KidsData

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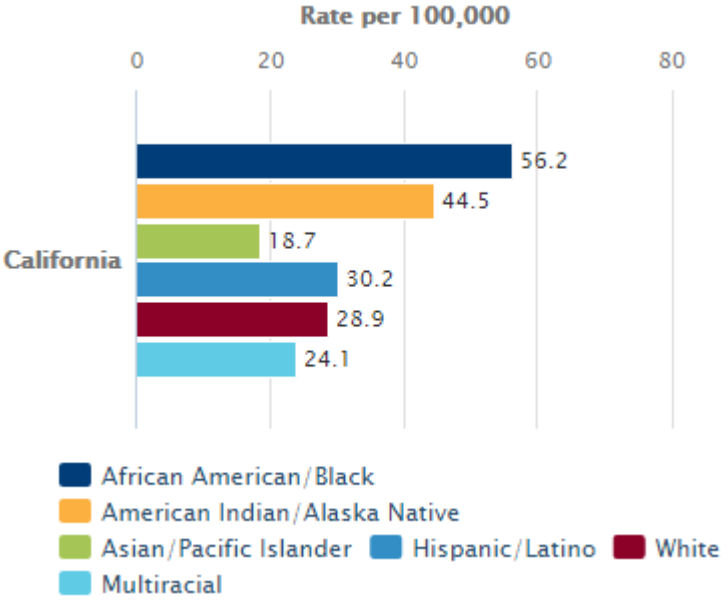
Child and Young Adult Deaths in California

Deaths Among Children and Young Adults, by Age Group and Cause: 2020

California	Number			
Cause of Death	Ages 1-4	Ages 5-14	Ages 15-19	Ages 20-24
Birth Defects	42	37	21	30
Cancer	44	106	57	104
COVID-19	S	S	14	62
Diseases of the Heart	S	15	20	47
Homicide	14	31	215	342
Suicide	N/A	54	174	299
Unintentional Injuries	103	153	599	1,251

Definition: Number of deaths among children and young adults ages 1-24, by age group and leading causes of child and young adult death in California (e.g., in 2020, there were 106 deaths due to cancer among California children ages 5-14).
Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, Death Statistical Master Files; CDC WONDER Online Database, Underlying Cause of Death (May 2022).

Death Rate Among Children and Young Adults, by Race/Ethnicity: 2015-2017



Definition: Number of deaths per 100,000 children and young adults ages 1-24, by race/ethnicity (e.g., in 2015-2017, the death rate among Hispanic/Latino children and young adults in California was 30.2 per 100,000).
Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, Death Statistical Master Files (Apr. 2020); California Dept. of Finance, Population Estimates and Projections (Apr. 2020); CDC WONDER Online Database, Underlying Cause of Death (May 2020).

Firearm Death Rate Among Children and Young Adults Ages 0-24

What It Is

Kidsdata.org provides data on child and young adult deaths in the following indicators:

- Number of deaths among young people ages 1-24 by age group and leading cause of death
- Rates of child and young adult death overall, by age group, and by race/ethnicity
- Death rates for leading causes of death by age group and by race/ethnicity

Numbers and rates of firearm-related deaths among young people ages 0-24 also are provided, at the county level overall and at the state and national level by race/ethnicity. Additionally, California and U.S. data on firearms deaths by intent/cause (assault/homicide, self-inflicted/suicide, and total) are available overall, by age group, and by gender.

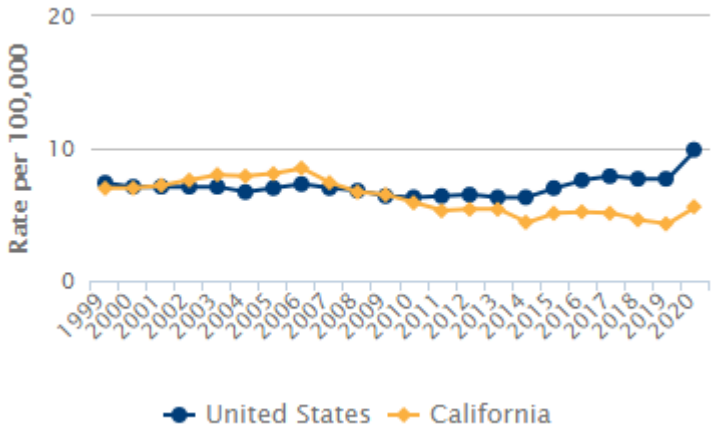
Why This Topic Is Important

The death of any young person is a tragedy. High death rates also can be an indicator of larger system issues, such as community violence or barriers to health care. In the U.S., unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death among young people ages 1-24: For children ages 1-4, the most common mechanism is drowning; for 5- to 19-year-olds, it is motor vehicle crashes; for young adults ages 20-24, it is poisonings, nearly all from drug overdose. Other leading causes of death among children and young adults include suicide, homicide, cancer, heart disease, and birth defects. In 2020, firearms overtook motor vehicles as the leading mechanism of injury death among U.S. children ages 0-17.

Death rates from injuries, and overall death rates, generally are higher for boys than girls. Disparities by race/ethnicity also persist, statewide and nationally; e.g., among groups with data, African American/black and American Indian/Alaska Native children and youth have had the highest death rates for many years. Many fatal injuries can be prevented through environmental, behavioral, social, and legislative change.

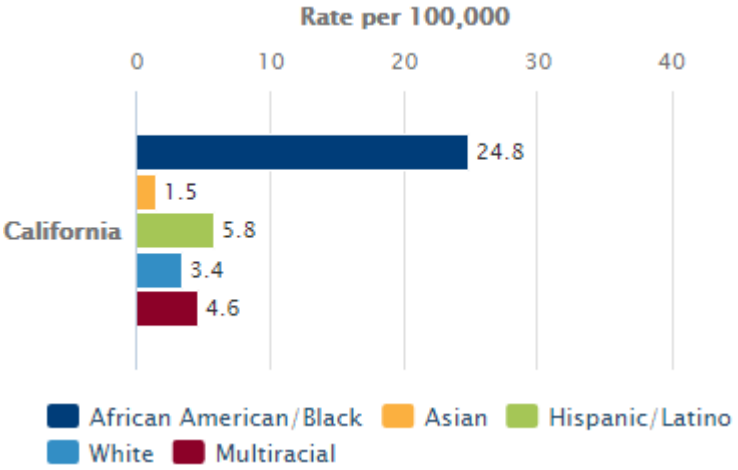
How Children Are Faring

In 2015-2017, the death rate among California young people ages 1-24 was 29.8 per 100,000, lower than the U.S. rate of 40.9 deaths per 100,000. After declining between 2004-2006



Definition: Number of firearm-related deaths per 100,000 children and young adults ages 0-24 (e.g., in 2020, the death rate due to firearms among California children and young adults was 5.6 per 100,000).
Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, Death Statistical Master Files; California Dept. of Finance, Population Estimates and Projections; CDC WONDER Online Database, Underlying Cause of Death (May 2022).

Firearm Death Rate Among Children and Young Adults, by Race/Ethnicity: 2020



Definition: Number of firearm-related deaths per 100,000 children and young adults ages 0-24, by race/ethnicity (e.g., in 2020, the death rate due to firearms among Hispanic/Latino children and young adults in California was 5.8 per 100,000).
Data Source: CDC WONDER Online Database, Underlying Cause of Death (May 2022).

and 2013-2015, statewide rates have risen in recent years, echoing national trends. Across counties with data, child and young adult death rates vary widely, from 18.4 per 100,000 (Yolo) to 76 per 100,000 (Calaveras) in 2015-2017.

Young adults ages 20-24 consistently have higher death rates (64.9 per 100,000 in 2015-2017) than other age groups in California, while children ages 5-14 have the lowest (10 per 100,000 in 2015-2017). Since 2000-2002, African American/black and American Indian/Alaska Native youth have experienced the highest rates of death among racial/ethnic groups with data statewide. Both in California and the nation as a whole, unintentional injuries—such as drownings, car crashes, and poisonings (including overdoses)—are the leading cause of death for children and young adults overall, for all age groups, and for all racial/ethnic groups with data except African American/black youth, for whom homicide is the leading cause of death.

In 2020, California young people ages 0-24 died of firearm injuries at a rate of 5.6 per 100,000, an increase of around 30% compared with 2019. Of the 692 firearm-related deaths among children and young adults statewide in 2020, boys and young men accounted for the vast majority (616). Homicide and suicide are the most common causes of firearm-related death across gender and age groups. Disparities exist in firearm death rates by race/ethnicity, statewide and nationally. In California, the firearm death rate among African American/black youth in 2020 (24.8 per 100,000 in 2020) was four times higher than the rate for Hispanic/Latino youth (5.8 per 100,000), seven times higher than that for white youth (3.4 per 100,000), and 16 times that for Asian youth (1.5 per 100,000).

View references for this text and additional research on this topic:
https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/49/deaths/summary

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