

# Suicide is a Public Health Problem

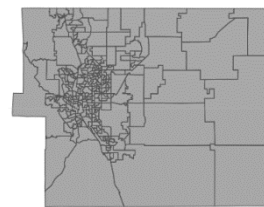
## The Facts about Suicide in El Paso County 2022



**United States** in 2021  
14.5 suicides per 100,000 people  
11<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death



**Colorado** in 2022  
22.0 suicides per 100,000 people  
8<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death



**EL Paso County** in 2022  
25.5 suicides per 100,000 people  
8<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death

### Summary of Suicide Deaths El Paso County 2020-2022

183 suicide deaths per year on average



Firearm



Hanging



Poisoning

#### Sex

81% male



#### Age

Average age 43 years old



#### Contributing Risk Factors

56% current mental health problem  
73% drug/alcohol intoxication  
40% intimate partner problem  
22% declining physical health  
15% financial problems



Demographic information

#### Military Affiliation

29% military or veteran



### Known Active Prior Military Duty

El Paso County 2020-2022

20%

2020

30%

2021

25%

2022

### Firearm Suicide Deaths

El Paso County 2020-2021



mental health problem 46%



military 63%



male 87%



intimate partner problem 42%

# Youth Suicide Deaths

## El Paso County 2020-2022



Firearm



Hanging



Poisoning



### Total

average of 8 suicides per year among youth under 18

### Age & Sex

74% male, ages 13-17

### Risk Factors

65% mental health problem  
35% school problem  
46% family problem

### Location

82% of suicides were completed in the home

**63%** of youth firearm suicides were completed by youth with a history of suicidal thoughts or plans (2020-2021)



Had 1+ drink of alcohol in the past 30 days  
(of all Colorado high schoolers, '21)

**30 %**



Positive for alcohol at time of death  
(of El Paso teens who died by suicide, '21-'22)

**12 %**



Used marijuana at least once in the past 30 days  
(of all Colorado high schoolers, '21)

**18 %**



Positive for THC at time of death  
(of El Paso teens who died by suicide, '21-'22)

**23 %**

## What can you do?



Ask someone you are worried about if they're thinking about suicide.



If you have firearms in your home, store them locked, unloaded and out of reach of children



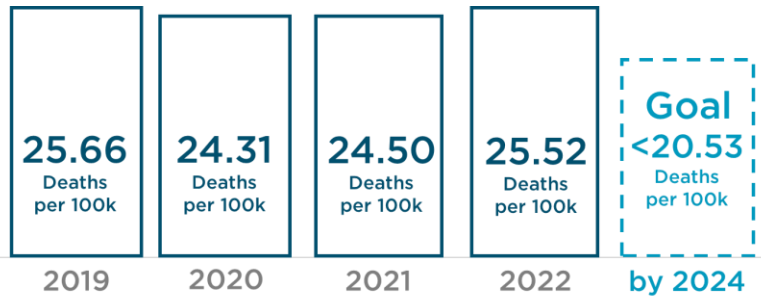
Seek help using the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255



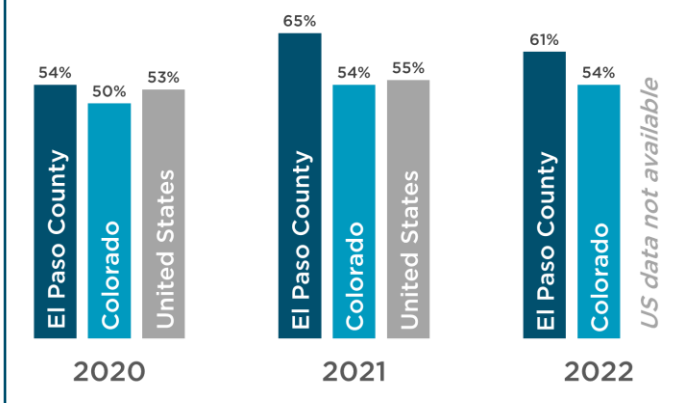
# EL PASO COUNTY

## 2022 Deaths Due to Suicide

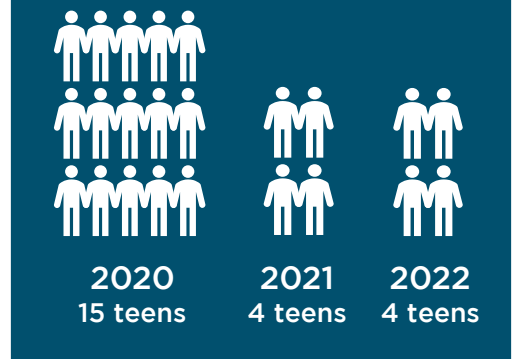
The Suicide Prevention Collaborative of El Paso County is working to reduce the local rate of suicide deaths by 20% between 2019 and 2024. Rates show us the proportion within the population, allowing us to track progress in a way that accounts for population growth.



Over half of all suicide deaths in El Paso County were by firearm. There was an 11% increase between 2020 and 2021, but a 4% decrease in 2022.



Suicide deaths among 11-17-year-olds in El Paso County decreased between 2020 and 2021 and remained the same in 2022.



**44**

Average age of death by suicide (Range of 13-91 years)



**73%**

of autopsies contain drugs (42%) alcohol (36%), or THC (22%) at the time of death



**74%**

of those who died by suicide were male



**25%**

have known active or prior military duty (5% decrease from 2021)



**34%**

have notes or social media posts indicating suicidal intentions

For more information, please contact Nicole Johnston, Suicide Prevention Project Manager for the Suicide Prevention Collaborative of El Paso County, at [Nicole.Johnston@ppchp.org](mailto:Nicole.Johnston@ppchp.org).

Sources: CDC WONDER Online Database; CDPHE CoHID Dashboard; CDPHE Colorado Suicide Dashboard; 2020-2021 El Paso County Coroner's Annual Reports



## September 2022 – August 2023 Impact Report

- Promoted Safe Homes, Safer Families; Community Safe Storage and Suicide Prevention Workshops
  - Coordinated Media Campaign to Increase Awareness of Suicide Prevention Awareness Month
  - Produced a PSA on safe storage and suicide prevention featuring Chief Vasquez, Sheriff Roybal and Colonel Hanson and shared via a digital media campaign
  - Organized Faith, Hope and Suicide Prevention; A suicide prevention discussion with faith-based leaders in El Paso County
  - Organized Safe Media Messaging Reporting Event: a meeting with media outlets on how to responsibly report on suicide
  - Coordinated an LGBTQ+ Public Policy Education Workshop
  - Worked with local and statewide elected officials to inform and recommend policies surrounding suicide prevention, intervention and crisis response
  - Coordinated Suicide Prevention Summit: action planning meeting on what has been done, what stakeholders are doing, and what are next steps to prevent suicides
  - Developed a more diverse cadre of Suicide Prevention Trainers by recruiting BIPOC faith-based leaders to mentor and participate in the Master Trainer program.
  - Coordinated efforts to increase participation in suicide prevention gatekeeper trainings with focus on employers, faith-based groups, veterans, older adults, and diverse populations
  - Coordinated with the Youth Suicide Prevention Work Group to share resources and implement a plan informed by youth
  - Coordinated production of a Lifeline film series that explores first person stories of the struggles with First Responders' PTSD, Suicidal Ideations and resources that are available to help
  - Supported MOUs with Collaborative partners and Colorado Springs Police Department, El Paso County Sherriff and El Paso County Coroner written policy and protocol for referral and resource provisions to those bereaved by suicide
  - Partnered and promoted Zero Suicide policies with our healthcare entities throughout El Paso County
  - Partnered with local school district on recommendations for a Mental Health and Wellness Plan
- And more....