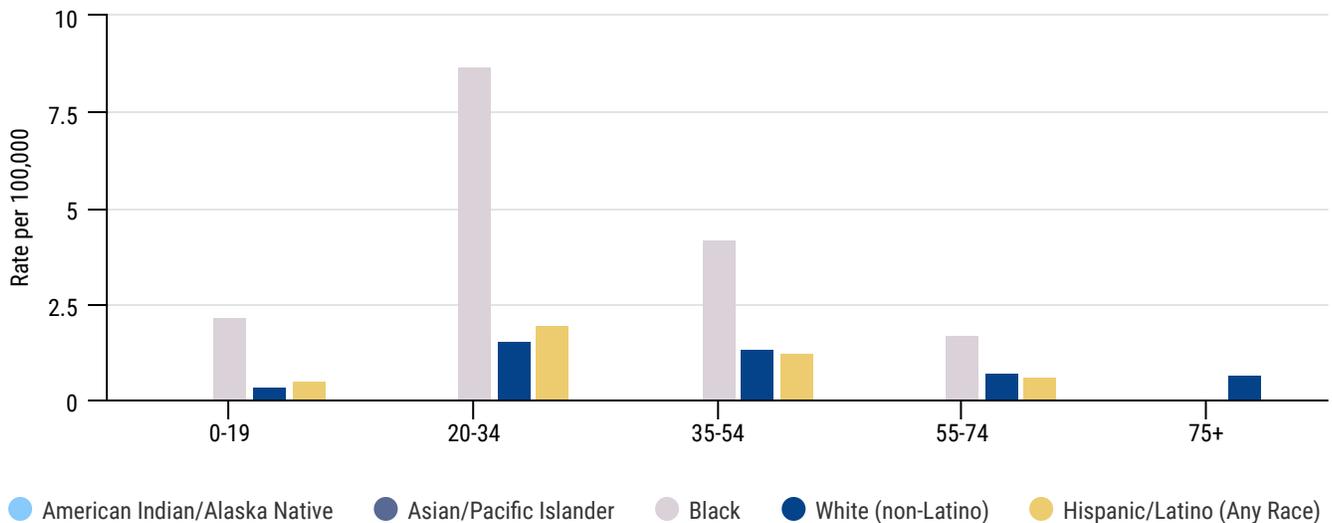
Note: All rates listed are age-adjusted in order to allow for accurate comparisons between populations with differing age distributions.



## FIREARM HOMICIDE DEMOGRAPHICS

While nobody is immune from gun violence, some populations are at higher risk for certain kinds of violence than others. Males die by firearm homicide at overwhelmingly higher rates than do females; in 2018, 83% of homicide victims were male. Overall, firearm homicide rates in 2018 were highest among Black people as compared to people of other racial and ethnic identities and firearm homicide risk was highest among people ages 20-34 across the entire population. Black males ages 20-34 died by firearm homicide at disproportionately higher rates than the rest of the population; in 2018, Black men ages 20-34 had a firearm homicide rate nearly 17 times higher than their White male counterparts. Among all females, Black women ages 20-34 had the highest firearm homicide rate; in 2018, Black women ages 20-34 had a firearm homicide more than 5.5 times higher than their White female counterparts. Looking at rates by sex, race, and age together can help illustrate who dies by firearm homicide in the United States.

### FEMALE FIREARM HOMICIDE RATES BY RACE AND AGE, 2018



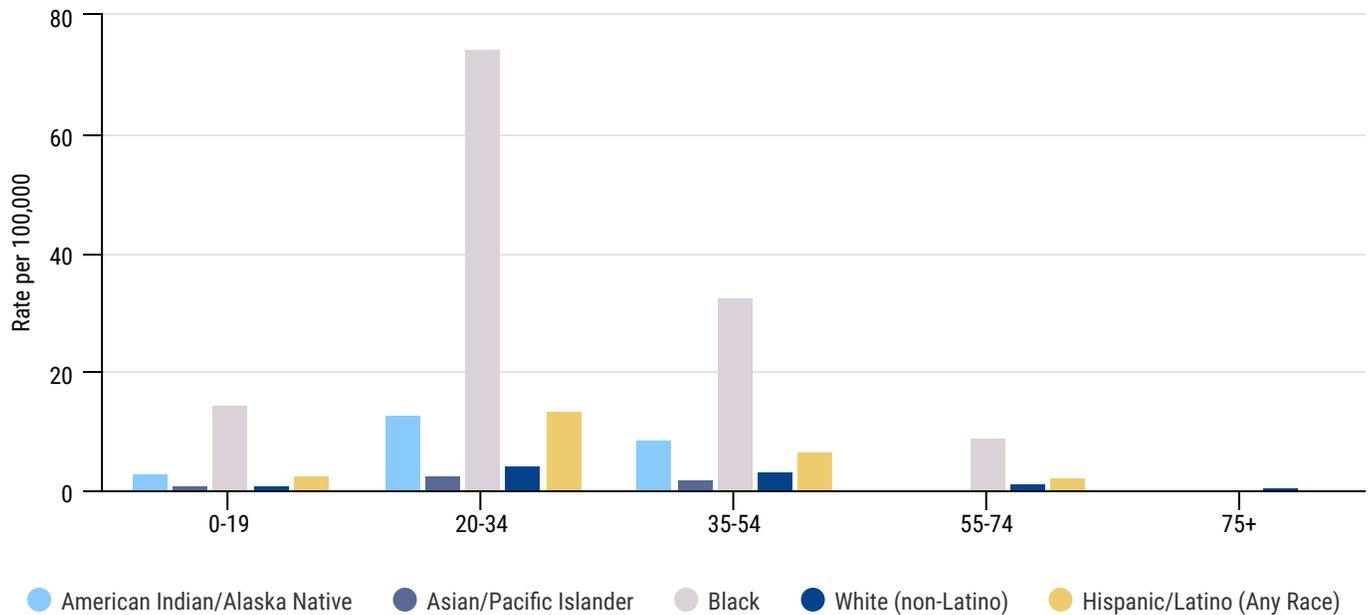
Note: The CDC considers firearm homicide rates based on fewer than 20 deaths “statistically unreliable” and suppresses firearm homicide rates based on fewer than 10 deaths. Fewer than 20 firearm homicides were reported during this time period for the following races and therefore are omitted from the above chart: American Indian/ Alaska Native females all age groups; Asian/ Pacific Islander all age groups; Black females ages 75+; and Hispanic/Latino (any race) females ages 75+.

- Among females within each racial/ethnic identity group, the firearm homicide rate was highest for ages 20-34.
- Black females had the highest firearm homicide rate across all age groups except 75+, with the starkest disparities in risk across the younger age groups. Black girls and youths aged 0-19 and Black women aged 20-34 were each nearly 6 times more likely to be killed by firearm homicide than their White (non-Latino) counterparts (5.92 and 5.63 times, respectively).
- Fewer than 20 firearm suicides were reported among American Indian/Alaska Native females and Asian females in each age group; therefore their rates are considered unreliable and cannot be compared.



# FIREARM HOMICIDE DEMOGRAPHICS

## MALE FIREARM HOMICIDE RATES BY RACE AND AGE, 2018

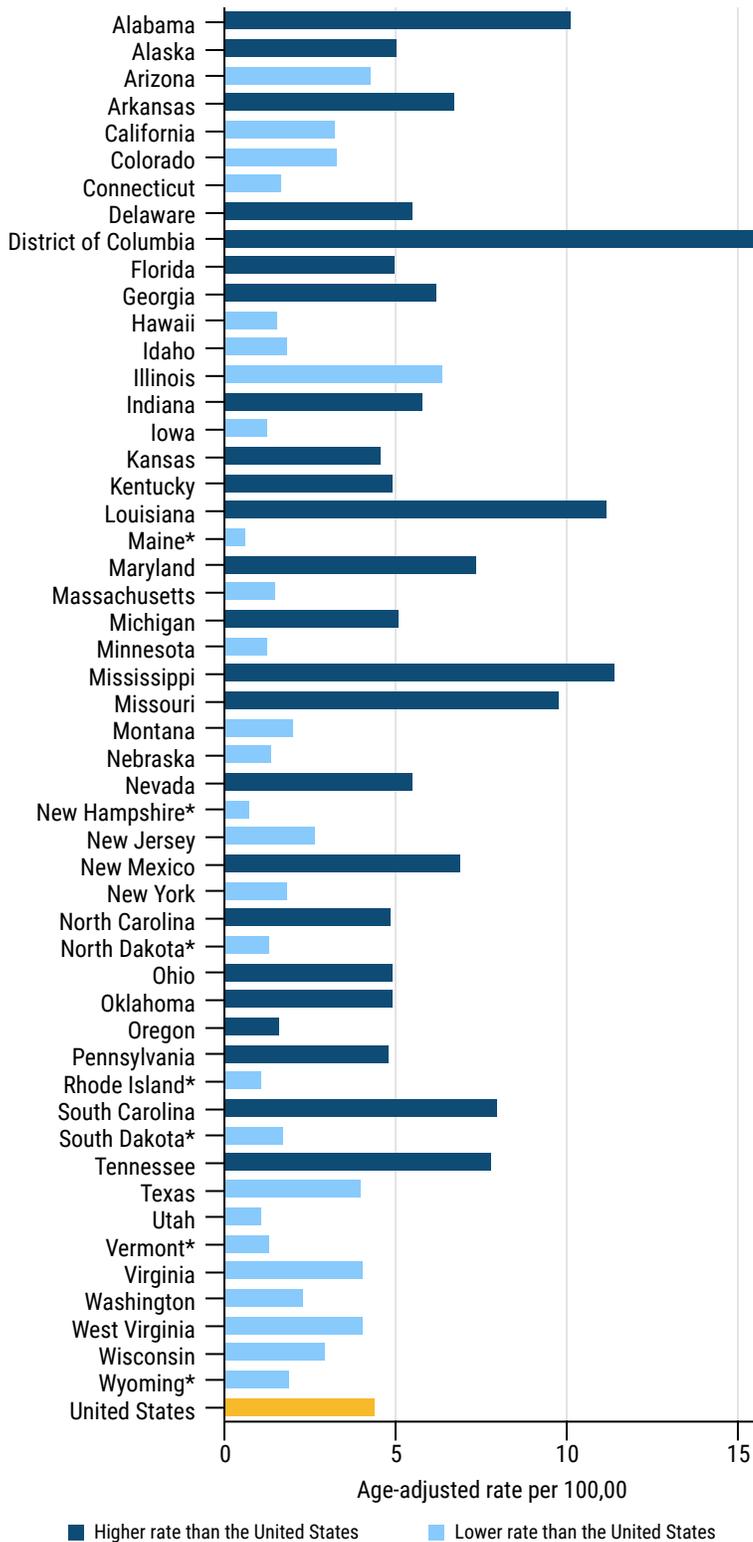


Note: The CDC considers firearm homicide rates based on fewer than 20 deaths “statistically unreliable” and suppresses firearm homicide rates based on fewer than 10 deaths. Fewer than 20 firearm homicides were reported during this time period for the following races and therefore are omitted from the above chart: American Indian/ Alaska males ages 55-74 and 75+; Asian/ Pacific Islander males ages 55-74 and 75+; Black males ages 75+; and Hispanic/Latino (any race) males ages 75+.

- Among males within each racial/ethnic identity group, the firearm homicide rate was highest for ages 20-34.
- Black males had the highest firearm homicide rate across all age groups except 75+, with the starkest disparities in risk across the younger age groups. Black boys and youths aged 0-19 were over 14 times more likely to be killed by firearm homicide than White (non-Latino) boys and youths, while Black men aged 20-34 were nearly 17 times more likely to be killed by firearm homicide than their White (non-Latino) counterparts.

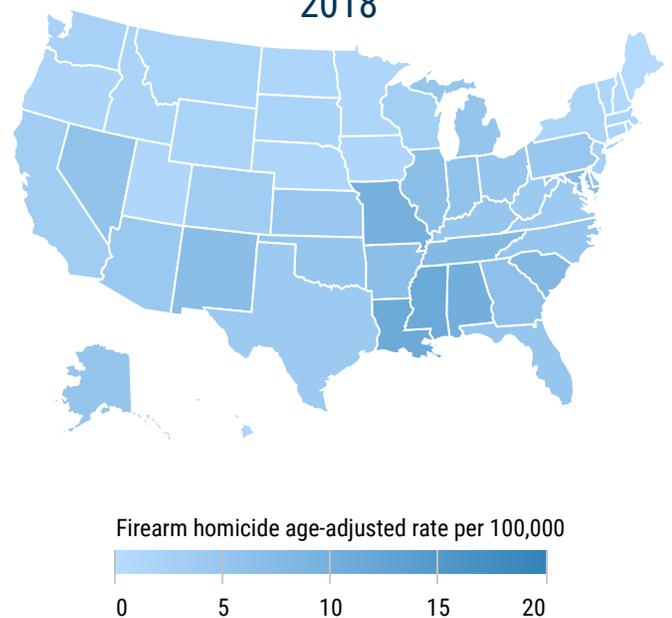


# FIREARM HOMICIDE RATES BY STATE



Firearm homicide is an epidemic that reaches communities large and small nationwide, but it is more common in some places than others. Among the states in 2018, the District of Columbia had the highest firearm homicide rate (15.59 per 100,000 people), followed by Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama (11.38, 11.16, and 10.15 per 100,000, respectively). Conversely, Utah had the lowest firearm homicide rate (1.10 per 100,000 people), followed by Iowa, Minnesota, and Nebraska (1.26, 1.30, and 1.37 per 100,000, respectively). Fewer than 20 firearm homicides were reported in Maine, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming during 2018, therefore their rates are considered unreliable and cannot be compared to other states.

## FIREARM HOMICIDE RATES BY STATE 2018



Note: All rates listed are age-adjusted in order to allow for accurate comparisons between populations with differing age distributions.

\*The CDC considers firearm homicide rates based on fewer than 20 deaths "statistically unreliable" and suppresses firearm homicide rates based on fewer than 10 deaths. Fewer than 20 firearm homicides were reported during 2018 for the following states: Maine, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming. Since a single year of data does not produce a reliable rate and would exclude these states from the above graphics, we chose instead to use firearm homicide rates spanning the most recent three years (2016-2018) for these states in order to include them for comparison.

Please see Appendix, Table 3 for corresponding data.

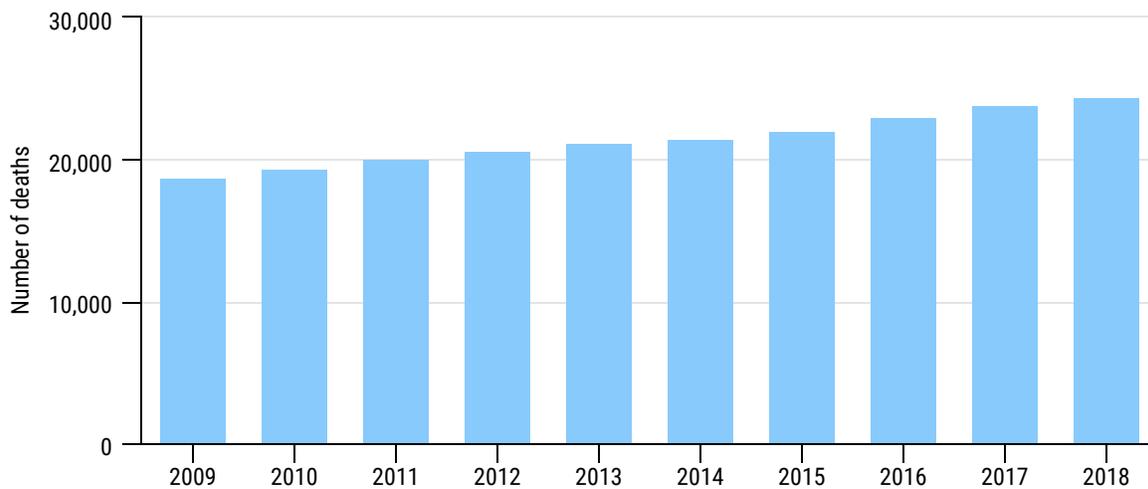


# FIREARM SUICIDE

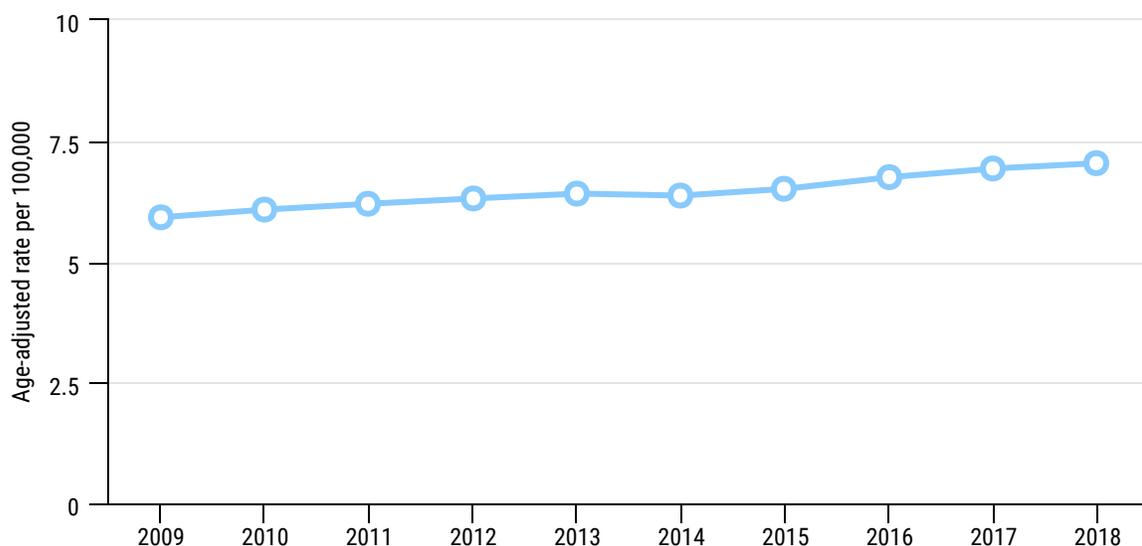
In 2018, 24,432 Americans died by firearm suicide, representing more than 61% of all gun deaths and half of all suicides; this was the first time annual firearm suicide deaths exceeded 24,000. On average, 67 people died by firearm suicide every day in 2018.

The firearm suicide epidemic is growing – 578 more people died by firearm suicide in 2018 than in 2017. In fact, the number and rate of firearm suicides has increased every year since 2006, except for 2014. The firearm suicide rate increased 19% over the last decade (2009-2018), from 5.92 deaths per 100,000 in 2009 to 7.04 deaths per 100,000 in 2018. This was the first time the age-adjusted firearm suicide rate exceeded 7 deaths per 100,000 people.

## FIREARM SUICIDE DEATHS IN THE UNITED STATES, 2009-2018



## FIREARM SUICIDE RATE IN THE UNITED STATES, 2009-2018



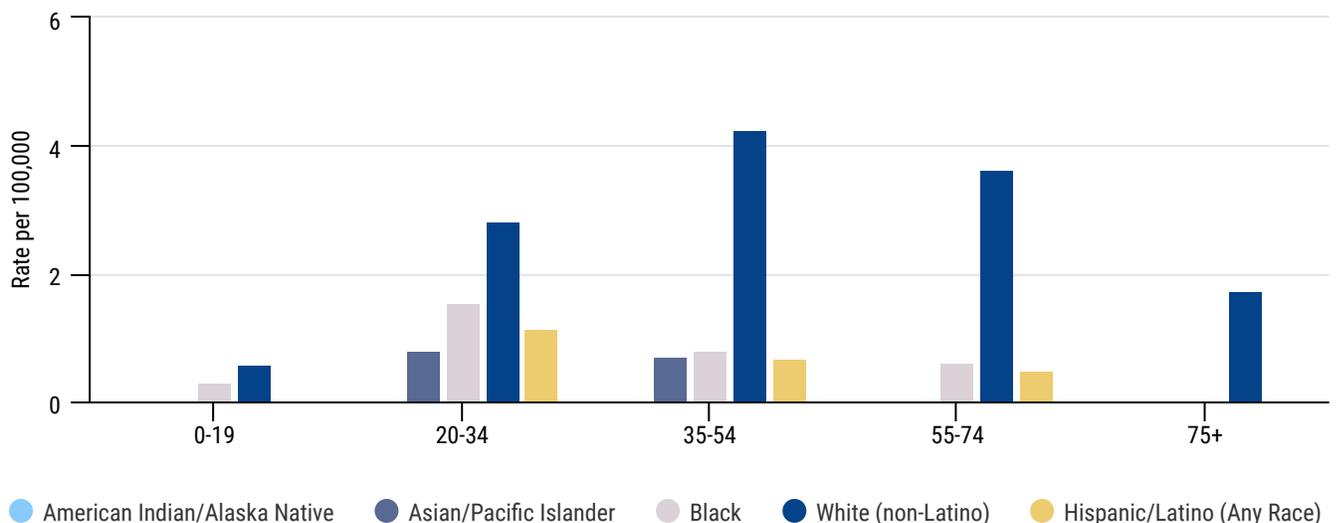
Note: All rates listed are age-adjusted in order to allow for accurate comparisons between populations with differing age distributions.



## FIREARM SUICIDE DEMOGRAPHICS

While nobody is immune from gun violence, some populations are at higher risk for certain kinds of violence than others. Males die by firearm suicide at overwhelmingly higher rates than do females; in 2018, 86% of suicide decedents were male. Overall, firearm suicide rates in 2018 were highest among White people, followed by American Indian/Alaska Native people. Firearm suicide risk was highest among people age 75 and older across the population as a whole, but that was primarily due to the very high rate of suicide among White males in that age group; White males had the highest rate of suicide across all age groups. However, firearm suicide rates peaked at younger ages for other race/sex demographic groups. For example, when looking at race/sex demographics other than White males, American Indian/Alaska Native men ages 20-34 had the highest rate of firearm suicide. Thus, looking at rates by sex, race, and age together can help to paint a better picture of firearm suicide in the United States.

### FEMALE FIREARM SUICIDE RATES BY RACE AND AGE, 2018



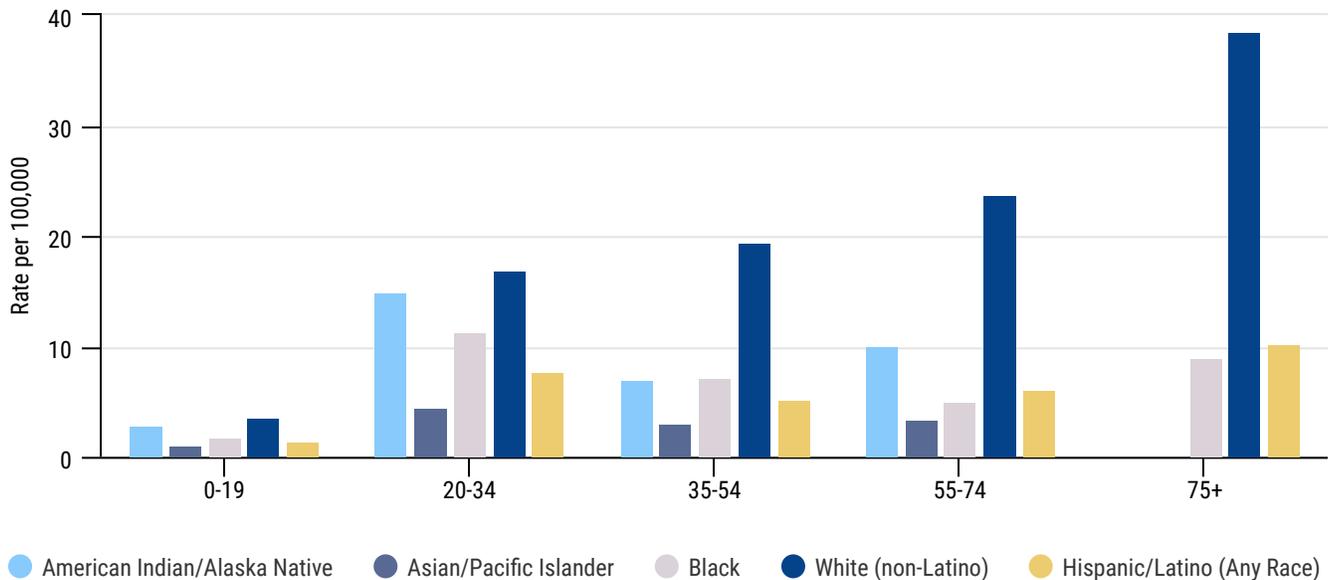
Note: The CDC considers firearm suicide rates based on fewer than 20 deaths “statistically unreliable” and suppresses firearm suicide rates based on fewer than 10 deaths. Fewer than 20 firearm suicides were reported during this time period for the following races and therefore are omitted from the above chart: American Indian/Alaska Native females all age groups; Asian/ Pacific Islander females ages 0-19, 55-74, and 75+; Black females ages 75+; and Hispanic/Latino (any race) females ages 0-19 and 75+.

- White women ages 35-54 had the highest firearm suicide rate among all females. White females had the highest firearm suicide rate within each age group as well.
- Among females of each racial and ethnic identity other than White, the highest firearm suicide rate was among women ages 20-34.
- Fewer than 20 firearm suicides were reported among American Indian/Alaska Native females in each age group; therefore their rates are considered unreliable and cannot be compared.



# FIREARM SUICIDE DEMOGRAPHICS

## MALE FIREARM SUICIDE RATES BY RACE AND AGE, 2018

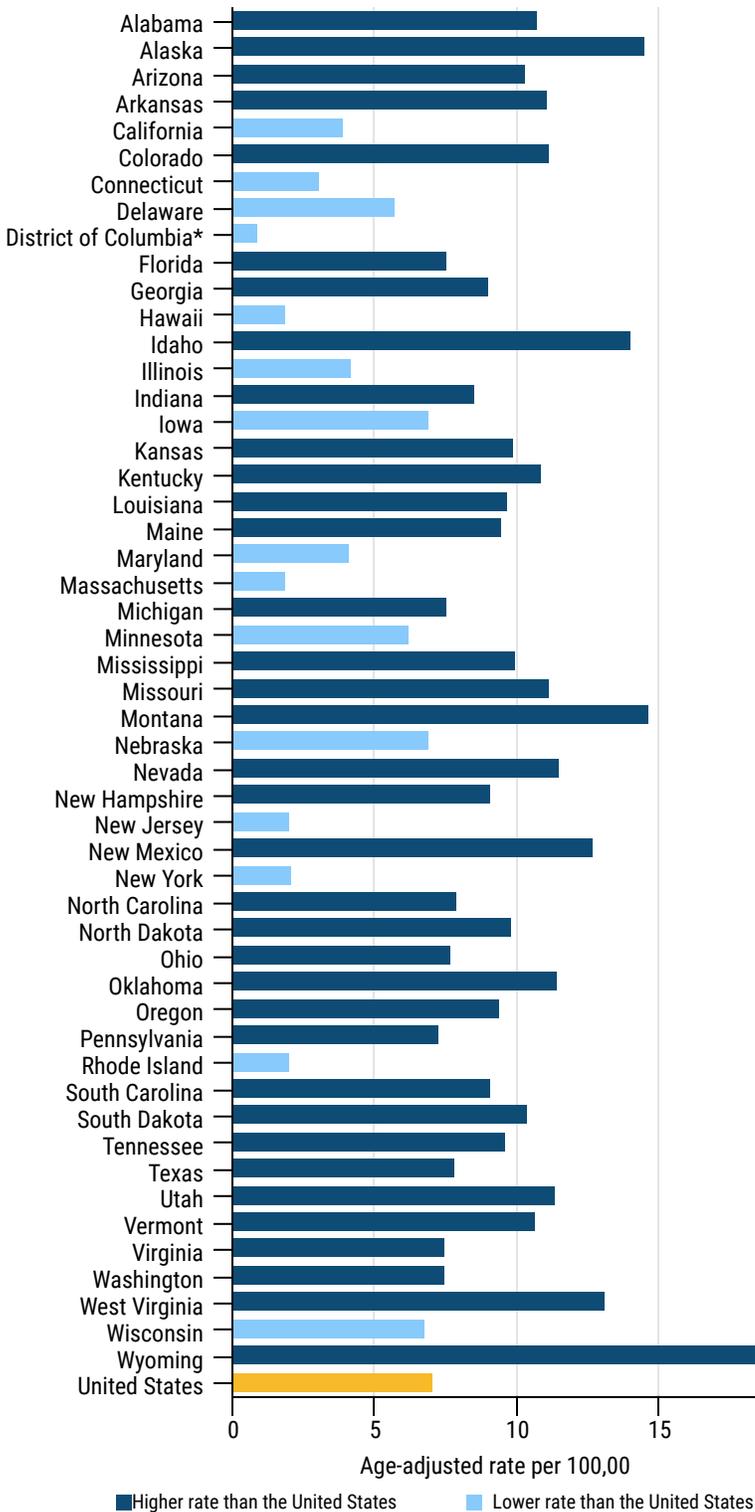


Note: The CDC considers firearm suicide rates based on fewer than 20 deaths “statistically unreliable” and suppresses firearm suicide rates based on fewer than 10 deaths. Fewer than 20 firearm suicides were reported during this time period for the following races and therefore are omitted from the above chart: American Indian/Alaska Native males ages 75+ and Asian/ Pacific Islander males ages 75+.

- White men ages 75+ had the highest firearm suicide rate among all males. White males had the highest firearm suicide rate within each age group as well.
- American Indian/Alaska Native males had the second highest firearm suicide rates (after White males) in the 0-19, 20-34, and 55-74 year age groups.
- Among American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, and Black males, men ages 20-34 had the highest firearm suicide rate.
- Among Hispanic/Latino males, people ages 75+ had the highest firearm suicide rate.

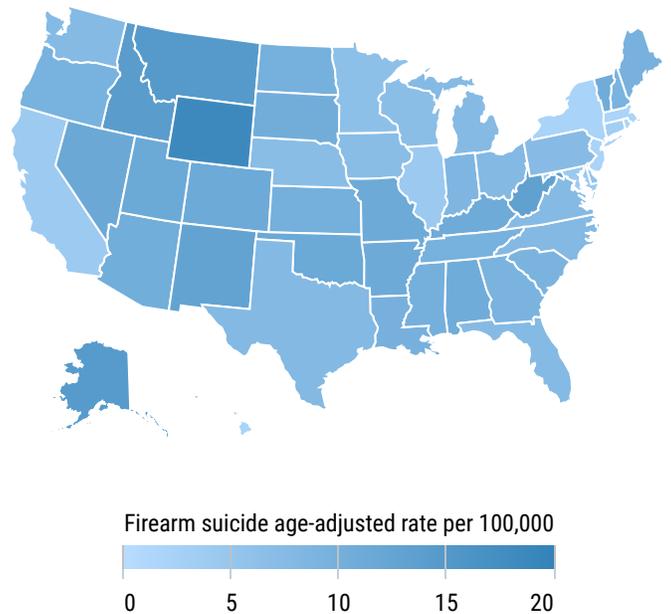


# FIREARM SUICIDE RATES BY STATE



Similar to firearm homicide, firearm suicide is an epidemic that reaches communities large and small, but it is more common in some places than others. Among the states in 2018, Wyoming had the highest firearm suicide rate (18.41 per 100,000 people), followed by Montana, Alaska, and Idaho (14.64, 14.50, and 14.01 per 100,000, respectively). Conversely, Massachusetts had the lowest firearm suicide rate (1.86 per 100,000 people), followed by Hawaii, New Jersey, and Rhode Island (1.92, 2.01, and 2.02 per 100,000, respectively). Fewer than 10 firearm suicides were reported in the District of Columbia during 2018, therefore the rate is considered unreliable and cannot be compared to other states.

FIREARM SUICIDE RATES BY STATE 2018



Note: All rates listed are age-adjusted in order to allow for accurate comparisons between populations with differing age distributions.

\*The CDC considers firearm suicide rates based on fewer than 20 deaths "statistically unreliable" and suppresses firearm suicide rates based on fewer than 10 deaths. Fewer than 20 firearm suicides were reported during 2018 for the District of Columbia. Since a single year of data does not produce a reliable rate and would exclude these states from the above graphics, we chose instead to use firearm suicide rates spanning the most recent three years (2016-2018) for the District of Columbia in order to include them for comparison.



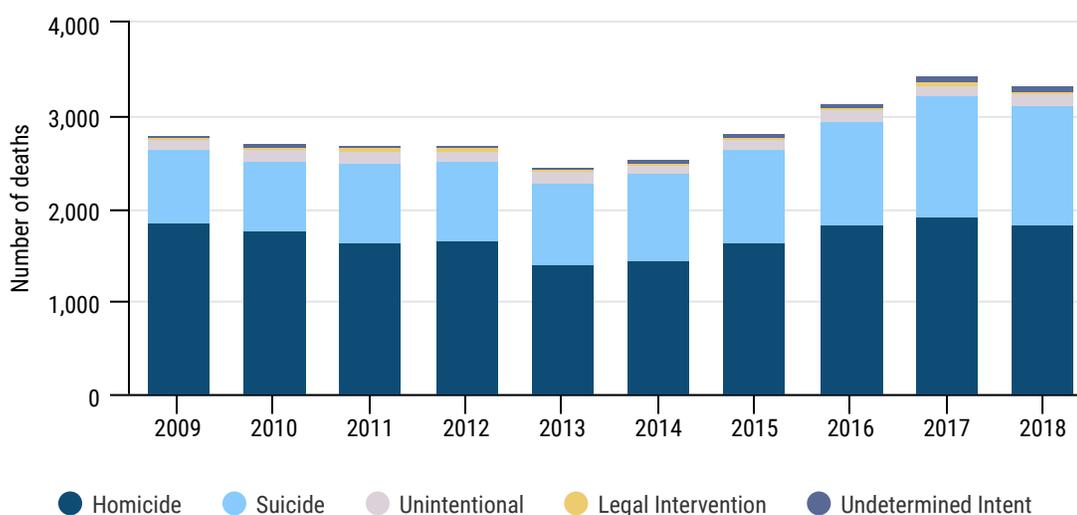
# GUN DEATHS AMONG CHILDREN AND TEENS

Too many children and teens are dying by gun violence in the United States. In 2018, 3,342 children and teens (ages 0-19) died by gun violence, an average of 9 each and every day.

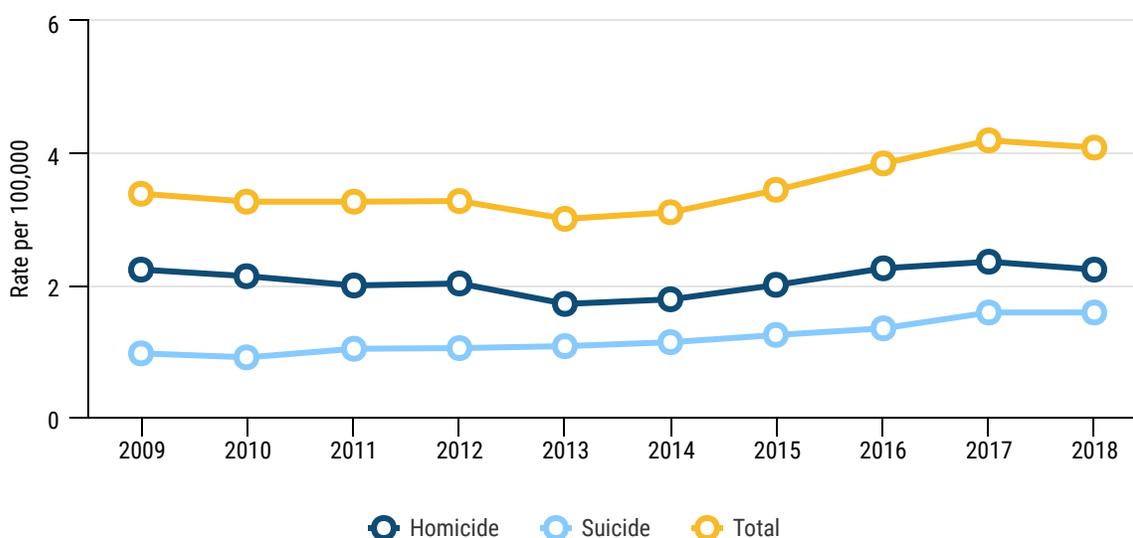
In 2018, 1,831 children and teens were killed by firearm homicide. Another 1,297 children and teens died by firearm suicide, a figure that has grown by 62% in the past decade.

People of all ages die by unintentional firearm injuries, but special attention is often paid when the victims are young. In 2018, 116 children and teens died by unintentional firearm injuries.

### FIREARM DEATHS AMONG CHILDREN AND TEENS, 2009-2018



### FIREARM DEATH RATES AMONG CHILDREN AND TEENS, 2009-2018





# CHILDREN AND TEEN GUN DEATH DEMOGRAPHICS

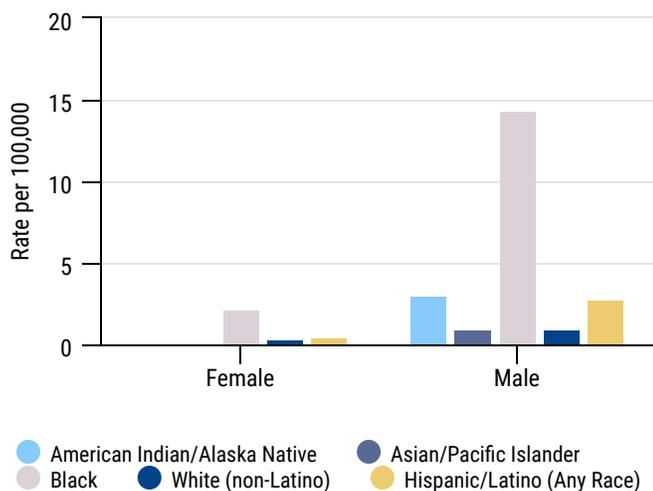
While nobody is immune from gun violence, some populations are at higher risk for certain kinds of violence than others. Young males die by firearm homicide and suicide at overwhelmingly higher rates than do young females; in 2018, 84% of children and teen murder victims and 87% of children and teen suicide decedents were male.

Black boys and youths (aged 0-19) had the highest firearm homicide rate in 2018 compared to other racial and ethnic groups among both males and females; followed by American Indian/Alaska Native boys and youths. Black boys and youths had a firearm homicide rate more than 14 times higher than their White (non-Latino) peers.

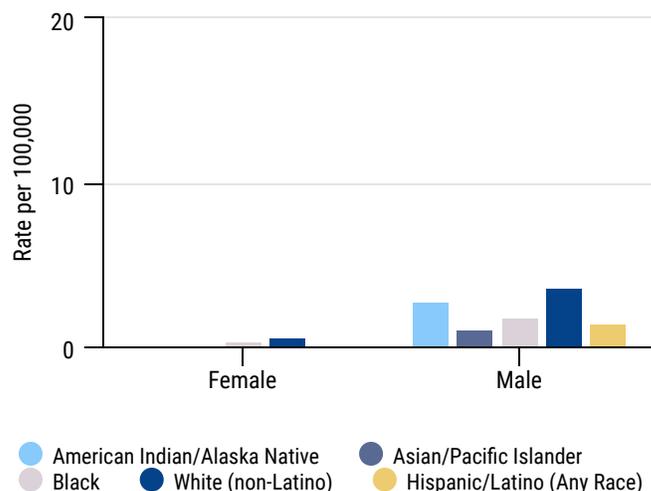
Firearm suicide risk was highest among White (non-Latino) boys and youths (aged 0-19), followed by American Indian/Alaska Native boys and youths.

Looking at rates by sex and race together can help to paint a better picture of children and teen firearm homicide and suicide in the United States.

### CHILDREN AND TEEN FIREARM HOMICIDE RATES BY SEX AND RACE, 2018



### CHILDREN AND TEEN FIREARM SUICIDE RATES BY SEX AND RACE, 2018

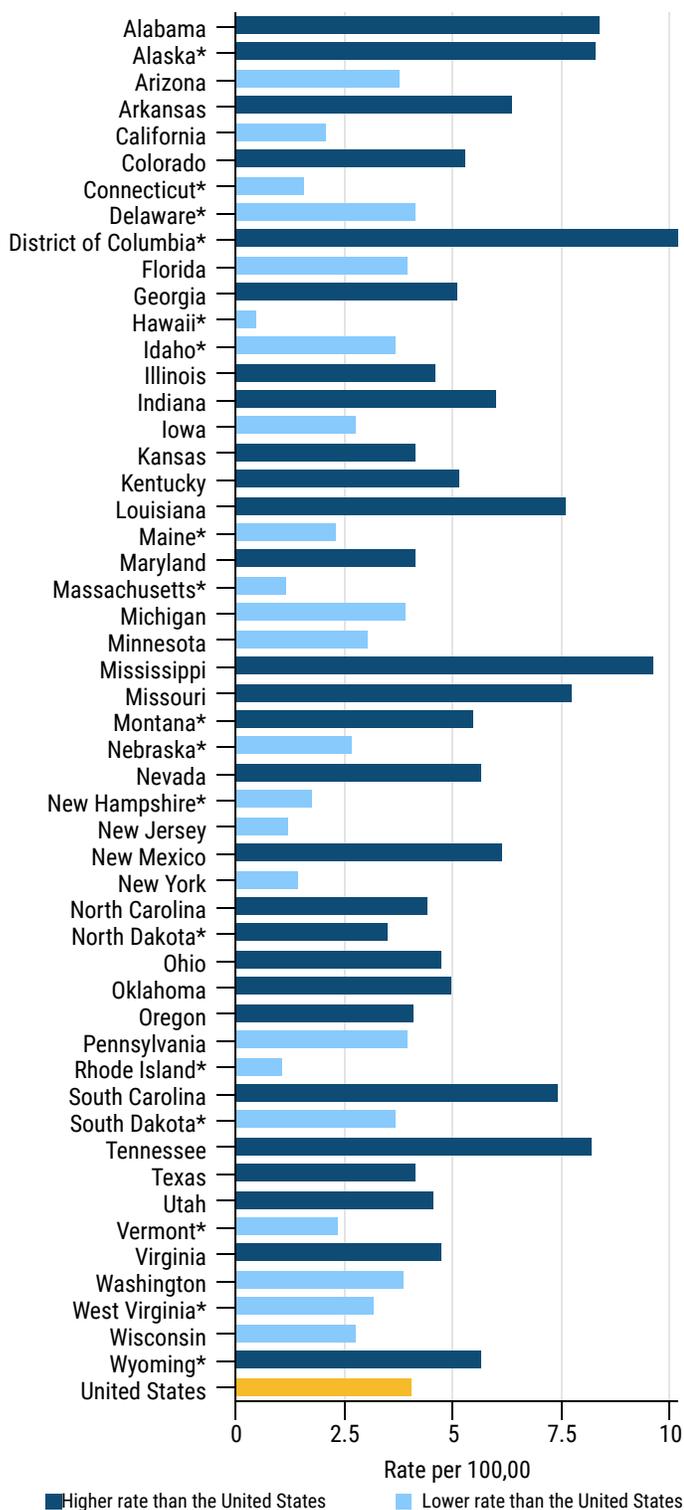


Note: The CDC considers firearm homicide rates based on fewer than 20 deaths "statistically unreliable" and suppresses firearm homicide rates based on fewer than 10 deaths. Fewer than 20 firearm homicides were reported during this time period for the following races and therefore are omitted from the above chart: American Indian/ Alaska Native females and Asian/ Pacific Islander females.

Note: The CDC considers firearm suicide rates based on fewer than 20 deaths "statistically unreliable" and suppresses firearm suicide rates based on fewer than 10 deaths. Fewer than 20 firearm suicides were reported during this time period for the following races and therefore are omitted from the above chart: American Indian/ Alaska Native females; Asian/ Pacific Islander females; and Hispanic/Latino females.



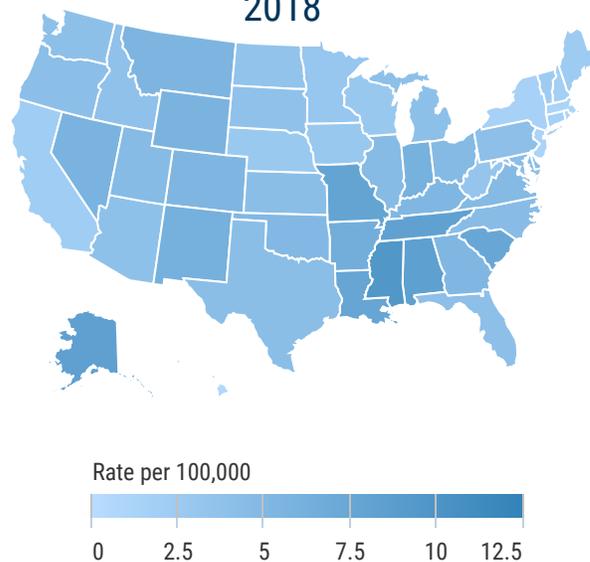
# CHILDREN AND TEEN FIREARM DEATH RATES BY STATE



Similar to all forms of gun violence, gun violence that affects children and teens is an epidemic that reaches communities large and small, but is more common in some places than others. In 2018, among states where there were more than 20 firearm deaths among children and teens, Mississippi had the highest children and teen firearm death rate (9.60 per 100,000 people), followed by Alabama, Tennessee, and Missouri (8.38, 8.18, and 7.76 per 100,000, respectively). Conversely, New Jersey had the lowest children and teen firearm death rate (1.25 per 100,000 people), followed by New York, California, and Wisconsin (1.47, 2.12, and 2.79 per 100,000, respectively).

Note: In 2018, 17 states had unreliable or suppressed data for children and teen gun deaths.

## CHILDREN AND TEEN GUN DEATH RATES BY STATE 2018



\*The CDC considers firearm death rates based on fewer than 20 deaths "statistically unreliable" and suppresses firearm death rates based on fewer than 10 deaths. Fewer than 20 children and teen firearm deaths were reported during 2018 for the following states: Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Idaho, Maine, Massachusetts, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming. Since a single year of data does not produce a reliable rate and would exclude these states from the above graphics, we chose instead to use children and teen firearm death rates spanning the most recent ten years (2009-2018) for these states in order to include them for comparison.



# UNINTENTIONAL GUN DEATHS

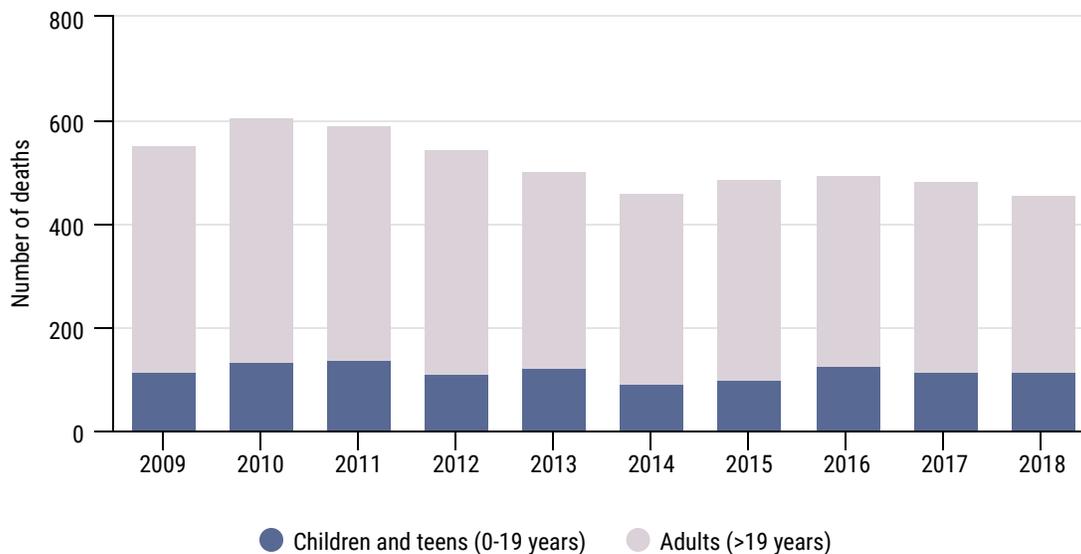
"Unintentional" is the description used for a death that was not caused purposely. In gun violence, examples include fatal injuries that occur when a weapon misfires or is mishandled by a child and results in the victim being shot (in contrast with homicide and suicide, both of which involve an intent to pull the trigger and cause harm).

Unintentional injuries and deaths are often called "accidents," which can imply that nothing could be done to stop them from happening; we do not use "accident" terminology because gun violence is preventable. Easy access to firearms, particularly unsecured firearms and the presence of firearms in risky situations, increases risk of unintentional injury and death by firearm. Mitigating access with safer storage practices and through evidence-based policy prevents unintentional gun violence.

In 2018, 458 people died by unintentional firearm injuries, or more than 1 person daily. While people of all ages are affected, special attention is often paid when the victims are especially young. Of the 458 total, 116 were children and teens (ages 0-19) who died by unintentional firearm injuries, about one every three days.

Amidst this heartbreak, there is reason for hope: in the course of the past decade, the number of unintentional firearm deaths has decreased. In the first half of the decade (2009-2013), there were nearly 561 annual unintentional firearm deaths (all ages); in contrast, in the second half of the decade (2014-2018), there were nearly 478 annual unintentional firearm deaths (all ages), a 15% decrease. Similarly, the number of unintentional firearm deaths among children and teens dropped by 11%, from an average of 124 annually from 2009-2013 to 110 annually from 2014-2018. The expansion of interventions to improve safer firearm storage and handling practices may contribute to further decreases in unintentional firearm deaths in the years to come.

UNINTENTIONAL FIREARM DEATHS, 2009-2018



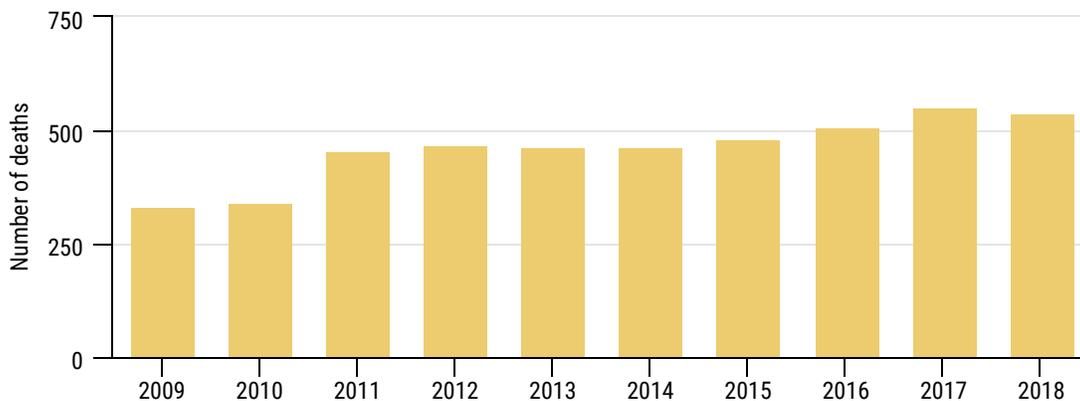


# LEGAL INTERVENTION

"Legal intervention" is the description used by the CDC for injuries inflicted by the police or other law enforcement agents, including military on duty, in the course of arresting or attempting to arrest lawbreakers, suppressing disturbances, maintaining order, and other legal actions. In gun violence, these are also known as police-involved shootings. In 2018, a total of 539 people died by legal intervention by firearm, or nearly three police-involved shooting deaths every two days.

More than 95% of these victims were men (516 of the 539 total), and men of color died at the highest rates. In 2018, 106 Black males died by legal intervention by firearm (an average of 2 per week), making up 20% of legal intervention deaths by firearm that year. Black males are killed by legal intervention by firearm at a rate 1.71 times that of White (non-Latino) males (0.48 vs. 0.28 per 100,000 people, respectively). With a rate falling between these two, 117 Latino males were killed by legal intervention by firearm in 2018 (0.39 per 100,000 people). Rates for American Indian/Alaska Native and Asian or Pacific Islander males, as well as females of all races/ethnic origins, are considered unreliable because the raw numbers of deaths in these categories are under 20.

LEGAL INTERVENTION FIREARM DEATHS, 2009-2018



A cautionary note about these data: Strong evidence suggests that the government's data (including the CDC data presented here) provide a substantial under-count of police-involved injuries and deaths. To address this gap, a number of media sources have tracked police-involved shootings in recent years, most notably the Washington Post's Fatal Force database, finding more than double the number of police-involved fatal shootings than are reported in FBI and CDC databases. Ultimately, better data on police-involved injuries and deaths are sorely needed. Compulsory and comprehensive data collection at the local level, reporting to the federal government, and transparency in public dissemination of data will be critical for understanding this unique kind of gun violence and developing evidence-based solutions to minimize police-involved shootings.

For more information:

Feldman, J. M., Gruskin, S., Coull, B. A., & Krieger, N. (2017). Quantifying underreporting of law-enforcement-related deaths in United States vital statistics and news-media-based data sources: A capture-recapture analysis. *PLoS Medicine*, 14(10), e1002399. DOI:10.1371/journal.pmed.100239

Peebles L. (2019). What the data say about police shootings. *Nature*, 573(7772):24-26. DOI: 10.1038/d41586-019-02601-9.

The Washington Post's Fatal Force database is available at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/investigations/police-shootings-database/>

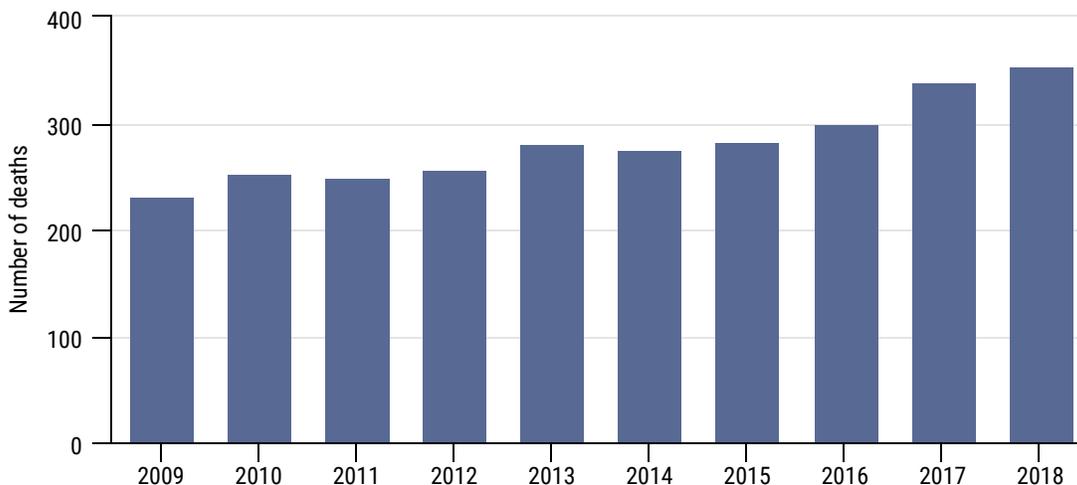


# UNDETERMINED INTENT

While the intentionality of the injury that caused a person’s death is most often known or determined in the course of death investigations, there are some cases wherein the available information is insufficient to enable the medical or legal authority to make a distinction between an unintentional injury, self-harm (suicide), or assault (homicide). These cases are described as having an undetermined intent.

In 2018, a total of 353 people died by firearm, undetermined intent, or nearly 1 person daily.

### UNDETERMINED INTENT FIREARM DEATHS, 2009-2018





# CONCLUSION

**The Educational Fund to Stop Gun Violence seeks to make gun violence – in all its forms – rare and abnormal.**

Gun violence is an epidemic in the United States. In 2018, firearms were the leading method of both homicide and suicide, and resulted in the deaths of nearly 40,000 people. Too many children, parents, brothers, sisters, partners, and friends died by gun violence. Every single day, nearly 109 loved ones died by gun violence. This is unacceptable.

In the face of this national tragedy, it is heartening to know that there are policies we can enact to reduce gun violence. Understanding a public health problem like gun violence – by measuring the scope of the problem and who is particularly affected (such as with the data described in this brief) – helps to tailor solutions. Evidence-based policies and programs are critical for reducing gun violence in all its forms. Through concerted action, we can change the trends in gun violence statistics and see reductions in gun violence in years to come.



# APPENDIX

**Table 1:  
U.S. Gun Deaths, 2009-2018**

	Homicide	Suicide	Unintentional	Legal intervention	Undetermined intent	Total gun deaths
2009	11,493	18,735	554	333	232	31,347
2010	11,078	19,392	606	344	252	31,672
2011	11,068	19,990	591	454	248	32,351
2012	11,622	20,666	548	471	256	33,563
2013	11,208	21,175	505	467	281	33,636
2014	11,008	21,386	461	464	275	33,594
2015	12,979	22,018	489	484	282	36,252
2016	14,415	22,938	495	510	300	38,658
2017	14,542	23,854	486	553	338	39,773
2018	13,958	24,432	458	539	353	39,740

**Table 2:  
U.S. Gun Death Rate per 100,000  
2009-2018**

	Homicide	Suicide	Unintentional	Legal intervention	Undetermined intent	Overall gun death rate
2009	3.80	5.92	0.18	0.12	0.08	10.07
2010	3.64	6.08	0.20	0.11	0.07	10.10
2011	3.60	6.20	0.20	0.14	0.08	10.22
2012	3.79	6.31	0.19	0.15	0.09	10.51
2013	3.63	6.41	0.16	0.15	0.09	10.43
2014	3.53	6.37	0.14	0.17	0.08	10.31
2015	4.17	6.51	0.15	0.14	0.09	11.06
2016	4.63	6.75	0.17	0.17	0.09	11.78
2017	4.65	6.93	0.16	0.17	0.09	11.99
2018	4.44	7.04	0.14	0.19	0.10	11.90

Note: All rates listed are age-adjusted in order to allow for accurate comparisons between populations with differing age distributions.



# APPENDIX

**Table 3:  
U.S. Gun Deaths by State, 2018**

	Homicides	Homicide rate (per 100,000)	Suicides	Suicide rate (per 100,000)	Total gun deaths	Overall gun death rate (per 100,000)
Alabama	468	10.15	552	10.74	1,064	21.84
Alaska	37	5.05	107	14.50	155	21.00
Arizona	293	4.29	802	10.32	1,147	15.34
Arkansas	194	6.75	345	11.04	573	18.95
California	1,275	3.25	1,629	3.89	3,040	7.49
Colorado	188	3.32	660	11.12	889	15.18
Connecticut	54	1.67	127	3.10	186	4.90
Delaware	46	5.55	58	5.75	107	11.59
District of Columbia	116	15.59	Suppressed	Suppressed	125	16.72
Florida	977	5.01	1,869	7.58	2,902	12.86
Georgia	644	6.24	987	9.03	1,680	15.73
Hawaii	20	1.58	30	1.92	59	4.04
Idaho	31	1.85	250	14.01	294	16.64
Illinois	784	6.41	573	4.22	1,382	10.86
Indiana	364	5.82	588	8.52	977	14.69
Iowa	37	1.26	231	6.95	282	8.66
Kansas	123	4.57	292	9.87	424	14.80
Kentucky	207	4.97	509	10.87	762	16.90
Louisiana	497	11.16	467	9.67	991	21.41
Maine	Suppressed	Suppressed	147	9.47	159	10.33
Maryland	426	7.36	266	4.13	707	11.71
Massachusetts	104	1.52	148	1.86	258	3.47
Michigan	479	5.11	806	7.53	1,310	12.89
Minnesota	66	1.30	356	6.26	437	7.82
Mississippi	320	11.38	313	9.91	681	22.94
Missouri	556	9.76	726	11.16	1,311	21.47

Note: All rates listed are age-adjusted in order to allow for accurate comparisons between populations with differing age distributions.



# APPENDIX

**Table 3 (cont'd):  
U.S. Gun Deaths by State, 2018**

	Homicides	Homicide rate (per 100,000)	Suicides	Suicide rate (per 100,000)	Total gun deaths	Overall gun death rate (per 100,000)
Montana	20	2.05	160	14.64	186	17.27
Nebraska	25	1.37	145	6.91	183	9.04
Nevada	158	5.52	367	11.50	550	17.86
New Hampshire	13	Unreliable	135	9.11	155	10.75
New Jersey	218	2.65	193	2.01	420	4.77
New Mexico	136	6.92	281	12.64	438	20.69
New York	356	1.88	445	2.07	821	4.07
North Carolina	489	4.89	873	7.88	1,416	13.30
North Dakota	13	Unreliable	75	9.77	89	11.53
Ohio	548	4.96	962	7.72	1,555	13.07
Oklahoma	185	4.93	465	11.44	665	16.78
Oregon	67	1.65	427	9.41	519	11.66
Pennsylvania	581	4.85	1,025	7.27	1,654	12.50
Rhode Island	13	Unreliable	23	2.02	37	3.26
South Carolina	373	7.97	493	9.08	895	17.57
South Dakota	16	Unreliable	91	10.35	117	13.58
Tennessee	504	7.77	690	9.59	1,228	17.85
Texas	1,145	4.01	2,263	7.86	3,522	12.25
Utah	34	1.10	339	11.37	397	13.20
Vermont	10	Unreliable	70	10.65	82	12.77
Virginia	334	4.05	679	7.51	1,035	11.80
Washington	173	2.35	599	7.46	809	10.36
West Virginia	66	4.06	257	13.11	343	18.21
Wisconsin	153	2.94	420	6.77	598	10.15
Wyoming	13	Unreliable	108	18.41	124	21.50

Note: All rates listed are age-adjusted in order to allow for accurate comparisons between populations with differing age distributions.



# APPENDIX

**Table 4:  
Changes in U.S. Gun Death Rates by State, 2009-2018**

State	Percent change in age-adjusted gun death rate, 2009-2018
Alabama	26.90
Alaska	41.03
Arizona	13.80
Arkansas	17.26
California	-8.66
Colorado	30.30
Connecticut	0.62
Delaware	32.16
District of Columbia	5.29
Florida	7.26
Georgia	20.35
Hawaii	18.82
Idaho	29.80
Illinois	32.60
Indiana	29.77
Iowa	38.56
Kansas	36.53
Kentucky	32.03
Louisiana	18.48
Maine	20.68
Maryland	15.37
Massachusetts	11.22
Michigan	16.44
Minnesota	26.13
Mississippi	37.12
Missouri	56.49

State	Percent change in age-adjusted gun death rate, 2009-2018
Montana	8.55
Nebraska	23.84
Nevada	18.51
New Hampshire	70.09
New Jersey	1.27
New Mexico	42.59
New York	-15.38
North Carolina	14.66
North Dakota	29.41
Ohio	53.95
Oklahoma	16.53
Oregon	12.66
Pennsylvania	20.19
Rhode Island	-34.67
South Carolina	29.76
South Dakota	45.24
Tennessee	18.06
Texas	11.26
Utah	26.68
Vermont	43.97
Virginia	14.79
Washington	13.35
West Virginia	39.01
Wisconsin	27.99
Wyoming	21.88



# APPENDIX

**Table 5:  
Female Firearm Homicide Rate per 100,000  
by Age and Race, 2018**

Age group	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	White (non-Latino)	Hispanic/Latino (any race)
0-19	Unreliable	Unreliable	2.19	0.37	0.52
20-34	Unreliable	Unreliable	8.73	1.55	1.99
35-54	Unreliable	Unreliable	4.20	1.34	1.25
55-74	Unreliable	Unreliable	1.69	0.72	0.63
75+	Suppressed	Unreliable	Unreliable	0.66	Unreliable

**Table 6:  
Male Firearm Homicide Rate per 100,000  
by Age and Race, 2018**

Age group	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	White (non-Latino)	Hispanic/Latino (any race)
0-19	3.08	0.93	14.35	1.00	2.76
20-34	12.60	2.82	74.37	4.45	13.26
35-54	8.71	1.98	32.50	3.46	6.57
55-74	Unreliable	Unreliable	9.18	1.50	2.19
75+	Suppressed	Unreliable	Unreliable	0.80	Unreliable



# APPENDIX

**Table 7:  
Female Firearm Suicide Rates per 100,000  
by Age and Race, 2018**

Age group	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	White (non-Latino)	Hispanic/Latino (any race)
0-19	Unreliable	Unreliable	0.31	0.59	Unreliable
20-34	Unreliable	0.80	1.54	2.82	1.14
35-54	Unreliable	0.72	0.82	4.27	0.68
55-74	Unreliable	Unreliable	0.61	3.64	0.50
75+	Suppressed	Suppressed	Unreliable	1.75	Unreliable

**Table 8:  
Male Firearm Suicide Rates per 100,000  
by Age and Race, 2018**

Age group	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	White (non-Latino)	Hispanic/Latino (any race)
0-19	2.83	1.12	1.83	3.62	1.50
20-34	15.02	4.59	11.40	16.92	7.67
35-54	7.04	3.07	7.15	19.48	5.19
55-74	10.03	3.46	5.05	23.83	6.05
75+	Unreliable	Unreliable	9.07	38.53	10.34



# APPENDIX

**Table 9:  
Children and Teen (Ages 0-19) Gun Deaths, 2009-2018**

	Homicide	Suicide	Unintentional	Legal intervention	Undetermined intent	Total children and teen gun deaths
2009	1,855	800	114	18	24	2,811
2010	1,773	749	134	17	38	2,711
2011	1,651	850	140	29	33	2,703
2012	1,664	861	110	36	23	2,694
2013	1,410	877	124	20	34	2,465
2014	1,464	932	93	24	35	2,548
2015	1,645	1,017	100	25	37	2,824
2016	1,849	1,102	127	27	50	3,155
2017	1,927	1,296	115	33	72	3,443
2018	1,831	1,297	116	26	72	3,342

**Table 10:  
Children and Teen (Ages 0-19) Gun Death Rates per 100,000 2009-2018**

	Homicide	Suicide	Unintentional	Legal intervention	Undetermined intent	Overall children and teen gun death rate
2009	2.23	0.96	0.14	Unreliable	0.03	3.38
2010	2.13	0.90	0.16	Unreliable	0.05	3.26
2011	1.99	1.03	0.17	0.04	0.04	3.26
2012	2.02	1.04	0.13	0.04	0.03	3.27
2013	1.71	1.07	0.15	0.02	0.04	3.00
2014	1.78	1.13	0.11	0.03	0.04	3.10
2015	2.00	1.24	0.12	0.03	0.05	3.44
2016	2.25	1.34	0.15	0.03	0.06	3.84
2017	2.35	1.58	0.14	0.04	0.09	4.19
2018	2.23	1.58	0.14	0.03	0.09	4.08



# APPENDIX

**Table 11:  
Children and Teen Firearm Homicide Rates per 100,000  
by Sex and Race, 2018**

	<b>American Indian/Alaska Native</b>	<b>Asian/Pacific Islander</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>White (non-Latino)</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino (any race)</b>
Female	Unreliable	Unreliable	2.19	0.37	0.52
Male	3.08	0.93	14.35	1.00	2.76

**Table 12:  
Children and Teen Firearm Suicide Rates per 100,000  
by Sex and Race, 2018**

	<b>American Indian/Alaska Native</b>	<b>Asian/Pacific Islander</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>White (non-Latino)</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino (any race)</b>
Female	Unreliable	Unreliable	0.31	0.59	Unreliable
Male	2.83	1.12	1.83	3.62	1.50



# APPENDIX

**Table 13:  
Children and Teen Gun Deaths by State, 2018**

	Children and teen firearm suicides	Children and teen firearm homicides	Children and teen total gun deaths	Children and teen overall gun death rate (per 100,000)
Alabama	32	56	102	8.38
Alaska	12	Suppressed	19	Unreliable
Arizona	35	28	70	3.81
Arkansas	16	27	50	6.39
California	54	143	212	2.12
Colorado	37	28	75	5.31
Connecticut	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed
Delaware	Suppressed	11	14	Unreliable
District of Columbia	Suppressed	17	17	Unreliable
Florida	62	117	188	3.99
Georgia	44	91	144	5.14
Hawaii	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed
Idaho	17	Suppressed	19	Unreliable
Illinois	26	113	147	4.61
Indiana	41	59	105	5.99
Iowa	16	Suppressed	23	2.80
Kansas	20	13	33	4.19
Kentucky	28	21	58	5.16
Louisiana	19	67	92	7.59
Maine	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed
Maryland	14	47	62	4.15
Massachusetts	Suppressed	Suppressed	13	Unreliable
Michigan	47	46	96	3.95
Minnesota	25	16	44	3.05
Mississippi	24	46	76	9.60
Missouri	48	66	119	7.76



# APPENDIX

**Table 13 (cont'd):  
Children and Teen Gun Deaths by State, 2018**

	<b>Children and teen firearm suicides</b>	<b>Children and teen firearm homicides</b>	<b>Children and teen total gun deaths</b>	<b>Children and teen overall gun death rate (per 100,000)</b>
Montana	11	Suppressed	11	Unreliable
Nebraska	Suppressed	Suppressed	13	Unreliable
Nevada	18	22	43	5.69
New Hampshire	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed
New Jersey	Suppressed	24	27	1.25
New Mexico	15	16	33	6.13
New York	19	44	67	1.47
North Carolina	46	63	115	4.45
North Dakota	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed
Ohio	58	75	138	4.75
Oklahoma	31	20	53	4.99
Oregon	28	Suppressed	40	4.11
Pennsylvania	38	75	119	3.97
Rhode Island	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed
South Carolina	29	57	92	7.41
South Dakota	Suppressed	Suppressed	15	Unreliable
Tennessee	38	94	137	8.18
Texas	143	177	343	4.19
Utah	36	Suppressed	47	4.57
Vermont	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed
Virginia	45	52	100	4.77
Washington	40	28	72	3.91
West Virginia	12	Suppressed	16	Unreliable
Wisconsin	19	17	40	2.79
Wyoming	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed



# GLOSSARY

**Age-adjusted rate:** The rates of almost all causes of death vary by age. Age adjustment is a technique for "removing" the effects of age from crude rates, so as to allow meaningful comparisons across populations with different underlying age structures. Age-adjusted death rates are weighted averages of the age-specific death rates, where the weights represent a fixed population by age. An age-adjusted rate represents the rate that would have existed had the age-specific rates of the particular year prevailed in a population whose age distribution was the same as that of the fixed population. Age-adjusted rates should be viewed as relative indexes rather than as direct or actual measures of mortality risk.

**Cause of Death:** Based on medical information—including injury diagnoses and external causes of injury—entered on death certificates filed in the United States. This information is classified and coded in accordance with the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th Revision (ICD–10).

**Homicide:** Injuries inflicted by another person with intent to injure or kill, by any means. Excludes injuries due to legal intervention and operations of war. The ICD-10 cause of death codes for firearm homicide include X93 Assault by handgun discharge; X94 Assault by rifle, shotgun and larger firearm discharge; X95 Assault by other and unspecified firearm and gun discharge; and \*U01.4 Terrorism involving firearms.

**International Classification of Diseases (ICD):** Causes of death are classified in accordance with the International Classification of Disease. Deaths for 1999 and beyond are classified using the Tenth Revision (ICD-10). ICD is designed to promote international comparability in the collection, processing, classification, and presentation of mortality statistics. This includes providing a format for reporting causes of death on the death certificate. The reported conditions are then translated into medical codes through use of the classification structure and the selection and modification rules contained in the applicable revision of the ICD, published by the World Health Organization (WHO).

**Legal Intervention:** Injuries inflicted by the police or other law-enforcing agents, including military on duty, in the course of arresting or attempting to arrest lawbreakers, suppressing disturbances, maintaining order, and other legal actions. Excludes injuries caused by civil insurrections. The ICD-10 cause of death code for legal intervention by firearm is Y35.0 Legal intervention involving firearm discharge.

**Suicide:** Intentionally self-inflicted injury that results in death. The ICD-10 cause of death codes for firearm suicide are X72 Intentional self-harm by handgun discharge; X73 Intentional self-harm by rifle, shotgun and larger firearm discharge; and X74 Intentional self-harm by other and unspecified firearm and gun discharge.

**Suppressed:** Rates are marked as suppressed when there are zero to nine (0-9) deaths.

**Underlying Cause of Death database:** The database contains mortality data based on information from all death certificates filed in the fifty states and the District of Columbia. Deaths of nonresidents (e.g. nonresident aliens, nationals living abroad, residents of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and other territories of the U.S.) and fetal deaths are excluded. Each death certificate identifies a single underlying cause of death and demographic data.

**Undetermined Intent:** Events where available information is insufficient to enable a medical or legal authority to make a distinction between accident, self-harm and assault. The ICD-10 cause of death codes for firearm deaths of undetermined intent are Y22 Handgun discharge, undetermined intent; Y23 Rifle, shotgun and larger firearm discharge, undetermined intent; and Y24 Other and unspecified firearm discharge, undetermined intent.

**Unintentional:** Unintentional injury that results in death. The ICD-10 cause of death codes for unintentional firearm deaths are W32 Accidental handgun discharge and malfunction; W33 Accidental rifle, shotgun and larger firearm discharge; and W34 Accidental discharge and malfunction from other and unspecified firearms and guns.

**Unreliable:** Rates are marked as "unreliable" when the death count is less than 20.



# ABOUT

## **EDUCATIONAL FUND TO STOP GUN VIOLENCE**

The Educational Fund to Stop Gun Violence (Ed Fund) seeks to make gun violence rare and abnormal. Founded in 1978, the Ed Fund is a nonprofit organization that makes communities safer by translating research into policy to prevent gun violence and engaging impacted communities in the policy making process. The Ed Fund is the gun violence prevention movement's premier research intermediary and founder of the Consortium for Risk-Based Firearm Policy, a group of researchers and experts who collaborate to develop innovative recommendations for policymakers. The Ed Fund's affiliate organization, the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, has advocated for stronger gun laws since 1974. Together, they have paved the way for the gun violence prevention movement to advance research and support evidence-based gun violence prevention programs and policies.

## **CONTRIBUTORS**

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## **SOURCE**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2018 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released February 2020. Data are from the Multiple Cause of Death Files, 1999-2018, as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html> on February 12, 2020.

## **SUGGESTED CITATION**

Educational Fund to Stop Gun Violence. (2020). Gun Violence in America: An Analysis of 2018 CDC Data. [www.efsgv.org](http://www.efsgv.org).