



SUMMARY OF YOUTH SUICIDE ATTEMPT-CLASSIFIED EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS – 2023

The Los Angeles (LA) County Department of Public Health's Acute Communicable Disease Control Program utilizes self-reported symptoms and diagnosis codes ("syndromic data") from patients presenting to local emergency departments (ED) to detect incidents and assess trends in health conditions important to public health throughout LA County.

Common uses for syndromic data include:

- Monitoring trends in emerging diseases and conditions (e.g. COVID-19)
- Monitoring seasonal patterns of disease (e.g. influenza or RSV)
- Case detection for infectious diseases (e.g. meningococcal disease)

Using syndromic data to monitor injury-related incidents is a new approach for LA County, especially regarding suicide attempts.

Flow of Data Sharing:

As mentioned, syndromic data originates from participating emergency departments in Los Angeles County. Currently, 90% of hospitals with EDs in LA County share their syndromic hospital emergency department data with the Los Angeles County Public Health Department, allowing timely trends in demographic and clinical data to be analyzed.

How Are Suicide Attempt-Classified Visits Identified?

As outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a suicide attempt-classified visit is defined when a patient's medical chart specifies treatment for a suicide attempt or a combination of both self-harm and suicidal ideation. Suicide attempt-classified visits include a range of outcomes from being treated and released from the emergency department, in-patient hospitalization, and death. ED visits are defined as suicide attempts by searching patient chief complaint and diagnosis codes for specific search terms. The list of search terms was adapted from the CDC's suicide attempt definition version 2.0*.

How is Los Angeles County Using This Information?

The rate trends and demographic data are being used to identify populations that have an overrepresentation of suicide attempt-classified visits to inform suicide prevention awareness and crisis response efforts. We hope by making this information publicly available, it will provide our partners and community members with valuable insights into youth suicide attempt trends within Los Angeles County.

What are the Limitations?

Syndromic hospital emergency department data has several limitations: (1) it cannot capture the true number of suicide attempt-classified ED visits in a population because it is used to look at trends over time, (2) it relies on information provided in the chief complaint and diagnosis field and is not as comprehensive as full patient health records, and (3) it likely underestimates the true burden of suicide attempts. There is a risk that various complex indicators are not considered or ascertained during patient evaluation and diagnosis in ED. In addition, some individuals do not seek medical care after their suicide attempt.

*[CDC Suicide Attempt v2 Fact Sheet and Technical Brief Document](#)

Suicide is the leading cause of death among Los Angeles youth aged 10-24 years, and for each death, many more youth attempt suicide or experience other forms of suicidal behavior¹. The Youth Suicide Prevention Pilot Program is focused on reporting youth suicide attempts and ensuring all youth in Los Angeles can access the resources they need to support their ongoing mental health and wellbeing. Please see the following resources available for support:

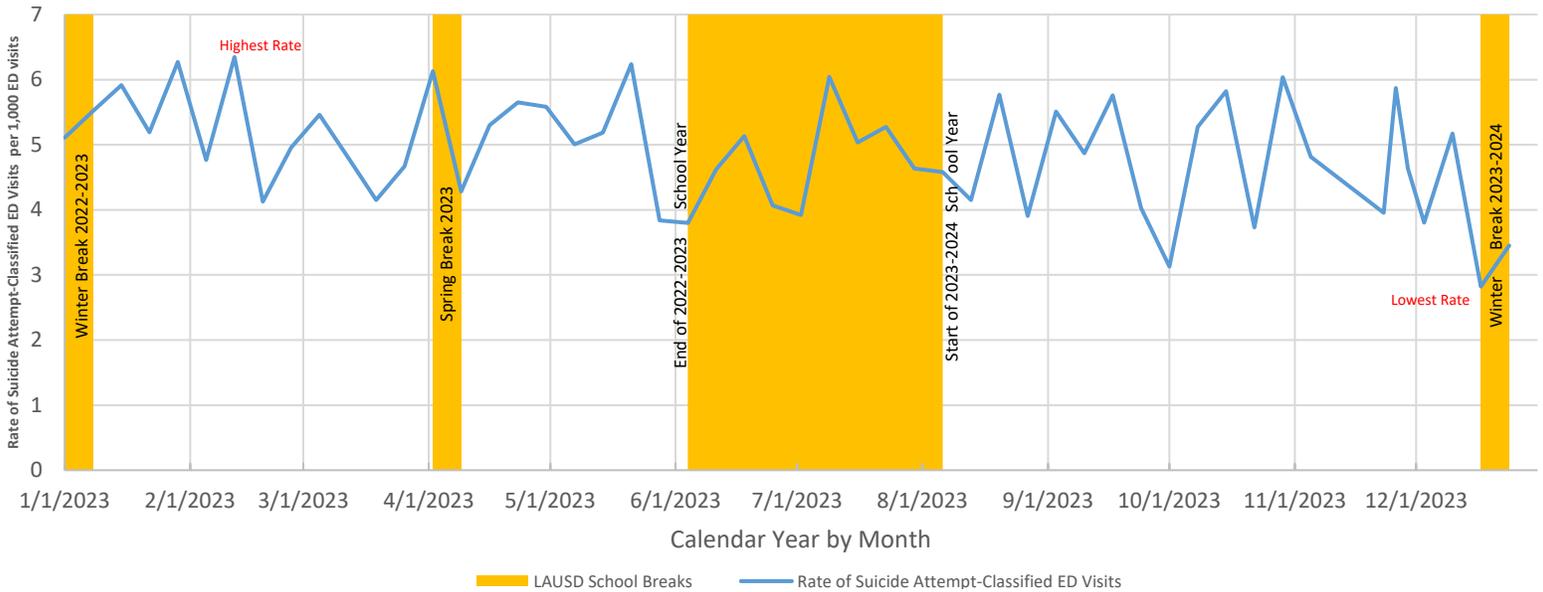
<p>SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE</p> <p>988 Suicide Prevention & Crisis Lifeline: Call or text 9-8-8</p> <p>24/7 Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741 or text 443-787-7678 on WhatsApp</p> <p>LA County Department of Mental Health 24/7 Help Line: Call (800) 854 7771</p> <p>The Trevor Project: Call 1-866-488-7386 or text START to 678-678</p> <p>California Youth Crisis Line: Call or text 1-800-843-5200</p> <p>Teen Line: call 310-855-4673 (6:00-10:00PT) or text TEEN to 839863 (6:00-9:00PT)</p> <p>For immediate safety concerns, go to your closest emergency room, psychiatric hospital or dial 911. Ask for psychiatric emergency support, if available.</p>	<p>GET INFORMATION</p> <p>Los Angeles County Office of Violence Prevention</p> <p>Email us: ovp@ph.lacounty.gov</p>  <p>Scan for more resources ph.lacounty.gov/ovp/suicideprevention.htm</p>
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¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. National Vital Statistics System, Mortality 1999-2020 and Mortality 2018-2022 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released in 2021 and 2024. Data are from the Multiple Cause of Death Files, 1999-2020 and 2018-2022, as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/mcd-icd10-expanded.html> on Sep 9, 2024 2:03:35 PM



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Figure 1: Weekly suicide attempt-classified ED visits among youth aged 10-24 per 1,000 ED visits, 01/1/2023 to 12/31/2023, LA County.



Week of the Calendar Year corresponds to CDC week, a standardized way of counting weeks to compare data over time. The first week ends on the first Saturday of January, as long as it is at least four days into the month. There on, each week begins on a Sunday and ends on a Saturday. School district holidays sourced from Los Angeles Unified School District Instructional School Calendar: Winter Break 2022-2023: Ends 1/6/2023, Spring Break: 4/3/2023 to 4/7/2023, Summer Break: 6/9/2023 to 8/11/2023, Winter Break 2023 -2024: Begins 12/18/2023.

Figure 2: Comparison of ED visit breakdown among youth aged 10-24 by overall ED visits and suicide attempt-classified ED visits by Age Group (year), 01/1/2023 to 12/31/2023, LA County.

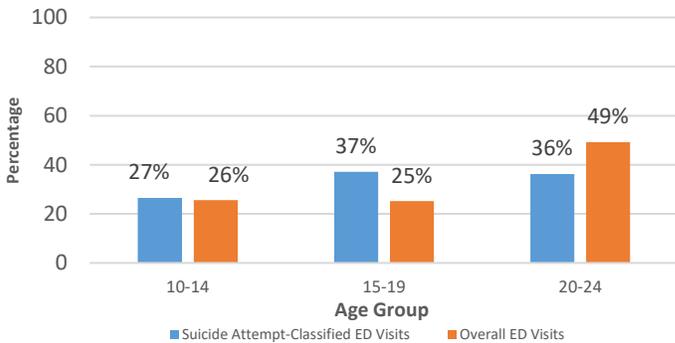


Figure 3: Comparison of ED visit breakdown among youth aged 10-24 by overall ED visits and suicide attempt-classified ED visits by Sex, 01/1/2023 to 12/31/2023, LA County.

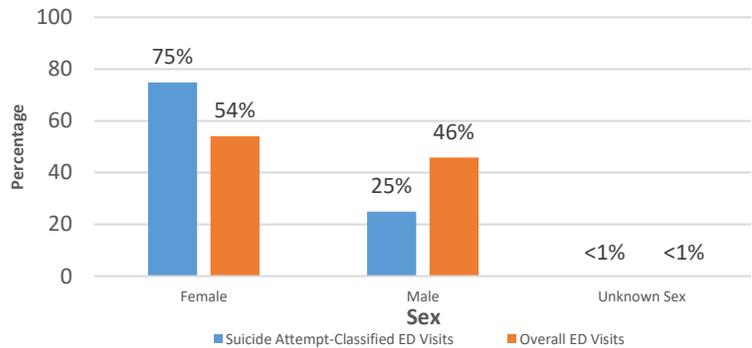


Figure 4: Comparison of ED visit breakdown among youth aged 10-24 by overall ED visits and suicide attempt-classified ED visits by Race/Ethnicity, 01/1/2023 to 12/31/2023, LA County.

