

INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH SAVES LIVES AND MONEY

Suicide

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States. In 2017, someone died by suicide every 11 minutes.¹ Tragically, statistics like this seem to be getting worse, not better, as the number of suicides rises across the country.² Nationwide, researchers are working to better understand the causes of suicide, develop new tools to identify and assist at-risk individuals, and in other ways address this growing public health problem.

TODAY

47,173

Americans died by suicide in 2017.³

Suicide rates have gone up

30%

or more since 1999 in half of all U.S. states.⁴

Suicide is the **second leading cause of death** among Americans aged 15-24.⁵

COST

Suicide costs the U.S. almost

\$70 billion

per year between lifetime medical expenses and lost work.¹

Nationally, non-fatal suicide attempts cost

\$5.25 billion

in medical costs and indirect economic costs.⁷

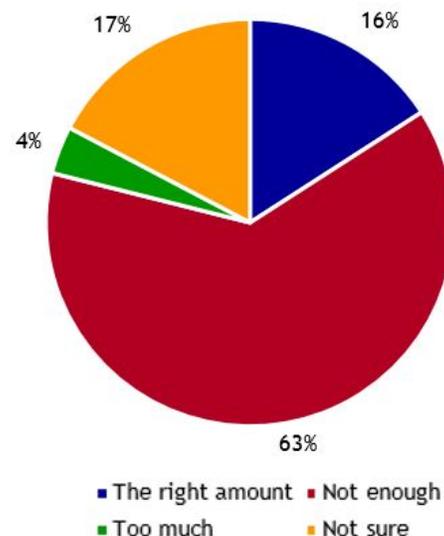
Research Delivers Solutions

Research has explored whether there are differences between people who **think** about suicide and those who **attempt** suicide. One study compared these groups in a **cognitive task** that measured **inhibition**, or the ability to stop an impulse. Based on the brain activity measured, the researchers found that participants who attempted suicide were less able to detect the need for inhibitory control.⁸

In 2017, other researchers examined data from numerous studies and found that “**thwarted belongingness**” (feelings of isolation, of not belonging), and “**perceived burdensomeness**” (feelings of being “dispensable,” more of a burden than of worth), were the two most consistent emotions among individuals contemplating suicide and among those who attempt it.⁹

Additional research examined the effectiveness of a **family based cognitive therapy** called **Safe Alternatives for Teens and Youths (SAFETY)**, which teaches both youth and their parents how to safely deal with potential triggers and harmful thoughts or behaviors. The researchers enrolled adolescents who had self-harmed or attempted suicide and their parents in the SAFETY program and found reduced suicide attempts compared to those not in SAFETY therapy. For every three enrollees, researchers estimated one possible attempt was prevented.¹⁰

The U.S. spends about 5 cents of each health dollar on research to prevent, cure and treat disease and disability. Do you think that this is too much, the right amount, or not enough?



Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2019

Suicide

Then. Now. Imagine.

THEN

A lack of data and difficulty in identifying predictive risk factors made recognizing patients at risk for suicide challenging for clinicians.¹¹

NOW

Social media posts offer researchers large amounts of data, allowing them to pinpoint patterns in suicide language online and protect those at risk.¹²

IMAGINE

A world without suicide.

Though more men die by suicide than women, the rate of

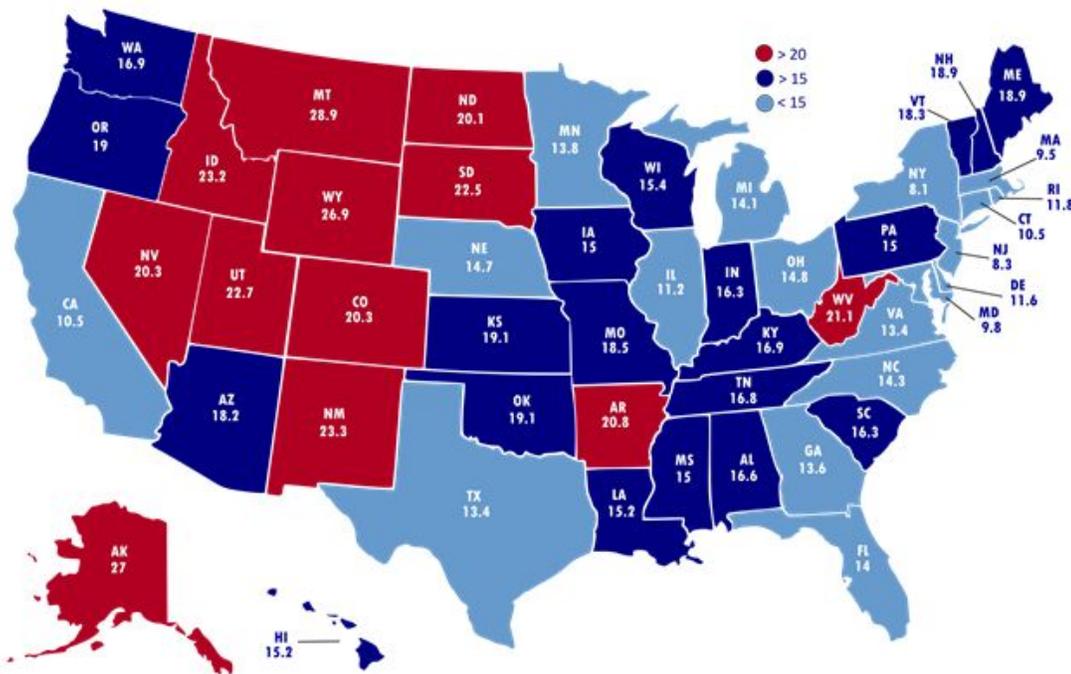
women

who died by suicide increased

53%

between 1999-2017, compared to 26% for men.²

Number of Deaths by Suicide per 100,000 Residents in 2017



SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, Center for Disease Control

1. "Preventing Suicide", CDC, 2019.
2. "Suicide Mortality in the United States 1999-2017", CDC, 2018.
3. "Suicide Statistics", American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, 2017.
4. "Suicide Rates Rising Across the U.S.", CDC, 2018.
5. "Deaths: Leading Causes for 2017", National Vital Stats Report, 2018.
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7. Shephard et al. "Suicide and Suicidal Attempts in the U.S.: Costs and Policy Implications" *Jrnl of the American Association of Suicidology*, 2015.
8. Albanese et al. Impaired Conflict Detection Differentiates Suicide Attempters From Ideating Nonattempters: Evidence From Event-Related Potentials" *Biological Psychiatry*, 2019.
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