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# Suicide Rate Decreases by 3 Percent for Second Consecutive Year According to Most Recent CDC Data (Year 2020)

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By AFSP

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**NEW YORK (March 1, 2022)** – The CDC has released its most recent [data](#) related to suicide for the year 2020. Suicide is a leading cause of death, and according to this new data release, the suicide rate went down for the second consecutive year. In 2020, there were 45,979 suicide deaths; in 2019 there were 47,511 suicide deaths, a decrease of 1,532 deaths. From 2019 to 2020 the overall national U.S. suicide rate declined by 3 percent, including 8 percent among females and 2 percent among males. Demographic differences in suicide persist, as evidenced by increasing rates among persons aged 25-to-34-years old and 85 and older. Rates increased slightly for Blacks, Native Americans/Alaskan Native males and decreased for other age, race and ethnic groups. **[Dr. Christine Yu Moutier, the Chief Medical Officer](#)** of the [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#) released this statement:

“As the nation’s largest suicide prevention organization, we are heartened and encouraged to see the national suicide rate decrease for the second consecutive year in the United States. Despite the recent decline in the suicide rate, factors such as social isolation, economic decline, family stressors, new or worsening mental health symptoms, and disruptions to work and school associated with the COVID-19 pandemic have been challenging and rates of depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts have increased in the U.S. Unfortunately, the U.S. does not collect real-time suicide data but, in addition to finalized 2020 data, we are seeing provisional data for the first quarter of 2021 that suggests the rate remains steady.

There are many factors that contribute to suicide, and several factors may have contributed to the decrease in rate from 2019 to 2020. We cannot determine which specific factors may have contributed to the decline but we do know that creating a culture open to talking about mental health and suicide prevention, educating people about what to do when they are in distress, making a wide array of supports available to those who seek it, using treatments that have been shown to reduce suicide risk based on research, supporting those affected by suicide, and passing legislation that make suicide prevention a top national priority are all positive advancements that we’ve seen over the past several years that likely had a collective impact.

At AFSP, we are committed to creating programs, supporting research, engaging partners, and advancing policies that will help contribute to a continued decrease in suicide - especially important in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Project 2025, a first-of-its-kind initiative led by AFSP, aims to positively impact our culture surrounding mental health and suicide prevention and set the goal of reducing the suicide rate 20 percent by the year 2025. By mobilizing institutions, associations, and individuals across healthcare, corrections, and firearms owning communities, we are promoting evidence-based practices and research to drive policy, increase engagement around addressing mental health and suicide, and reach the most people with life-saving initiatives.

AFSP's advocacy efforts have also led to the national prioritization of suicide prevention as demonstrated by the passage of the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act, which designated 988 as the new three-digit national number for those in crisis (replacing the existing 1-800-273-8255 number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline; as 988 is not yet universally accessible, individuals should continue to call 1-800-273-8255 until the full effective date of July 2022). In conjunction with 988, legislation has been enacted to build an effective crisis service system to support people in crisis. Those who are in distress need to be met with resources that will support their mental health including a fully funded, accessible, and well-designed national system of crisis services and health care.

As the nation's largest private funder of suicide research, we know that concentrated, strategic, culturally competent and evidence-based suicide prevention efforts can save lives. Through these efforts, and by all working together, we have the ability to keep bending the suicide curve down."

For safe reporting: <https://afsp.org/about-suicide/for-journalists/>.

*[The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#) is dedicated to saving lives and bringing hope to those affected by suicide. AFSP creates a culture that's smart about mental health through education and community programs, develops suicide prevention through research and advocacy, and provides support for those affected by suicide. Led by CEO [Robert Gebbia](#) and headquartered in New York, and with a public policy office in Washington, D.C., AFSP has [local chapters](#) in all 50 states with programs and events nationwide. Learn more about AFSP in its latest [Annual Report](#), and join the conversation on suicide prevention by following AFSP on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).*

**Contact:** Maria de los Angeles Corral, [PR@afsp.org](mailto:PR@afsp.org)

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