

Suicide in Georgia State and County Statistics 2005

Suicide Rate by County, Georgia, 1994-2002

- COUNTY RATE ≥ 13.5 PER 100,000 POPULATION
- COUNTY RATE ≥ 11.5 AND < 13.5 PER 100,000 POPULATION
- COUNTY RATE < 11.5 PER 100,000 POPULATION
- LESS THAN 10 DEATHS—RATE NOT CALCULATED

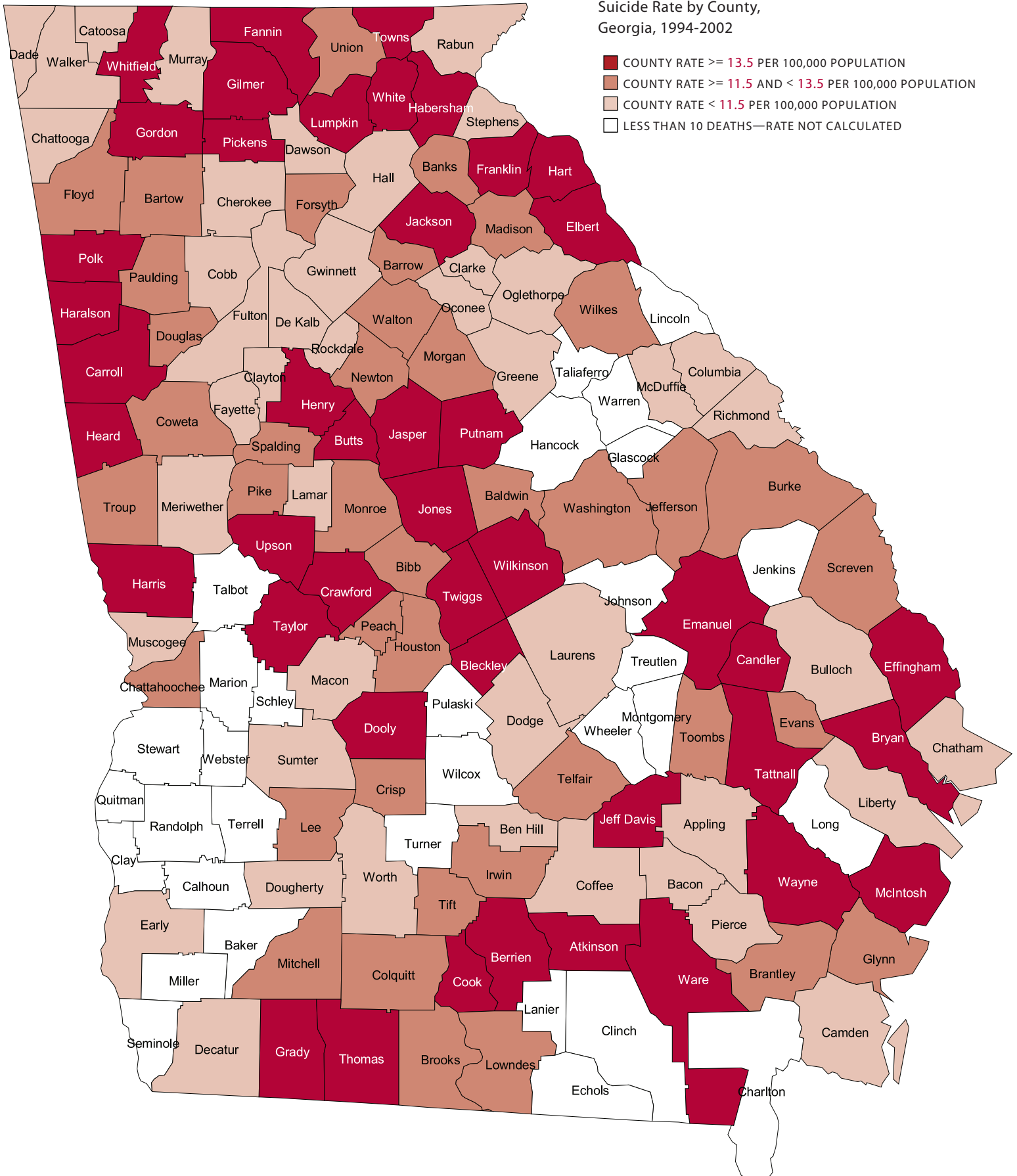


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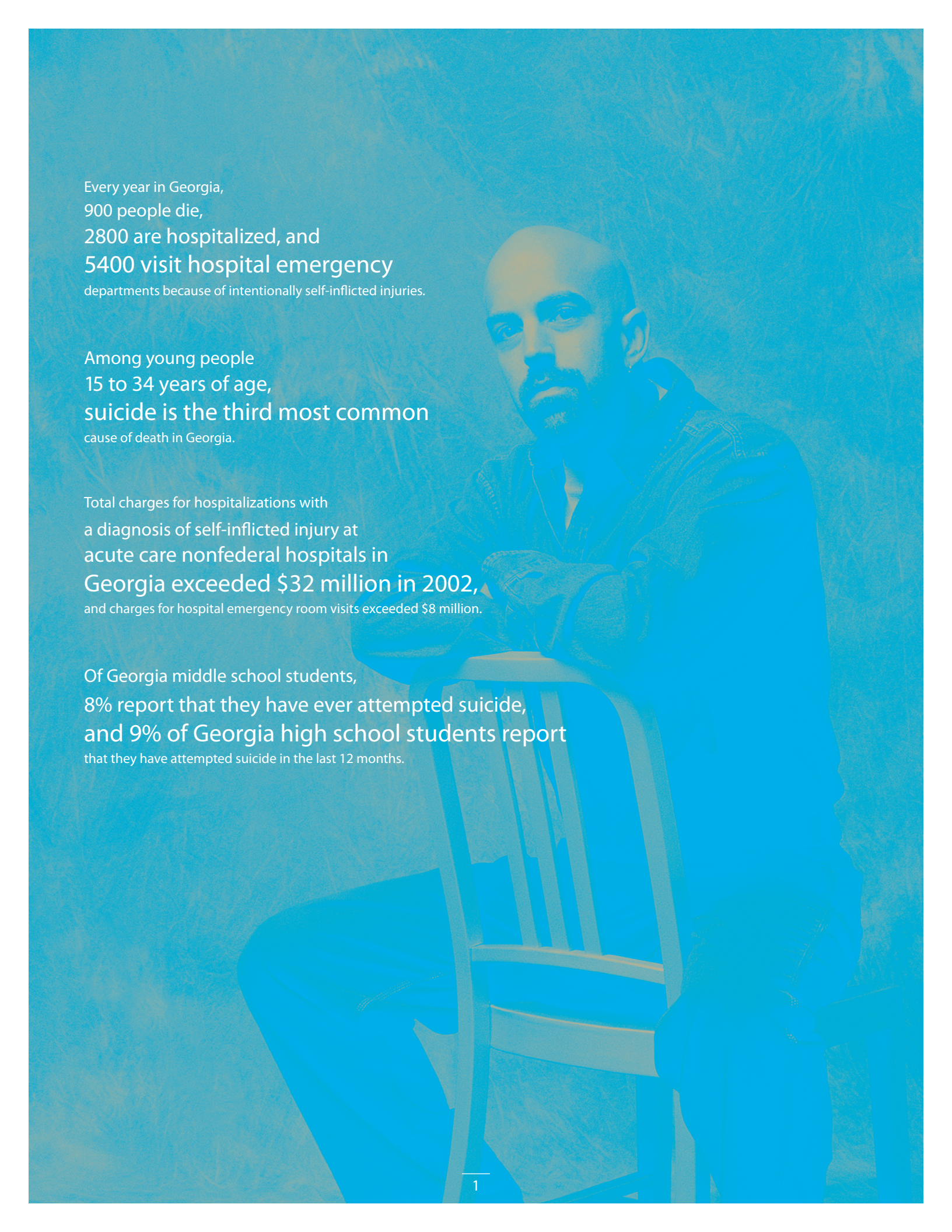
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This report is dedicated to the courageous survivors whose efforts have raised awareness about the seriousness of suicide, its devastating impact on families and friends and the dire need for prevention.



Every year in Georgia,
900 people die,
2800 are hospitalized, and
5400 visit hospital emergency
departments because of intentionally self-inflicted injuries.

Among young people
15 to 34 years of age,
suicide is the third most common
cause of death in Georgia.

Total charges for hospitalizations with
a diagnosis of self-inflicted injury at
acute care nonfederal hospitals in
Georgia exceeded \$32 million in 2002,
and charges for hospital emergency room visits exceeded \$8 million.

Of Georgia middle school students,
8% report that they have ever attempted suicide,
and 9% of Georgia high school students report
that they have attempted suicide in the last 12 months.

Introduction

IN 2002, SUICIDE CLAIMED the lives of 900 Georgia residents and over 30,000 persons in the United States. In recent years, the public health importance of suicide has become more widely recognized. The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent Suicide (1999), the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (2001), and the Georgia Suicide Prevention Plan (2001) all call attention to the heavy burden of suicide on our society and the potential for suicide prevention. This report provides information about the burden of suicide and intentionally self-inflicted injuries in Georgia.

Suicide in Georgia

FROM 1999 THROUGH 2002, 3,520 GEORGIA RESIDENTS committed suicide, an average of 880 persons per year. Suicide was the 11th leading cause of death in Georgia in 2002 with 900 persons dying (Table 1). It was the third leading cause of death among persons 15 to 24 years and 25 to 34 years (Table 2).

Table 1: SUICIDE AND SELF-INFLICTED INJURY IN GEORGIA, 2002

	Deaths	Hospitalizations	Emergency Room Visits
Number	900	2,842	5,435
Most common method (Percent of total)	Firearms (69%)	Poisoning (91%)	Poisoning (70%)
Groups at highest risk			
Sex	Males	Females	Females
Race	Whites	Whites	White
Age (years)	≥ 75	15-54	15-24

Table 2. LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH IN GEORGIA, BY AGE GROUP, 1999–2002

Rank	<1 yr n=4,490*	1-4 yrs n=717	5-14 yrs n=978	15-24 yrs n=4,212	25-34 yrs n=5,931	35-44 yrs n=12,521	45-54 yrs n=21,964	55-64 yrs n=31,499	65-74 yrs n=48,062	75-84 yrs n=67,359	85+ yrs n=56,998	All ages N=254,731
1	Congenital malform 845	Injury 275	Injury 450	Injury 1,868	Injury 1,611	Cancer 2,122	Cancer 5,975	Cancer 10,546	Cancer 14,976	Heart 20,727	Heart 20,257	Heart 71,241
2	Short gestation/ LBW 810	Homicide 71	Cancer 108	Homicide 706	Homicide 671	Heart 2,075	Heart 5,210	Heart 8,705	Heart 13,393	Cancer 14,127	Cancer 5,842	Cancer 54,449
3	SIDS 474	Congenital 60	Homicide 58	SUICIDE 492	SUICIDE 638	Injury 1,964	Injury lung 1,752	Chronic lung 1,521	Chronic 3,535	Stroke 5,658	Stroke 5,742	Stroke 17,347
4	Maternal complic 180	Cancer 42	Heart 48	Cancer 198	HIV 550	HIV 1,228	Stroke 1,019	Stroke 1,480	Stroke 2,848	Chronic lung 4,443	Alzheimer's 2,838	Injury 12,741
5	Resp distress 168	Heart 33	Congenital 48	Heart 170	Heart 539	SUICIDE 761	HIV 773	Injury 1,030	Diabetes 1,344	Alzheimer's pneumonia 2,030	Flu/ lung 2,496	Chronic 12,273
6	Injury tumor 147	Benign 15	Suicide 29	HIV 59	Cancer 508	Homicide liver 545	Chronic 738	Diabetes kidney 986	Chronic pneumonia 1,041	Flu/ lung 1,794	Chronic 2,118	Diabetes 5,993
7	Bacterial sepsis 113	Septicemia 13	Chronic lung 17	Congenital 58	Stroke 95	Stroke 438	SUICIDE 608	Chronic liver 619	Injury 1,003	Diabetes 1,703	Chronic kidney 1,380	Flu/ pneumonia 5,829
8	Placenta, cord, membr 112	Chronic lung 12	Benign tumor 16	Preg/ childbirth 34	Diabetes 90	Chronic liver 322	Diabetes 540	Chronic kidney 580	Septicemia 940	Chronic kidney 1,565	Septicemia 1,205	Alzheimer's 5,348
9	Diseases of circ sys 111	Perinatal 12	Septicemia 10	Stroke 30	Septicemia 64	Diabetes 272	Chronic lung 431	Septicemia 550	Flu/ pneumonia 720	Septicemia 1,451	Injury 1,191	Chronic kidney 5,137
10	Necrotizing enterocolitis 83	Anemia/Flu pneumonia 10	Stroke 9	Septicemia Preg/childbirth 23	Flu/ pneumonia 53	Septicemia 157	Septicemia 357	SUICIDE 406	Chronic liver 531	Injury 1,449	Diabetes 1,035	Septicemia 4,837

*Number of deaths in age group, 1999-2002, including deaths that are not in the top 10 causes
Note: ICD-10 cause-of-death lists (published by NCHS) were used for 1999-2002 deaths.

Chronic kidney = Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome, nephrosis
Chronic lung = Chronic lower respiratory diseases
Congenital = Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities
Diseases of circ sys = Diseases of the circulatory system
Heart = Diseases of the heart
Injury = Unintentional injury, including motor vehicle accidents

Maternal complic = Maternal complication of pregnancy
Perinatal = Certain conditions of perinatal period
Placenta, cord, membr = Complications of placenta, cord, membrane
Preg/childbirth = Pregnancy, childbirth & puerperium
Resp distress = Respiratory distress of newborn
SIDS = Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

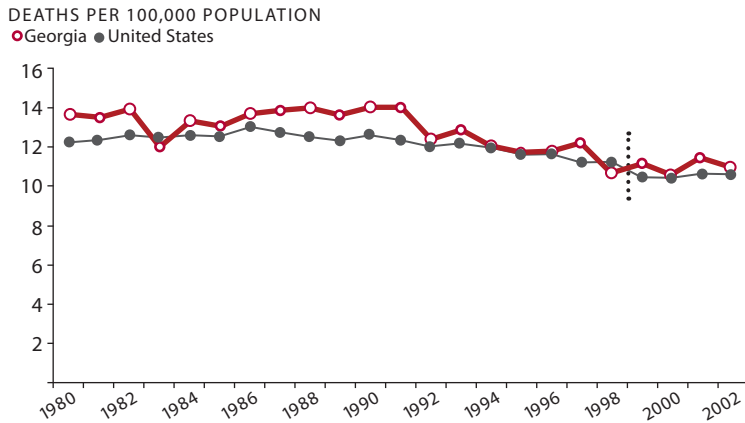
TRENDS

THE AGE-ADJUSTED SUICIDE RATE in Georgia is similar to the national rate (Figure 1). The age-adjusted suicide rate in Georgia has declined slowly over the past two decades, from 13.6 per 100,000 in 1980 to 10.9 per 100,000 in 2002, paralleling the decline in the national rate.

SEX AND RACE

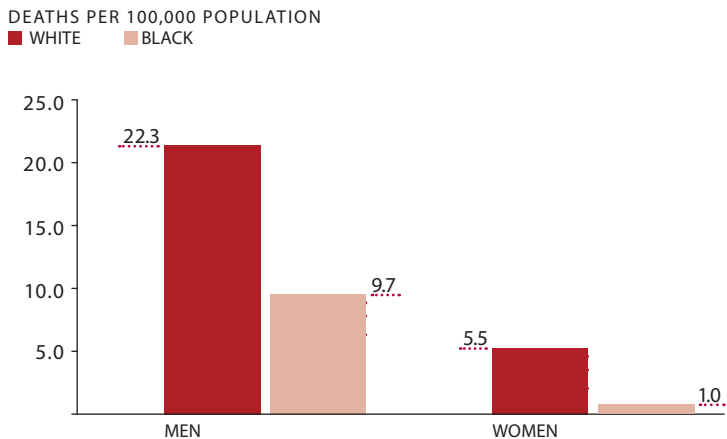
THE AGE-ADJUSTED SUICIDE RATE for Georgia from 1999 through 2002 was over four times higher for men (18.9 per 100,000) than for women (4.2 per 100,000) and almost three times higher for whites (13.4 per 100,000) than for blacks (4.9 per 100,000). White males had over twice the rate of black males, and white females had over five times the rate of black females (Figure 2). For these four years, an average of 705 males and 175 females died from suicide each year; an average of 752 whites and 115 blacks died from suicide each year.

Figure 1. SUICIDE RATES, Georgia and the United States, 1980–2002



NOTE: The dotted line indicates a change in coding systems used for cause of death. ICD-9 codes were used in 1980–1998 and the ICD-10 codes were used in the 1999–2001. Rates are age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

Figure 2. SUICIDE RATES BY SEX AND RACE, Georgia, 1999–2002



Rates are age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

AGE

SUICIDE RATES ARE HIGHEST AMONG the elderly in Georgia. From 1999 through 2002, persons 75 to 84 years of age had the highest suicide rate of any age group (Figure 3). Despite higher rates of suicide among the elderly, more young Georgians die from suicide than older adults because the younger population is larger than the older population. From 1999 through 2002, more than half the suicides in Georgia were among persons younger than 45 years of age (Figure 4).

Figure 3. AGE SPECIFIC SUICIDE RATES, Georgia, 1999–2002

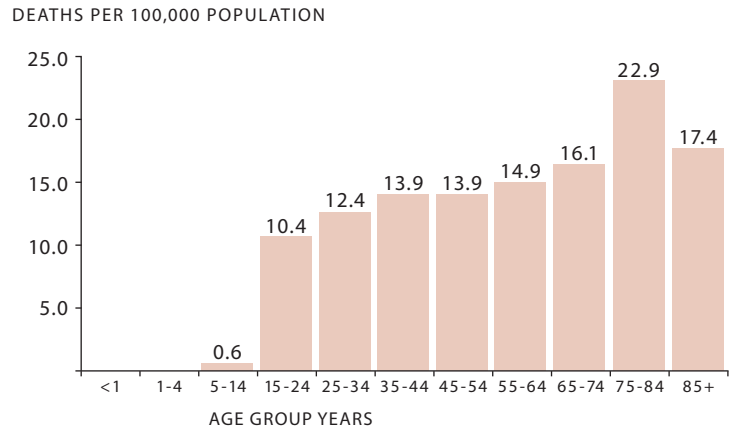
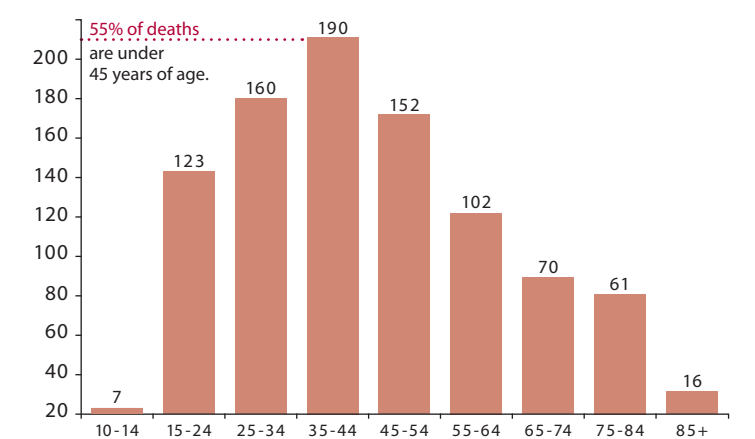


Figure 4. AVERAGE ANNUAL NUMBER OF SUICIDES BY AGE GROUP, 1999–2002, Georgia

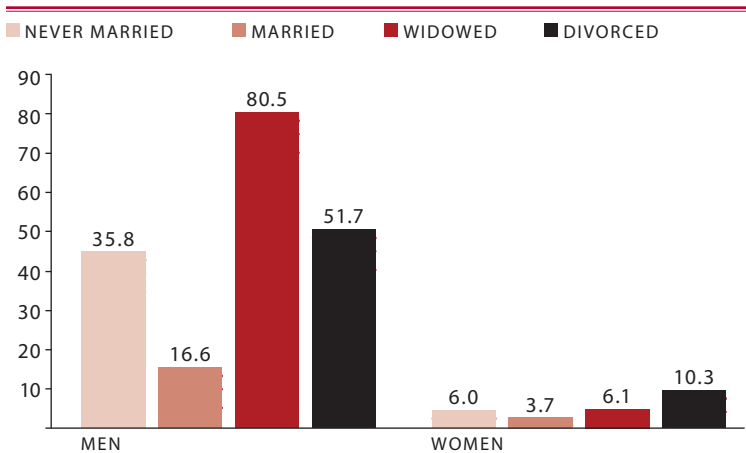


Rates are age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

MARITAL STATUS

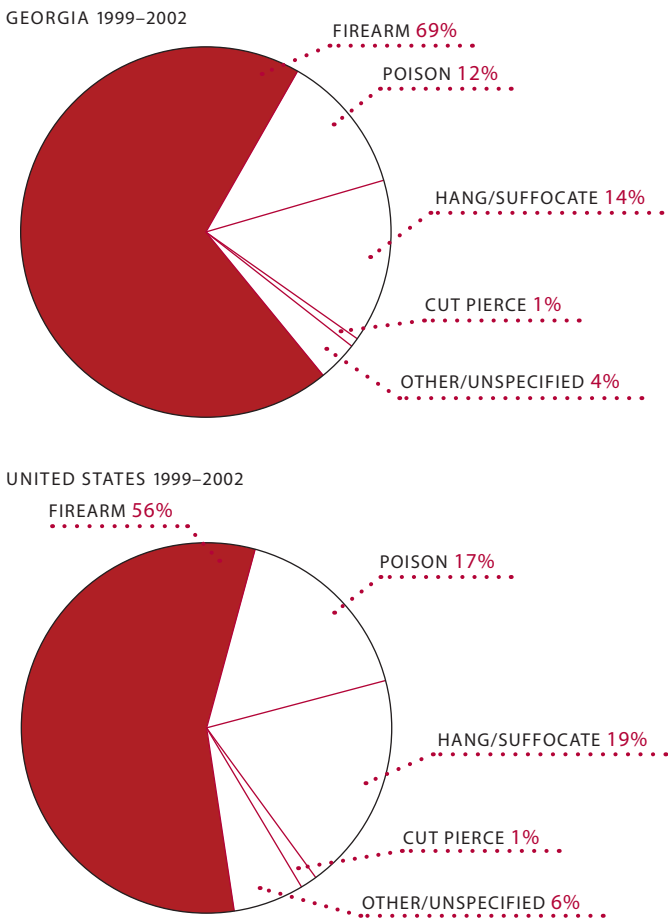
FROM 1999 THROUGH 2002 rates among men 15 years of age and older, rates were lowest for married men (16.6 per 100,000) and highest among widowers (80.5 per 100,000) (Figure 5). Among women 15 years of age and older, rates were lowest among married women (3.7 per 100,000) and highest in divorced women (10.3 per 100,000).

Figure 5. SUICIDE RATES BY SEX AND MARITAL STATUS AMONG PERSONS ≥15 YEARS, Georgia, 1999–2002



Rates are age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

Figure 6. SUICIDE DEATHS BY METHOD, Georgia and the United States



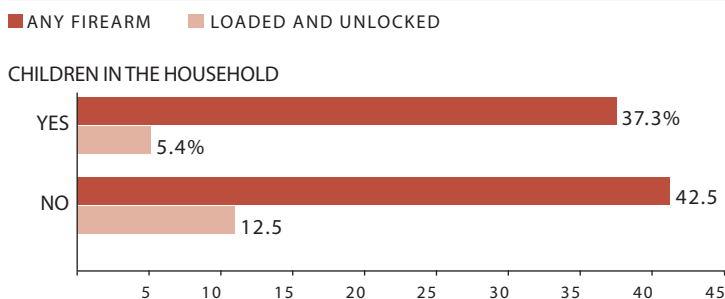
METHOD

IN GEORGIA FROM 1999 THROUGH 2002, 69% of suicides, or about 600 suicides per year, involved a firearm (Figure 6). The second most common method of suicide in Georgia was hanging or suffocation (14%). Nationwide, by contrast, 56% of suicides involved a firearm and 19% involved hanging or suffocation in 1999 through 2002.

Firearms were the most common method of suicide for both men and women, and young and old. Men dying from suicide in Georgia were more likely to use a firearm (72% of deaths) than women (56% of deaths). People less than 25 years of age were equally likely to use a firearm (67%) as people 25 years of age and older (69%).

Firearm suicides are associated with the presence of a firearm in the home. In 2001, 40% of adults 18 years and older in Georgia reported having a firearm in or around their home, and 10% of adult Georgians had a loaded unlocked firearm in the home. Nationwide, an estimated 30%-33% of homes have a firearm within; and in 6%-9% of homes the firearm is loaded and unlocked. In Georgia, non-Hispanic whites were more likely than non-Hispanic blacks or Hispanics to report any household firearms and loaded unlocked firearms. Prevalence of household firearms was higher in households without children, but 5% of adults living in households with children reported a loaded unlocked firearm in or around the home (Figure 7). The most current data on reasons for firearms in Georgia households are from 1999, with 48% of adults citing hunting or sport as the main reason for having a firearm in or around the home, and 35% citing protection.

Figure 7. PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS WITH FIREARMS IN OR AROUND THE HOME BY PRESENCE OF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD, Georgia, 2001



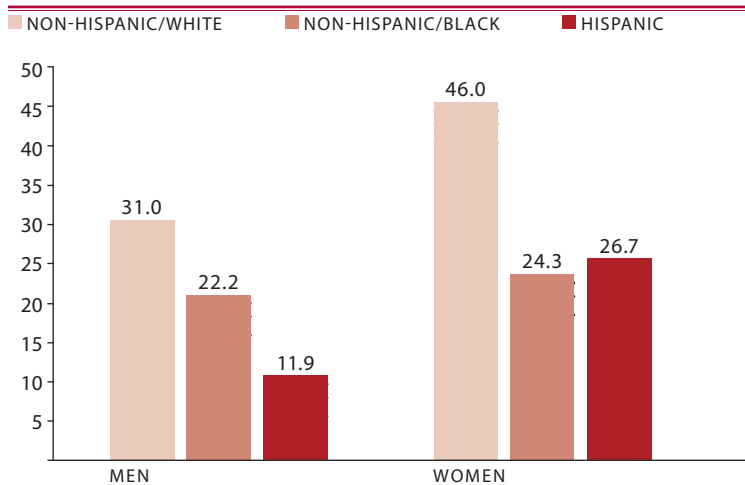
Rates are age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

Hospitalizations and Emergency Room Visits

HOSPITALIZATIONS

IN 2002, 2,842 GEORGIA RESIDENTS were hospitalized at non-federal acute care hospitals in Georgia because of an intentional self-inflicted injury. The age-adjusted hospitalization rate was higher for women (37.9 per 100,000) than for men (26.9 per 100,000) and higher for Non-Hispanic whites (38.4 per 100,000) than for Non-Hispanic blacks (23.2 per 100,000) or Hispanics (18.0 per 100,000). Non-Hispanic white women had the highest hospitalization rate of any race/ethnicity/sex group (Figure 8). Age-specific hospitalization rates were highest for persons 15 to 54 years (Figure 9). Poisoning was the most common method (91%) of self-harm resulting in hospitalization (Figure 10). Substances used included tranquilizers and other psychotropic drugs (37% of poisonings) and pain/inflammation/fever relieving medications (27% of poisonings). Total charges for these hospitalizations exceeded \$32 million in 2002.

Figure 8. HOSPITALIZATION RATES FOR SELF-INFLICTED INJURY SEX AND RACE/ETHNICITY, Georgia, 2002

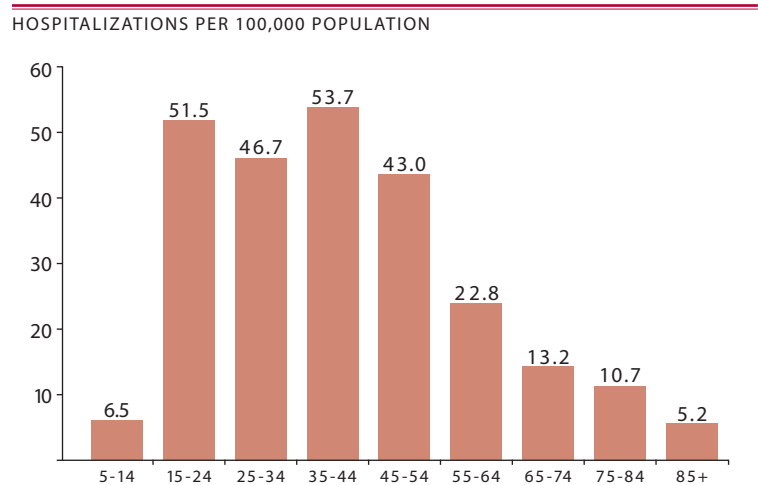


Rates are age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS

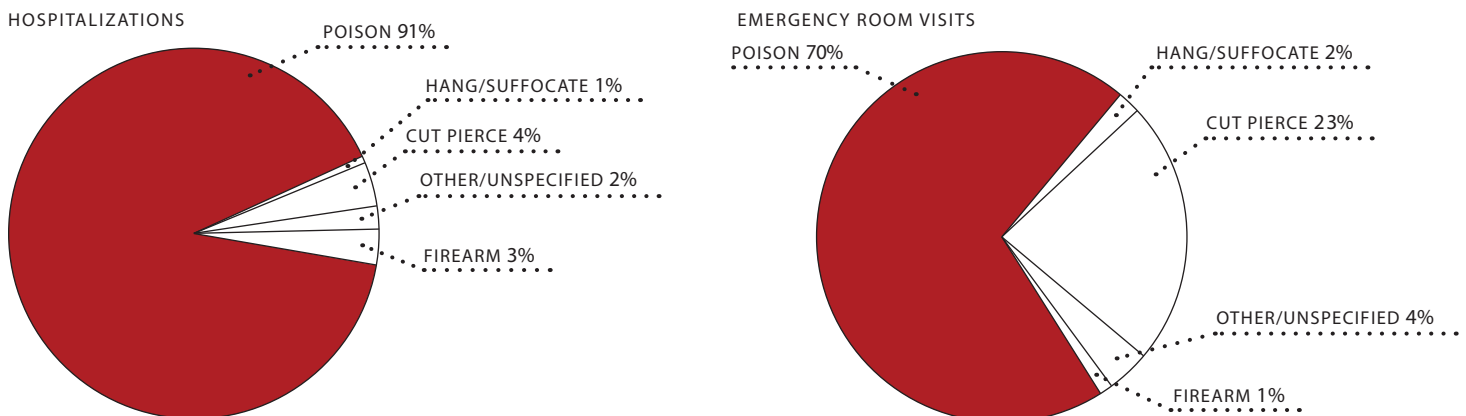
IN 2002, 5,435 GEORGIA RESIDENTS were treated in hospital owned emergency rooms (ERs) in Georgia because of a self-inflicted injury. Females (70.8 per 100,000) were more likely to visit ERs for self-inflicted injuries than males (51.0 per 100,000), and Non-Hispanic whites (69.6 per 100,000) were more likely to visit an ER than Non-Hispanic blacks (52.2 per 100,000) or Hispanics (34.5 per 100,000). Non-Hispanic white females (79.4 per 100,000) had the highest ER visit rate for self-inflicted injury among sex/race/ethnicity groups. Persons 15 to 24 years had the highest ER visit rate (157.9 per 100,000) of any age group. Poisoning, the most common method of self-harm leading to an ER visit, was involved in 70% of visits. Hospital charges for ER visits for self-inflicted injuries totaled approximately \$8 million.

Figure 9. AGE-SPECIFIC HOSPITALIZATION RATES FOR SELF-INFLICTED INJURY, Georgia, 2002



Rates are age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

Figure 10. HOSPITALIZATIONS AND EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS FOR SELF-INFLICTED INJURY BY METHOD, Georgia, 2002



Suicide Behavior Among Youth

DEATHS

FROM 1999 THROUGH 2002, 521 PERSONS less than 25 years of age died from suicide, an average of 130 per year. Most of these suicides (67%) were committed with firearms (Figure 11).

HOSPITALIZATIONS AND EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS

IN 2002, 718 PERSONS less than 25 years of age were hospitalized with self-inflicted injuries. Of these, 62% were females. Poisoning was the most common method (93%) of self-harm resulting in hospitalization in this age group (Figure 11). Pain/inflammation/fever relieving medications, commonly purchased over the counter, were used in 43% of these poisonings.

In 2002, 2260 persons less than 25 years of age were treated in an ER for self-inflicted injury; of these, 59% were females.

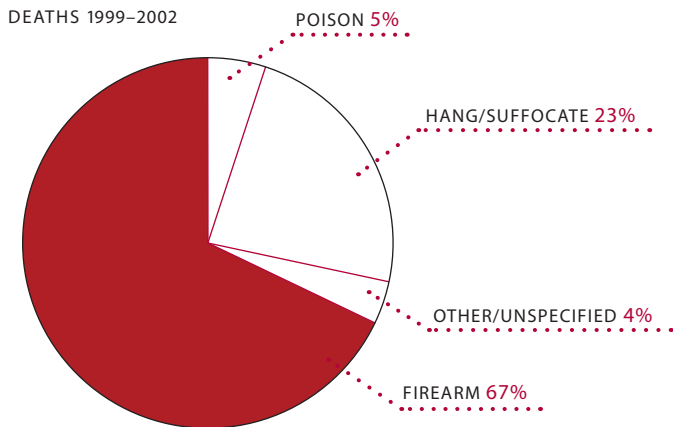
Poisoning was the most common method (70%) of self-harm resulting in ER visits in this age group. Pain/inflammation/fever relieving medications, commonly purchased over the counter, were used in 37% of these poisonings.

Self-inflicted injury by persons less than 25 years of age resulted in approximately \$6 million in hospitalization charges and \$3 million in ER charges in 2002 in Georgia.

Suicide-related Feelings, Thoughts, Behaviors

Among middle school students, 13% reported that at some time in their lives they had made a plan to kill themselves, and 8% had ever attempted suicide (Figure 12). High school students reported that during the past 12 months 13% made a plan to commit suicide and 9% attempted suicide.

Figure 11. SUICIDES AND HOSPITALIZATIONS FOR SELF-INFLICTED INJURY METHOD, PERSONS <25, Georgia



HOSPITALIZATIONS 1999-2002

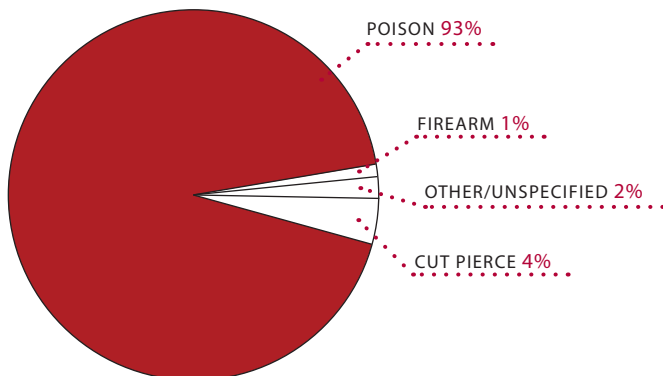
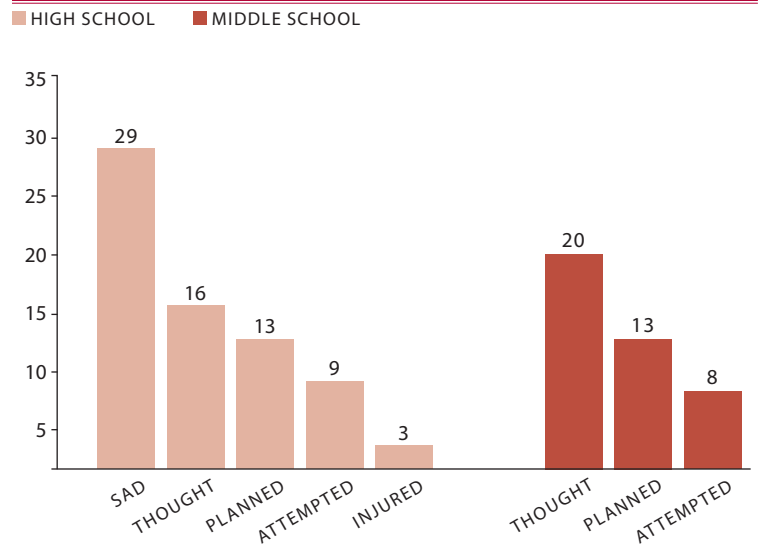


Figure 12. SUICIDE-RELATED FEELINGS, THOUGHTS, AND BEHAVIORS AMONG HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS, Georgia, 2003



Sad=Ever sad or hopeless every day for 2+ weeks and stopped usual activities
 Thought=Seriously thought about attempting suicide past 12 months (High School); Ever (Middle school)
 Planned=Made a plan about how to attempt suicide past 12 months (High School); Ever (Middle school)
 Attempted=Attempted suicide past 12 months (High School); Ever (Middle school)
 Injured=If attempted, injured seriously enough to see doctor or nurse

Suicide Statistics by County and District

AGE-ADJUSTED COUNTY SUICIDE RATES from 1994 through 2002 indicate that suicide rates are higher in counties outside of metro areas (Figure 13, Tables 3-4). In aggregate, counties designated as metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) had a lower suicide rate (10.5 per 100,000) than non-MSA counties combined (12.6 per 100,000) from 1999 through 2002.

Table 3. SUICIDES AND HOSPITALIZATIONS AND EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS FOR SELF-INFLICTED INJURY BY COUNTY, Georgia 1994–2002

	DEATHS, 1994–2002			HOSPITALIZATIONS, 1999–2002				EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS, 2002		
	Total No.	Avg. No. per year	Rate*	Total No.	Avg. Number per year	Rate*	Avg. Charges per year	Number	Rate	Charges
GEORGIA WIDE	7746	861	11.3	9918	2480	29.0	\$23,711,208	5435	60.7	\$8,128,592
GEORGIA COUNTIES										
APPLING	12	1	8.0	15	4	22.3	\$34,866	17	97.8	\$25,436
ATKINSON	10	1	16.5	14	4	45.7	\$55,967	4	57.9	\$9,800
BACON	10	1	11.2	23	6	57.9	\$35,959	4	41.8	\$6,241
BAKER	2	0	-	3	1	20.4	\$8,513	1	27.8	\$2,966
BALDWIN	49	5	12.7	60	15	31.5	\$94,999	35	71.3	\$25,899
BANKS	15	2	11.8	20	5	34.2	\$61,591	15	97.9	\$23,786
BARROW	46	5	12.9	68	17	34.6	\$197,659	75	141.5	\$117,411
BARTOW	82	9	13.0	127	32	39.8	\$279,877	109	127.9	\$194,256
BEN HILL	15	2	9.9	29	7	42.2	\$24,764	5	28.6	\$4,686
BERRIEN	22	2	15.9	34	9	53.7	\$103,143	14	88.2	\$19,417
BIBB	174	19	12.7	321	80	53.0	\$1,046,181	94	61.1	\$131,639
BLECKLEY	19	2	18.6	18	5	38.8	\$27,101	1	9.2	\$1,468
BRANTLEY	15	2	12.5	14	4	23.5	\$19,081	11	70.7	\$8,992
BROOKS	18	2	11.9	16	4	25.4	\$27,951	11	68.8	\$9,483
BRYAN	29	3	15.3	26	7	26.7	\$74,861	20	74.1	\$44,410
BULLOCH	40	4	9.1	38	10	16.8	\$115,112	16	25.3	\$40,790
BURKE	24	3	13.1	45	11	52.9	\$86,071	25	110.0	\$23,020
BUTTS	23	3	13.8	17	4	20.0	\$24,343	20	84.2	\$49,454
CALHOUN	7	1	-	3	1	11.1	\$3,048	3	46.7	\$1,209
CAMDEN	31	3	8.7	32	8	17.0	\$49,514	33	65.9	\$44,402
CANDLER	14	2	17.8	4	1	10.9	\$8,156	3	36.3	\$4,039
CARROLL	112	12	15.0	174	44	46.9	\$437,093	42	39.5	\$67,277
CATOOSA	43	5	9.3	49	12	22.4	\$103,466	43	77.0	\$60,198
CHARLTON	6	1	-	3	1	6.9	\$2,708	9	84.6	\$11,347
CHATHAM	221	25	10.8	303	76	32.5	\$994,362	183	77.3	\$296,683
CHATTAHOOCHEE	15	2	13.3	10	3	18.8	\$12,491	3	197.3	\$1,809
CHATTOOGA	25	3	11.0	38	10	37.6	\$68,406	46	173.5	\$121,853
CHEROKEE	112	12	9.5	132	33	22.0	\$303,041	146	86.9	\$185,295
CLARKE	84	9	9.8	125	31	33.5	\$264,981	33	27.6	\$50,127
CLAY	6	1	-	1	0	11.4	\$9,338	1	49.1	\$571
CLAYTON	206	23	11.1	202	51	20.2	\$688,862	97	34.9	\$155,062
CLINCH	9	1	-	4	1	14.5	\$10,458	2	29.0	\$5,605
COBB	496	55	10.3	708	177	27.3	\$1,738,396	366	53.7	\$527,272
COFFEE	31	3	10.3	54	14	35.3	\$97,753	36	91.0	\$82,859

Table 3. SUICIDES AND HOSPITALIZATIONS AND EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS FOR SELF-INFLICTED INJURY BY COUNTY, Georgia 1994–2002

	DEATHS, 1994–2002			HOSPITALIZATIONS, 1999–2002				EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS, 2002		
	Total No.	Avg. No. per year	Rate*	Total No.	Avg. Number per year	Rate*	Avg. Charges per year	Number	Rate	Charges
GEORGIA WIDE	7746	861	11.3	9918	2480	29.0	\$23,711,208	5435	60.7	\$8,128,592
GEORGIA COUNTIES										
COLQUITT	46	5	12.7	46	12	27.3	\$70,912	12	27.5	\$12,243
COLUMBIA	62	7	8.6	111	28	30.1	\$212,839	49	50.8	\$71,917
COOK	18	2	13.6	34	9	54.9	\$38,380	3	18.2	\$2,315
COWETA	88	10	12.7	97	24	25.7	\$184,113	45	46.2	\$60,383
CRAWFORD	16	2	14.4	15	4	29.4	\$27,904	10	75.5	\$14,481
CRISP	22	2	11.8	64	16	76.3	\$59,130	16	76.5	\$12,766
DADE	15	2	10.8	7	2	10.8	\$13,816	5	32.1	\$6,260
DAWSON	10	1	8.5	9	2	13.4	\$7,086	10	56.5	\$10,072
DECATUR	27	3	11.1	49	12	45.2	\$48,574	22	82.9	\$20,845
DEKALB	515	57	9.1	665	166	23.4	\$1,659,760	289	40.4	\$417,039
DODGE	17	2	9.8	54	14	69.8	\$78,158	16	81.8	\$22,812
DOOLY	14	2	14.0	22	6	47.6	\$26,640	2	17.6	\$467
DOUGHERTY	82	9	9.8	126	32	33.8	\$316,155	46	46.7	\$53,945
DOUGLAS	96	11	13.0	174	44	44.5	\$519,921	78	76.0	\$104,275
EARLY	11	1	10.2	3	1	6.4	\$1,955	7	62.3	\$10,174
ECHOLS	2	0	-	3	1	21.2	\$7,778	0	0.0	\$0
EFFINGHAM	41	5	14.4	35	9	22.3	\$92,032	40	92.3	\$46,417
ELBERT	26	3	14.5	26	7	33.1	\$43,419	10	51.8	\$15,855
EMANUEL	33	4	17.2	43	11	51.8	\$51,742	20	91.2	\$25,616
EVANS	12	1	13.1	7	2	17.5	\$87,368	8	69.9	\$11,050
FANNIN	35	4	19.5	23	6	29.8	\$26,670	11	55.3	\$11,207
FAYETTE	69	8	9.1	60	15	17.1	\$133,930	56	60.6	\$97,077
FLOYD	100	11	12.4	117	29	32.7	\$379,273	120	131.7	\$368,256
FORSYTH	93	10	12.9	77	19	19.7	\$275,888	51	43.5	\$66,341
FRANKLIN	34	4	19.2	51	13	63.2	\$54,670	26	132.9	\$24,852
FULTON	707	79	10.3	870	218	25.3	\$2,505,482	455	51.2	\$604,691
GILMER	33	4	17.4	21	5	22.5	\$40,151	31	125.5	\$45,410
GLASCOCK	2	0	-	5	1	54.2	\$5,391	2	86.0	\$6,240
GLYNN	76	8	12.3	90	23	34.3	\$219,055	48	73.3	\$60,604
GORDON	58	6	15.5	91	23	49.6	\$237,214	25	52.3	\$55,535
GRADY	31	3	14.9	27	7	29.6	\$47,164	8	33.9	\$8,120
GREENE	11	1	9.5	6	2	10.5	\$18,743	7	51.5	\$5,369
GWINNETT	448	50	10.0	475	119	18.5	\$1,187,574	400	57.3	\$726,595
HABERSHAM	44	5	13.9	45	11	30.5	\$79,953	52	133.6	\$44,898
HALL	131	15	11.1	74	19	12.9	\$227,975	82	51.4	\$100,367
HANCOCK	4	0	-	10	3	24.5	\$22,981	5	46.6	\$4,480
HARALSON	47	5	21.0	62	16	61.3	\$196,389	19	72.9	\$44,358
HARRIS	40	4	19.1	31	8	32.1	\$37,447	11	44.1	\$10,481
HART	29	3	14.4	34	9	39.1	\$42,425	14	65.7	\$13,935
HEARD	14	2	16.0	22	6	50.1	\$29,058	8	73.2	\$9,361
HENRY	125	14	14.2	119	30	24.2	\$378,671	86	58.8	\$124,260
HOUSTON	117	13	12.3	209	52	45.3	\$270,457	83	68.5	\$111,375

Table 3. SUICIDES AND HOSPITALIZATIONS AND EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS FOR SELF-INFLICTED INJURY BY COUNTY, Georgia 1994–2002

	DEATHS, 1994–2002			HOSPITALIZATIONS, 1999–2002				EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS, 2002		
	Total No.	Avg. No. per year	Rate*	Total No.	Avg. Number per year	Rate*	Ave. Charges per year	Number	Rate	Charges
GEORGIA WIDE	7746	861	11.3	9918	2480	29.0	\$23,711,208	5435	60.7	\$8,128,592
GEORGIA COUNTIES										
IRWIN	11	1	12.4	10	3	25.1	\$8,459	10	88.7	\$9,330
JACKSON	48	5	13.7	63	16	35.7	\$119,490	28	61.1	\$45,062
JASPER	14	2	15.2	9	2	20.0	\$35,131	7	56.8	\$7,244
JEFF DAVIS	15	2	13.7	34	9	66.9	\$48,631	5	39.7	\$4,948
JEFFERSON	19	2	12.4	20	5	31.7	\$61,117	11	70.8	\$14,444
JENKINS	2	0	-	12	3	37.5	\$160,588	6	73.4	\$5,986
JOHNSON	7	1	-	12	3	39.0	\$23,877	24	302.9	\$21,819
JONES	30	3	15.3	40	10	40.9	\$73,562	16	65.1	\$19,031
LAMAR	15	2	11.2	16	4	25.0	\$87,582	18	106.7	\$51,066
LANIER	1	0	-	8	2	27.7	\$10,374	6	80.3	\$5,705
LAURENS	45	5	11.3	77	19	43.8	\$149,457	28	63.5	\$50,164
LEE	24	3	11.5	37	9	35.5	\$83,738	14	47.0	\$22,804
LIBERTY	49	5	10.9	32	8	14.8	\$106,141	35	56.3	\$45,982
LINCOLN	9	1	-	15	4	48.1	\$15,199	1	13.4	\$3,313
LONG	6	1	-	1	0	2.0	\$237	3	24.6	\$3,767
LOWNDES	94	10	12.3	94	24	24.7	\$180,323	47	43.9	\$52,426
LUMPKIN	33	4	19.2	38	10	40.0	\$31,483	19	79.6	\$31,485
MACON	13	1	10.8	14	4	25.9	\$38,287	8	57.0	\$10,783
MADISON	27	3	11.9	45	11	43.0	\$125,855	11	40.8	\$10,816
MARION	6	1	-	9	2	32.7	\$8,597	5	69.5	\$5,322
MCDUFFIE	17	2	9.1	46	12	56.1	\$67,399	19	90.1	\$37,067
MCINTOSH	13	1	13.8	9	2	22.1	\$24,079	8	73.8	\$6,811
MERIWETHER	20	2	9.8	25	6	28.9	\$37,285	20	90.6	\$25,797
MILLER	7	1	-	6	2	26.5	\$5,203	5	88.2	\$6,422
MITCHELL	26	3	12.9	20	5	20.8	\$24,278	19	77.6	\$24,622
MONROE	24	3	12.8	37	9	41.9	\$99,133	8	34.4	\$9,890
MONTGOMERY	6	1	-	10	3	30.6	\$24,413	0	0.0	\$0
MORGAN	17	2	12.9	15	4	24.7	\$33,143	8	51.4	\$10,991
MURRAY	33	4	11.2	92	23	59.4	\$141,032	8	19.1	\$13,247
MUSCOGEE	171	19	10.6	367	92	49.3	\$721,803	167	87.9	\$164,854
NEWTON	58	6	11.5	117	29	44.9	\$264,453	72	95.9	\$63,669
OCONEE	16	2	7.3	20	5	18.4	\$56,726	5	20.0	\$7,168
OGLETHORPE	11	1	10.0	18	5	36.6	\$35,316	3	23.4	\$5,384
PAULDING	74	8	11.8	95	24	27.7	\$250,862	88	90.8	\$130,099
PEACH	26	3	13.0	26	7	26.2	\$38,697	32	123.0	\$38,590
PICKENS	29	3	14.7	23	6	25.2	\$47,890	20	79.1	\$36,048
PIERCE	15	2	11.3	19	5	30.1	\$74,575	11	73.3	\$11,545
PIKE	13	1	11.5	7	2	13.1	\$11,110	18	120.9	\$61,060
POLK	56	6	16.8	49	12	32.6	\$116,860	55	139.9	\$136,938
PULASKI	8	1	-	14	4	35.9	\$11,268	6	63.8	\$5,454
PUTNAM	25	3	15.0	20	5	27.0	\$21,214	8	44.1	\$4,549
QUITMAN	3	0	-	1	0	13.8	\$1,139	0	0.0	\$0

Table 3. SUICIDES AND HOSPITALIZATIONS AND EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS FOR SELF-INFLICTED INJURY BY COUNTY, Georgia 1994–2002

	DEATHS, 1994–2002			HOSPITALIZATIONS, 1999–2002				EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS, 2002		
	Total No.	Avg. No. per year	Rate*	Total No.	Avg. Number per year	Rate*	Avg. Charges per year	Number	Rate	Charges
GEORGIA WIDE	7746	861	11.3	9918	2480	29.0	\$23,711,208	5435	60.7	\$8,128,592
GEORGIA COUNTIES										
RABUN	14	2	9.2	10	3	17.5	\$18,901	9	67.9	\$11,305
RANDOLPH	6	1	-	4	1	14.2	\$1,692	5	70.6	\$6,521
RICHMOND	176	20	10.2	342	86	42.4	\$822,400	123	59.3	\$157,666
ROCKDALE	64	7	10.6	91	23	31.4	\$235,765	59	78.5	\$32,022
SCHLEY	3	0	-	4	1	28.5	\$5,696	0	0.0	\$0
SCREVEN	17	2	12.2	11	3	19.3	\$15,550	10	71.2	\$7,981
SEMINOLE	6	1	-	2	1	6.2	\$965	5	58.4	\$5,028
SPALDING	65	7	12.7	47	12	20.4	\$190,191	36	61.7	\$131,622
STEPHENS	23	3	10.3	42	11	42.9	\$56,939	21	86.9	\$25,525
STEWART	8	1	-	5	1	25.1	\$4,132	4	84.4	\$4,711
SUMTER	28	3	10.1	45	11	33.0	\$65,168	17	49.7	\$41,869
TALBOT	5	1	-	4	1	17.1	\$13,621	3	44.5	\$2,706
TALIAFERRO	4	0	-	1	0	14.6	\$2,704	1	58.3	\$3,119
TATTNALL	33	4	16.9	30	8	31.1	\$88,898	32	131.2	\$50,668
TAYLOR	14	2	18.5	7	2	21.0	\$11,920	3	34.2	\$4,341
TELFAIR	14	2	12.7	30	8	62.6	\$44,620	11	93.3	\$19,776
TERRELL	9	1	-	7	2	15.9	\$15,178	6	56.6	\$9,063
THOMAS	51	6	13.7	31	8	18.7	\$102,310	31	75.8	\$29,129
TIFT	41	5	12.6	32	8	20.5	\$83,793	29	73.1	\$51,632
TOOMBS	29	3	12.9	42	11	41.1	\$78,325	14	55.8	\$22,798
TOWNS	13	1	15.8	7	2	23.0	\$8,122	13	157.4	\$15,026
TREUTLEN	2	0	-	3	1	12.2	\$9,110	3	48.2	\$5,127
TROUP	69	8	13.4	131	33	56.8	\$168,348	25	42.9	\$22,572
TURNER	9	1	-	7	2	18.7	\$24,656	7	68.7	\$9,317
TWIGGS	14	2	15.6	11	3	26.2	\$22,847	5	48.0	\$7,868
UNION	18	2	11.8	21	5	29.2	\$13,526	8	51.7	\$6,172
UPSON	36	4	14.4	24	6	22.6	\$30,158	38	140.2	\$60,915
WALKER	55	6	10.1	65	16	27.0	\$137,365	60	99.7	\$91,466
WALTON	57	6	12.0	68	17	27.0	\$115,386	25	36.9	\$40,518
WARE	56	6	16.9	48	12	35.2	\$243,614	35	101.5	\$43,450
WARREN	6	1	-	6	2	25.2	\$10,614	12	200.2	\$19,670
WASHINGTON	24	3	13.0	22	6	26.4	\$29,433	4	20.0	\$8,915
WAYNE	33	4	14.5	24	6	22.6	\$57,656	9	32.8	\$9,188
WEBSTER	1	0	-	0	0	-	\$0	0	0.0	\$0
WHEELER	6	1	-	8	2	30.5	\$16,186	5	79.7	\$40,467
WHITE	33	4	19.1	25	6	31.0	\$71,057	15	70.5	\$16,601
WHITFIELD	99	11	13.6	137	34	40.1	\$244,952	37	43.0	\$54,075
WILCOX	8	1	-	7	2	19.9	\$5,484	4	45.6	\$2,704
WILKES	12	1	12.2	12	3	27.8	\$24,675	2	20.8	\$2,195
WILKINSON	17	2	19.0	11	3	27.5	\$14,168	3	31.2	\$2,995
WORTH	20	2	10.4	33	8	40.3	\$54,740	13	60.7	\$12,661

*Rate is the average annual age-adjusted rate

Table 4. SUICIDES, HOSPITALIZATIONS, AND EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS FOR SELF-INFLICTED INJURY BY DISTRICT, Georgia, 1994-2002

	DEATHS, 1994-2002			HOSPITALIZATIONS, 1999-2002				EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS, 2002		
	Total No.	Avg. No. per year	Rate*	Total No.	Avg. Number per year	Rate*	Avg. Charges per year	Number	Rate	Charges
GEORGIA WIDE	7746	861	11.3	9918	2480	29.0	\$23,711,208	5435	60.7	\$8,128,592
GEORGIA DISTRICTS										
Northwest (Rome)	554	62	12.7	700	175	33.3	\$1,783,527	570	103.8	\$1,209,219
North Georgia (Dalton)	340	38	12.4	428	107	31.2	\$803,736	253	69.3	\$345,282
North (Gainesville)	489	54	12.9	453	113	24.2	\$949,615	335	66.7	\$390,365
Cobb/Douglas	592	66	10.7	882	221	29.5	\$2,258,317	444	56.8	\$631,547
Fulton	707	79	10.3	870	218	25.3	\$2,505,482	455	51.2	\$604,691
Clayton county (Morrow)	206	23	11.1	202	51	20.2	\$688,862	97	34.9	\$155,062
East Metro (Lawrenceville)	570	63	10.1	683	171	21.9	\$1,687,792	531	62.3	\$822,286
DeKalb	515	57	9.1	665	166	23.4	\$1,659,760	289	40.4	\$417,039
LaGrange	648	72	12.7	739	185	29.1	\$1,711,880	412	60.7	\$760,844
South Central (Dublin)	132	15	10.8	233	58	43.0	\$389,673	98	71.9	\$169,791
North Central (Macon)	533	59	13.0	791	198	41.1	\$1,796,705	310	62.7	\$386,956
East Central (August)	382	43	10.4	669	167	39.3	\$1,536,288	281	64.4	\$378,234
West Central (Columbus)	354	39	11.6	588	147	41.6	\$1,017,099	245	67.8	\$267,201
South (Valdosta)	231	26	11.9	267	67	28.9	\$509,620	132	54.1	\$164,311
Southwest (Albany)	348	39	11.5	393	98	28.4	\$782,731	192	54.2	\$219,231
East (Savannah)	261	29	11.2	338	85	31.0	\$1,086,394	223	79.7	\$343,100
Southeast (Waycross)	339	38	12.4	373	93	29.0	\$1,059,124	216	64.8	\$348,756
Coastal (Brunswick)	204	23	11.5	190	48	21.8	\$473,886	147	62.9	\$205,976
Northeast (Athens)	342	38	11.3	454	114	30.0	\$1,010,718	205	47.9	\$308,701

*Rate is the average annual age-adjusted rate

Risk Factors and Protective Actions for

RISK FACTOR

Mental disorders—particularly mood disorders such as depression and bi-polar disorder

Substance abuse

Physical illness

Barriers to appropriate clinical care

Easy access to highly lethal (e.g., firearms) or common methods (e.g., sedatives) of suicide

Family history of suicide or previous suicide attempt

Financial loss or social isolation

Cultural or religious beliefs that suicide is a noble resolution

PROTECTIVE ACTION

Appropriate clinical care for mood disorders

Appropriate clinical care for substance abuse

Appropriate clinical care of physical illness

Improved access and coverage for mental health, substance abuse and physical health problems

Restricted access to highly lethal or common methods of suicide

Recognition and referral

Family and community support

Cultural or religious beliefs that discourage suicide

The Georgia Suicide Prevention Plan

In 1999, the Surgeon General released the Call to Action to Prevent Suicide, identifying suicide as a national priority because of its large impact not only upon victims but on family members, friends, and society at large. This was followed in 2001 by the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: Goals and Objectives for Action. The Georgia Suicide Prevention Plan was developed in 2001. It was modeled after the National Strategy and supported by funds allocated by the Georgia Legislature. The three primary Action Steps of the National and the Georgia Plan are Awareness, Intervention, and Methodology.

Action Step: Awareness

- Promote awareness that suicide is a serious public health problem and that many suicides are preventable.
- Develop broad-based support of suicide prevention.
- Develop and implement strategies to reduce the stigma associated with being a consumer of mental health, substance abuse and suicide prevention services.

Action Step: Intervention

- Develop and implement community based suicide prevention programs.
- Promote efforts to reduce access to lethal means of self harm.
- Implement training for recognition of at-risk behavior and delivery of effective treatment.

- Develop and promote effective professional practices and support services.
- Improve access to and community linkages with mental health and substance abuse services.
- Improve reporting and portrayals of suicidal behavior, mental illnesses and substance abuse in the entertainment and news media.

Action Step: Methodology

- Promote and support research and evaluation on suicide prevention.
- Improve and expand systems for data collection.

Summary and Recommendations

Suicide is a serious public health problem. Every year in Georgia, about 900 people die, 2800 are hospitalized, and 5400 visit hospital emergency departments because of intentionally self-inflicted injuries. The majority of persons dying are younger than 45 years of age, and the majority of suicides involve firearms.

Suicide is costly. In Georgia, the financial burden from hospitalization and emergency room charges alone exceeded \$40 million per year. In addition to the financial cost is the suffering experienced by the family members and friends of those that have died by suicide.

Suicide can be prevented. Suicide rates in Georgia can be reduced by a combination of 1) increased awareness of the risk factors for suicide, 2) improved services and programs, 3) restricted access to highly lethal and common methods of suicide, and 4) evaluation of suicide prevention efforts. Accomplishing these tasks will require collaboration among a broad spectrum of public and private organizations and agencies.

Technical Notes

Age-adjusted mortality rates for the US from 1980 through 2001 were obtained via WONDER at <http://wonder.cdc.gov> from the compressed mortality file compiled by the National Center for Health Statistics at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Deaths with underlying cause of death coded as suicide (E950-E959 in 1980-1998 and X60-X84, Y87.0 in 1999-2002) were selected.

Age-adjusted deaths rates for Georgia from 1980 through 1993 were also obtained via WONDER. Age-adjusted mortality rates for Georgia in 1994 through 2002 were based on death certificate data provided by the Vital Records Branch and Office of Health Information and Policy of the Georgia Division of Public Health. Deaths with underlying cause coded as suicide were selected. Age-adjusted death rates for Georgia were calculated using the direct method with population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. 2000 Standard Population as the standard.

The data set on hospitalizations and emergency room (ER) visits at acute care hospitals in Georgia in 2002 was provided by the Office of Health Information and Policy after compilation by the Georgia Hospital Association. ER data do not include persons who were admitted to the hospital from the ER. Analyses were restricted to Georgia residents. Hospitalizations and ER visits for self-inflicted injuries were defined as those with an injury code for the principal diagnosis and a self-harm code (E950-959) for any other diagnosis, as recommended by the State and Territorial Injury Prevention Directors Association (STIPDA). Several hundred patients with a principal diagnosis of a mental health disorder (not an injury) plus a self-harm code were excluded from our analyses. Age-adjusted hospitalization and ER rates were calculated using the direct method with population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. 2000 Standard Population as the standard.

Age-adjusted mortality rates for counties and districts were calculated using data from death certificates provided by Vital Statistics Branch and Office of Health Information and Policy. The number of deaths for 1994 through 2002 was determined by selecting records with underlying cause of death coded as E950-959 in 1994-1998 (ICD-9) or X60-X84, Y87.0 in 1999-2002 (ICD-10). The number of deaths for 1994-1998 was multiplied by the "comparability ratio" provided by NCHS (National Vital Statistics Reports, Vol 49, No. 3) for suicide (0.9962), before calculating age-adjusted mortality rates. The "comparability ratio" compensates for the change in coding systems. Age-adjusted mortality rates were calculated using the direct method with population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. 2000 Standard Population as the standard.

Data on suicidal ideation and behavior were obtained from the 2003 Georgia Student Health Survey, a written survey conducted in a representative sample of public middle schools and high schools throughout the state. The data were weighted to reflect the likelihood of sampling each student and to reduce bias by compensating for differing patterns of nonresponse. Data on firearms in households were obtained from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, a telephone survey conducted

annually with a sample of adults aged > 18 years. The sample is weighted to reflect an individual's probability of selection and to adjust for nonresponse. In 2001, respondents were asked "Are there any firearms now kept in or around your home? Include those kept in a garage, outdoor storage area, car, truck, or other motor vehicle." If they answered "yes," they were asked "Is there a firearm around your home that is now both loaded and unlocked?" National estimates of firearm ownership and storage practices were taken from the article, Johnson RM, et al., Firearm ownership and storage practices, U.S. households, 1992-2002. *Am J Prev Med* 2004;27:173-182. The association between firearms and suicide in the home is described in a recent article by Dahlberg LL, et al. (Guns in the home and risk of a violent death in the home: Findings from a national study. *Am J Epidemiol* 2004;10:929-936).

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AFSP
American Foundation
for Suicide Prevention



DHR
GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN RESOURCES

Agencies Collaborating to Prevent Suicide

GEORGIA

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
Southeastern Division
Phone: 1-888-333-2377 (Toll free)

Clinic for Education, Treatment, and
Prevention of Addiction (CETPA)
Phone: 770-452-8630

Georgia Department of Education
Learning Support Division
404-657-8332

Georgia Department of Human Resources
Division of Aging Services 404-657-5258
Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and
Addictive Diseases
Adolescent Mental Health 404-657- 2260
Prevention Services 404-657-2260
Division of Public Health
Family Health Branch Mental Health 404-463-2448
Injury Prevention Section 404-657-6322

Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network
Phone: 404-758-4500
Phone: 1-800-832-8645 (Toll free)

Georgia School Counselors Association
Phone: 770-785-9302

Lifekeeper Foundation
Lifekeeper Faces of Suicide Quilts
Phone: 678-937-9297
Website: www.lifekeeper.org

The Link Counseling Center and
Link's National Resource Center for Suicide Prevention and
Aftercare
Phone: 404-256-9797

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)-Georgia
Phone: 770-234-0855
Phone: 1-800-728-1052 (Toll free)

National Mental Health Association of Georgia
Phone: 404-527-7175

National Organization for People of Color Against Suicide
(NOPCAS), Georgia
Phone: 404-505-7703

Suicide Prevention Action Network Georgia (SPAN GA)
Website: www.span.ga.yahoogroups.com

Suicide Prevention Coalition of Georgia (SPCGA)
Phone: 678-405-2277
Website: www.spcga.yahoogroups.com

Time for Community Coalition
Phone: 404-687-9891

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCES

American Association of Suicidology (AAS)
Phone: 202-237-2280
E-mail: ssilive16@ixnetcom.com
Website: www.suicidology.org

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)
Phone: 1-888-333-2377 (Toll free)
E-mail: inquiry@ASFP.org
Website: www.afsp.org

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
Division of Violence Prevention
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Phone: 770-488-4362
E-mail: dvpinfo@cdc.gov
Website: www.cdc.gov

National Depressive and Manic-Depressive Association
(NDMDA)
Phone: 1-800-826-3632 (Toll free)
Website: www.ndmda.org

National Mental Health Association (NMHA)
Phone: 1-800-969-NMHA (Toll free)
Website: www.nmha.org

National Organization for People of Color Against Suicide
(NOPCAS)
Website: www.cities.com/NOPCAS

Suicide Prevention Resource Center
Phone: 1-877-438-7772
Website: www.sprc.org

National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center
Phone: 1-866-SAFEYOUTH
Website: www.safeyouth.org

SAVE (Suicide Awareness\Voices of Education)
Phone: 952-946-7998
E-mail: save@save.org
Website: www.save.org

Suicide Prevention Action Network USA (SPAN USA)
Phone: 202-449-3600
E-mail: info@spanusa.org
Website: www.spanusa.org

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)
Phone: 301-443-4513
E-mail: nimhinfo@nih.gov
Website: www.nimh.nih.gov
National Alliance for The Mentally Ill (NAMI)
Phone: 1-800-950-6264 (Toll free)
Website: www.nami.org