

Study finds 8% annual increase in preteen suicide rates since 2008

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Researchers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) found that rates of preteen suicide (ages 8–12) have been increasing by approximately 8% annually since 2008. The study appears in the journal *JAMA Network*

Open.

These increases were most pronounced among female preteens, American Indian/Alaska Native or Asian/Pacific Islander preteens, and Hispanic preteens.

While the overall number of preteen suicides is small compared to teen and adult populations, the researchers say the findings from this analysis underscore the need for age-appropriate and culturally responsive prevention efforts that include suicide risk screening and lethal means safety counseling. The findings also highlight the need to better understand, identify, and help preteens who may be at risk for suicide.

The researchers also found:

- Female preteens had a disproportionate increase in suicide rate compared to male preteens.
- Black preteens had the highest overall suicide rate.
- Hispanic preteens had the greatest percent increase in suicide rate.
- Hanging and suffocation were the most common suicide methods, but firearms were the most rapidly increasing suicide method.

Using 2001–2022 data from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System for U.S. youth \(ages 8–12\)](#), the researchers examined suicide deaths overall and by sex, race, ethnicity, [suicide](#) method, metropolitan or non-metropolitan area, and geographic region.

The study was conducted in collaboration with lead researcher Donna A. Ruch and colleagues from The Ohio State University College of Medicine and Nationwide Children's Hospital, Columbus, and

researchers at the Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis.

More information: Ruch, D. A., et al. Suicide in US preteens aged 8 to 12 years, 2001-2022. *JAMA Network Open*. (2024)
[jamanetwork.com/journals/jaman ... tworkopen.2024.24664](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jaman...tworkopen.2024.24664)

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