

DEFINITION

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

SIGNIFICANCE

The main threats to adolescents' health and safety are risk behaviors, including substance abuse and violence. Teens' emotional health, including self-esteem and mental health, further impacts their safety. Nationally, the most prevalent causes of teen deaths are motor vehicle collisions, homicides and suicides, all of which are preventable.¹

Factors that protect against teen deaths include parent involvement, access to mental health services designed for adolescents, state policies regulating teens' driving, prevention of teen drinking and driving, reduced access to guns, and school and community programs to reduce risk behaviors and support positive and healthy youth development.²

Between 2004 and 2008, there were 153 deaths of teens ages 15 to 19 in Rhode Island, a rate of 38.5 per 100,000 teens.^{3,4} Of the teens ages 15 to 19 who died between 2004 and 2008, 57 (37%) lived in the core cities and 96 (63%) lived in the remainder of the state.⁵

Of the teen deaths between 2004 and 2008, 39 (25%) were due to disease, 39 (25%) were due to intentional injury, 72 (47%) were due to unintentional injuries, one (1%) was due to undetermined injuries, and two (1%) were of unknown causes. Of the intentional injuries, 20 were homicides and 19 were suicides (3 females and 16 males).⁶

According to the *2009 Rhode Island Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, 7% of male high school students and 8% of female high school students in Rhode Island reported having attempted suicide in the previous year, and 9% of male high school students and 15% of female high school students reported seriously considering suicide in the previous year. Eight percent of female middle school students in Rhode Island and 4% of their male peers reported having ever attempted suicide.⁷

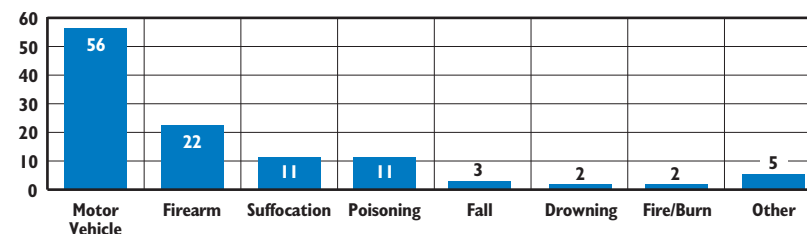
Teen Deaths		
(Deaths per 100,000 Youth Ages 15-19)		
	2000	2006
RI	52	34
US	67	64
National Rank*		1st
New England Rank**		1st

*1st is best; 50th is worst

**1st is best; 6th is worst

Source: *Kids Count data book: State profiles in child well-being 2009*. (2009). Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Injury Deaths by Cause, Teens Ages 15 to 19, 2004-2008



n=112

Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 2004-2008.

- ◆ Between 2004 and 2008 in Rhode Island, nearly two-thirds (64%) of the 112 deaths caused by injury were unintentional. Half of all injury deaths (50%) were caused by motor vehicle collisions.⁸
- ◆ Among the 33 males ages 15 to 19 killed in Rhode Island motor vehicle crashes between 2004 and 2008, 17 (52%) were driving, 13 (39%) were passengers in vehicles driven by other teenage boys ages 15 to 19, one was a passenger in a vehicle driven by an adult, one was a pedestrian and one was a skateboarder. Between 2004 and 2008, 17 teen girls in Rhode Island died in motor vehicle accidents. Of these, 6 (35%) were driving, 10 (59%) were passengers and one was a pedestrian.⁹
- ◆ Six (26%) of the teen drivers who died in motor vehicle crashes between 2004 and 2008 had been drinking and 9 (38%) of the teen passengers who died had also been drinking.¹⁰
- ◆ According to the *2009 Rhode Island Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, 23% of Rhode Island public high school students reported that during the month before the survey they rode in a vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking, and 13% reported that they never or rarely wore a seatbelt when riding in a car.¹¹

References

^{1,2} *KIDS COUNT indicator brief: Reducing the teen death rate*. (2009). Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

^{3,5,6} Rhode Island Department of Health, Hospital Discharge Database, 2004-2008.

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates, 2004-2008.

^{7,11} Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Health Data and Analysis, *2009 Rhode Island Youth Risk Behavior Survey*.

^{8,9,10} Department of Transportation, National Center for Statistics and Analysis, Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), 2004-2008. Analysis by the Rhode Island Department of Health, 2009.