**DEFINITION**

Teen deaths is the number of deaths from all causes among teens ages 15 to 19, per 100,000 teens. The data are reported by place of residence, not place of death.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Adolescents’ health and safety can be threatened by a variety of risk behaviors, including alcohol, drug abuse, and violence. Teens’ mental health, including mood disorders and depression, further impacts their safety. Nationally in 2016, 75% of teen deaths were accidents, homicides, and suicides, all of which are preventable. Factors that protect against teen deaths include parent and family involvement, access to mental health services, state regulated teen driving programs, as well as violence and substance abuse prevention programs. Individual and group therapeutic programs in family, school, and community settings can support positive behavior changes and increase mental health awareness.

Between 2013 and 2017 in Rhode Island, 58% of the 73 teen deaths caused by injury were unintentional. Twenty-nine percent of all injury deaths involved motor vehicles. Among the 26 teens ages 15 to 19 killed in Rhode Island motor vehicle crashes between 2013 and 2017, 12 were driving, eight were passengers in vehicles driven by others, four were pedestrians, and two were bicyclists.

Two (17%) of the teen drivers who died in motor vehicle crashes in Rhode Island between 2013 and 2017 had been drinking, and two teen fatalities occurred with adult drivers who had been drinking.

Ten (59%) of teen drivers and passengers killed in automobile accidents in Rhode Island between 2013 and 2017 were not wearing a seatbelt.

In 2017, 37% of Rhode Island high school students reported texting or e-mailing while driving on at least one day in the month prior to taking the Rhode Island Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Fourteen percent reported riding in a vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking in the prior month, and 7% reported that they never or rarely wear a seatbelt while riding in a car driven by someone else.

**REFERENCES**


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