

American senior adults suffer greatest increase in suicides

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ATLANTA (BP)—Senior adults suffered the largest increase in suicides among Americans as nearly 50,000 people in the United States killed themselves in 2022, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in its latest report](#).

The 8 percent rise in suicides among adults 65 and older was the highest driver in suicide deaths, the CDC said, with 10,433 deaths in that age group alone. That's compared to 9,652 adults over 65 who killed themselves the previous year.

Suicide declined 8.4 percent among the youngest Americans the CDC tracks—ages 10-24— falling from 7,126 to 6,529.

Senior adults have needed mental health assistance especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Association of Retired Persons reported. More than 45 percent of adults 50 and older suffered from anxiety, 34 percent lost interest in activities, and 31 percent suffered depression or hopelessness, the AARP said in a study of 2,000 older adults conducted Feb. 24 to March 1, 2022.

'Devastating mental health crisis'

Overall, the CDC tracked 49,449 suicides among Americans ages 10 and older in the numbers released August 10, a 2.6 percent increase from the 48,183 deaths in 2021.

Suicides briefly declined in 2019 and 2020 after consistently rising since

2000, but began rising again in 2021, the CDC said.

The increase underscores a “devastating mental health crisis in America,” U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murphy said upon the release of the latest numbers, which are provisional.

“Mental health has become the defining public health and societal challenge of our time. Far too many people and their families are suffering and feeling alone,” Murphy said.

“These numbers are a sobering reminder of how urgent it is that we further expand access to mental health care, address the root causes of mental health struggles, and recognize the importance of checking on and supporting one another.”

Among other CDC suicide numbers:

- Suicide rose 6.6 percent among 45- to 64-year-olds, rising to 15,632 from the previous 14,668.
- Males outnumbered females in suicide deaths, 39,255 compared to 10,194.
- Whites, who accounted for 37,459 suicides, far outnumbered other ethnic groups including Blacks and African Americans, 3,825; Hispanics and Latinos, 5,120; Asians, 1,458, and American Indian or Alaska Natives, 650.

Help for anyone suffering thoughts of suicide is available through the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. Connect with a trained crisis counselor by texting or calling 988, or connecting online at 988lifeline.org.