

Teen Deaths

Definition

Teen deaths is the number of deaths among youth ages 15-19 and the rate per 100,000 teens.

Data in context

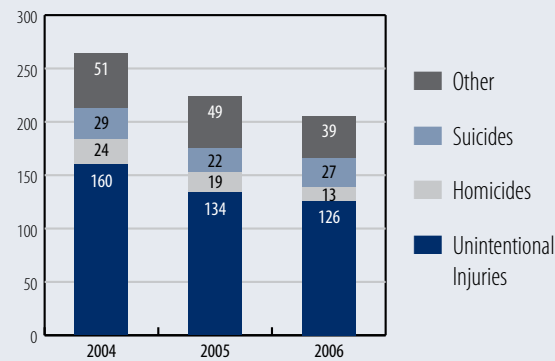
Teen years are a period of transition into adulthood for youth and can include increased exposure to health and safety risks. For some youth, ineffective or absent safety laws, under-resourced environments, and violence silence their opportunities. The most prevalent causes of teen deaths – motor vehicle accidents, suicide, and homicide – are also the most preventable.¹

In 2005, Kentucky ranked 36th in the nation for deaths among teens with a rate of 83 per 100,000 compared to 65 deaths per 100,000 nationally.² Kentucky's teen death rate increased while the national teen death rate declined, though significant improvements in 2006 to Kentucky's graduated driver's license and seat belt laws have already saved teen lives. The graduated driver's license, for example, is credited with reducing teen deaths from motor vehicle crashes from 36 to 26 in the same three-month time span from 2006 to 2007.³

Of counties with rates calculated, Christian, Daviess, and Madison Counties had the lowest rates of teen deaths between 2004 and 2006. Death rates were more than double the state rate in Butler, Casey, Jackson, Letcher, Lincoln, Logan, McCreary, Magoffin, Martin, Morgan, and Woodford Counties.

Teen death rates for White youth are higher than those for Black youth (84 per 100,000 and 76 per 100,000, respectively). Though the number of deaths among Hispanic youth accounts for less than 4 percent of all Kentucky teen deaths, the rate of 148 per 100,000 is notably higher than the state rate, primarily due to a high rate of unintentional injuries. Most teen deaths among all races result from unintentional injuries, led by motor vehicle crashes, which accounted for 42 percent of all teen deaths in Kentucky between 2004 and 2006.⁴ While the disparities in the data are not fully understood, encouraging safe driving practices among all teens is important.

Teen Deaths by Cause, 2004 to 2006



Source: Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Vital Statistics Branch, processed by Kentucky Population Research at the University of Louisville Urban Studies Institute.

Suicide was the second leading cause of death among teens in Kentucky, with factors such as family history of suicide, depression or other mental illness, alcohol or drug abuse, and access to lethal methods increasing the risk of suicide.^{5,6} Although teen suicide occurs less frequently, the rate is increasing after many years of decline,⁷ accounting for 11 percent of Kentucky teen deaths from 2004 to 2006.⁸ Suicide was more prevalent among White youth than youth of color in Kentucky, accounting for 12 percent of all deaths among White youth in 2004-2006, as compared to 8 percent of deaths among Hispanic youth and 5 percent of deaths among Black youth. This data points to the need for greater supports and mental health services for all youth.

Exposure to domestic violence in the home, school disengagement, social alienation, and lack of employment opportunities are among the leading predictors for youth violence.⁹ Homicide is the third leading cause of teen deaths and can be prevented by providing youth with safe environments and connection to their community.¹⁰ In Kentucky, 8 percent of teen deaths resulted from homicide. While the number of deaths by homicide is highest among White youth (28 deaths), the higher proportion of Black youth living in under-resourced neighborhoods contributes to higher rates (31 per 100,000 among Black youth, or 26

deaths). Successful prevention strategies include parent- and family-based programs to reduce violence in the home, teaching conflict resolution skills to youth, and mentoring programs to provide adult role models for at-risk youth.¹¹

Data Source: Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Vital Statistics Branch, processed by Kentucky Population Research at the University of Louisville Urban Studies Institute. Number of youth in 2000 from the U.S. Decennial Census. Number of youth in 2005 from Kentucky Population Research at the University of Louisville Urban Studies Institute.

Data Note: All data refer to totals over the 3-year periods of 1999-2001 and 2004-2006. Data are reported by youth's county of residence.

Rate Calculation: (average number of deaths among youth ages 15-19 between 1999-2001 * 100,000) / (number of youth ages 15-19 in 2000) (average number of deaths among youth ages 15-19 between 2004-2006 * 100,000) / (number of youth ages 15-19 in 2005)

- 1 Annie E. Casey Foundation (2005). *KIDS COUNT Indicator Brief: Reducing the Teen Death Rate*. Available at <http://www.aecf.org>. Accessed August 2008.
- 2 Annie E. Casey Foundation (2007). *2007 KIDS COUNT Data Book: State Profiles of Child Well-Being*. Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- 3 Governor Ernie Fletcher's Communications Office (October 17, 2007). "Graduated Drivers' License Law Reducing Teenage Fatalities." Press release. Available at <http://migration.kentucky.gov/Newsroom/agovernor/20071017license.htm>. Accessed October 2008.
- 4 Data obtained from Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, July 2008, processed by Kentucky Population Research at the University of Louisville Urban Studies Institute.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control website. *Suicide Prevention: Youth Suicide*. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov>. Accessed September 2008.
- 7 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2007). "Suicide Trends Among Youth and Adults Aged 10-24 Years – United States 1990-2004." *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, vol. 56, no. 35.
- 8 Data obtained from Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, July 2008, processed by Kentucky Population Research at the University of Louisville Urban Studies Institute.
- 9 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. (2008). *Understanding Youth Violence Fact Sheet*. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/YVFactSheet.pdf>. Accessed August 2008.
- 10 Annie E. Casey Foundation (2005). *KIDS COUNT Indicator Brief: Reducing the Teen Death Rate*. Available at <http://www.aecf.org>. Accessed August 2008.
- 11 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. (2005). *Youth Violence Fact Sheet*. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/yvfacts.htm>. Accessed August 2008.

Teen deaths (number & rate per 100,000 teens ages 15-19)

	1999-2001		2004-2006	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Kentucky	655	76	694	83
Adair	3	*	1	*
Allen	3	*	3	*
Anderson	4	*	3	*
Ballard	2	*	2	*
Barren	3	*	10	139
Bath	3	*	3	*
Bell	3	*	5	*
Boone	9	49	5	*
Bourbon	1	*	2	*
Boyd	7	70	6	66
Boyle	4	*	5	*
Bracken	0	*	1	*
Breathitt	5	*	3	*
Breckinridge	3	*	4	*
Bullitt	7	53	10	71
Butler	2	*	6	212
Caldwell	2	*	4	*
Calloway	6	66	7	79
Campbell	8	41	12	63
Carlisle	2	*	0	*
Carroll	2	*	1	*
Carter	3	*	7	129
Casey	4	*	9	297
Christian	15	97	9	55
Clark	10	152	6	94
Clay	3	*	5	*
Clinton	3	*	4	*
Crittenden	1	*	5	*
Cumberland	2	*	0	*
Daviess	10	48	8	41
Edmonson	1	*	1	*
Elliott	2	*	1	*
Estill	5	*	3	*
Fayette	36	65	34	63
Fleming	3	*	2	*
Floyd	8	86	4	*
Franklin	6	61	4	*
Fulton	3	*	0	*
Gallatin	1	*	1	*
Garrard	2	*	4	*

	1999-2001		2004-2006	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Grant	5	*	5	*
Graves	14	185	6	83
Grayson	7	140	2	*
Green	0	*	3	*
Greenup	5	*	6	84
Hancock	1	*	3	*
Hardin	25	106	14	61
Harlan	2	*	8	127
Harrison	7	182	4	*
Hart	3	*	3	*
Henderson	4	*	5	*
Henry	1	*	2	*
Hickman	2	*	0	*
Hopkins	3	*	6	68
Jackson	1	*	7	270
Jefferson	96	71	92	70
Jessamine	9	101	11	117
Johnson	3	*	5	*
Kenton	11	36	18	58
Knott	4	*	3	*
Knox	4	*	5	*
LaRue	3	*	3	*
Laurel	11	100	14	139
Lawrence	8	227	1	*
Lee	2	*	3	*
Leslie	5	*	4	*
Letcher	6	104	8	174
Lewis	4	*	3	*
Lincoln	4	*	8	172
Livingston	2	*	3	*
Logan	3	*	9	181
Lyon	2	*	0	*
McCracken	8	63	7	60
McCreary	8	186	9	226
McLean	1	*	0	*
Madison	6	32	9	47
Magoffin	1	*	6	239
Marion	5	*	3	*
Marshall	3	*	7	127
Martin	2	*	6	241
Mason	3	*	4	*

	1999-2001		2004-2006	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Meade	10	174	2	*
Menifee	0	*	2	*
Mercer	7	180	4	*
Metcalfe	2	*	4	*
Monroe	4	*	2	*
Montgomery	2	*	3	*
Morgan	0	*	6	236
Muhlenberg	6	91	4	*
Nelson	7	84	7	85
Nicholas	5	*	1	*
Ohio	4	*	1	*
Oldham	9	94	4	*
Owen	3	*	1	*
Owsley	1	*	2	*
Pendleton	2	*	4	*
Perry	10	152	5	*
Pike	12	82	14	112
Powell	5	*	2	*
Pulaski	10	90	9	82
Robertson	0	*	0	*
Rockcastle	2	*	2	*
Rowan	6	82	8	116
Russell	1	*	3	*
Scott	6	78	8	98
Shelby	4	*	9	122
Simpson	3	*	3	*
Spencer	1	*	4	*
Taylor	3	*	6	119
Todd	1	*	5	*
Trigg	2	*	4	*
Trimble	3	*	2	*
Union	5	*	1	*
Warren	7	28	13	56
Washington	2	*	4	*
Wayne	5	*	6	152
Webster	2	*	2	*
Whitley	6	70	12	141
Wolfe	1	*	1	*
Woodford	5	*	9	180

* Rates were not calculated for counties with fewer than 6 occurrences.