Child and Youth Deaths in California

**What It Is**

Kidsdata.org provides county-level data on child and youth deaths in the following indicators:

- Rates of death among children and youth, by age, by age and cause (California and U.S. only), by race/ethnicity, and by race/ethnicity and cause (California and U.S. only)
- Number of deaths among children and youth by age and cause
- Rates of firearm-related death among children and youth by age and cause, by gender and cause, and by race/ethnicity and cause
- Number of firearm-related deaths among children and youth by age and cause, by gender and cause, and by race/ethnicity and cause

**Why This Topic Is Important**

The death of any young person is a tragedy. High child and youth death rates also can be an indicator of larger system issues, such as community violence or problems accessing health care. In the U.S., preventable injuries (e.g., from car accidents) are the leading cause of death for young people ages 1-24. For children ages 1-4, the most common cause of unintentional injury-related death is drowning; for 5- to 24-year-olds, it is motor vehicle accidents. Other leading causes of death among children and young adults include suicide, homicide, cancer, heart disease, and birth defects. Nationwide, firearms account for more youth homicides and suicides than any other type of injury.

Death rates from injuries, and overall death rates, generally are higher for boys than girls. Inequities 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 2014-16, the death rate among California children and young adults ages 1-24 was 29.4 per 100,000, compared with 39.4 deaths per 100,000 youth for the nation as a whole. California rates have been on the decline since 2004-06 and have been consistently lower than...
Firearm Death Rate Among Children/Youth, by Gender and Cause: 2014-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>California</th>
<th>Rate per 100,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Homicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Definition: Number of firearm-related deaths per 100,000 children and youth ages 0-24, by gender and cause (e.g., in 2014-2016, there were 6.1 firearm-related homicides per 100,000 male children and youth in California).


Firearm Death Rate Among Children/Youth, by Race/Ethnicity: 2014-2016

In 2016, there were 662 firearm-related deaths among California children and young adults ages 24 and under, with boys and young men accounting for the vast majority (593). Homicide and suicide are the most common causes of firearm-related death across all age, gender, and racial/ethnic groups with data. Overall, the statewide rate of firearm-related deaths among youth (4.7 per 100,000 in 2014-16) has decreased since 2004-06, and has been lower than the national rate since 2008-10. Still, disparities persist among groups; e.g., in 2014-16, African American/black youth died from firearm-related injuries at a rate (20.9 per 100,000) more than four times that for Hispanic/Latino youth (4.7 per 100,000), and more than seven times that for white youth (2.7 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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