



Examining Suicide in Eastern Jackson County

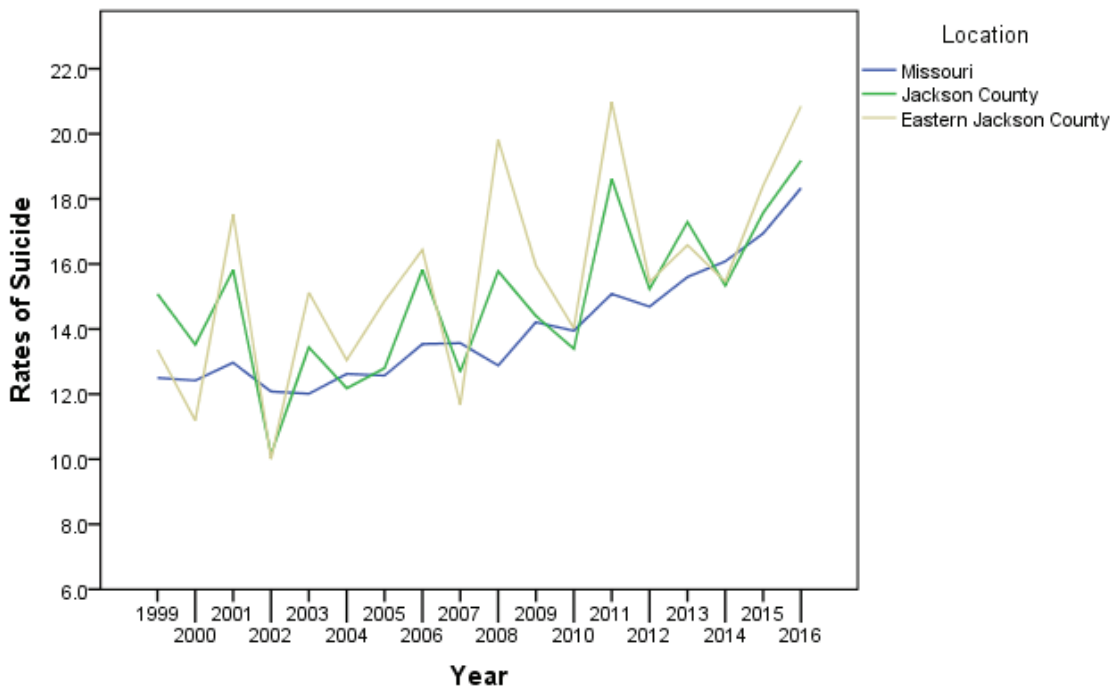
Trends in Suicide

Suicide is defined as death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with intent to die as a result of the behavior¹. In recent years, suicide has remained the tenth leading cause of death in the United States making it a growing public health concern. In the past year, there were more than twice as many suicides in the United States as there were homicides¹. The majority of these suicides occurred through the use of firearms; however, all methods for suicide have increased in the past decade. In Eastern Jackson County (EJC), similar trends have been observed as shown in Figure 1.

Risk Factors of Suicide

There's no single cause for suicide; however, it most often occurs when stressors and health issues converge to create an experience of hopelessness and despair. Depression is the most common condition associated with suicide. In addition to depression, anxiety and issues with substance use increase the risk for suicide⁴. Other risk factors include: access to lethal means, prolonged stress, stressful life events, exposure to another person's suicide, previous suicide attempts, abuse or trauma, and family history of suicide⁴.

Figure 1: Rates of Suicide per by Location per 100,000, 1999-2016



Rates of suicide have been increasing in Missouri, Jackson County and EJC.⁵

Table 1: Rates of Suicide by Method in EJC and MO, per 100,000

| Location | Means | Years | | | | | |
|----------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | 1999-2001 | 2002-2004 | 2005-2007 | 2008-2010 | 2011-2013 | 2014-2016 |
| | | Rate | Rate | Rate | Rate | Rate | Rate |
| MO | Firearm | 7.66 | 7.03 | 7.36 | 7.44 | 8.52 | 9.64 |
| | Other | 4.98 | 5.22 | 5.87 | 6.25 | 6.61 | 7.47 |
| EJC | Firearm | 7.85 | 8.06 | 7.06 | 8.58 | 8.38 | 8.48 |
| | Other | 6.20 | 4.67 | 7.25 | 7.99 | 9.25 | 9.80 |

In MO, more suicides are due to firearms while in EJC, more suicides are due to other methods. For both geographies and for both methods, rates continue to rise⁶.

Demographic Trends in Suicide

Differences in rates of death by suicide differ between age groups and genders as shown in Figures 2 and 3. In EJC, individuals aged 25 to 64 have the highest rates of suicide. For all age groups, with the exception of those aged 25-44, firearms was the most common method of suicide. When comparing males to females, there is a large gap between rates of suicide with males being more than twice as likely to die by suicide. Males also have much higher rates of using firearms which may explain why their overall rate is so much higher than females. In the United States, similar trends have been observed. Men have much higher rates than women with the most common method of suicide being firearms. The most common method of suicide among females was poisoning².

Figure 2: Suicide Rates by Age by Methods per 100,000, 1999-2016 in EJC

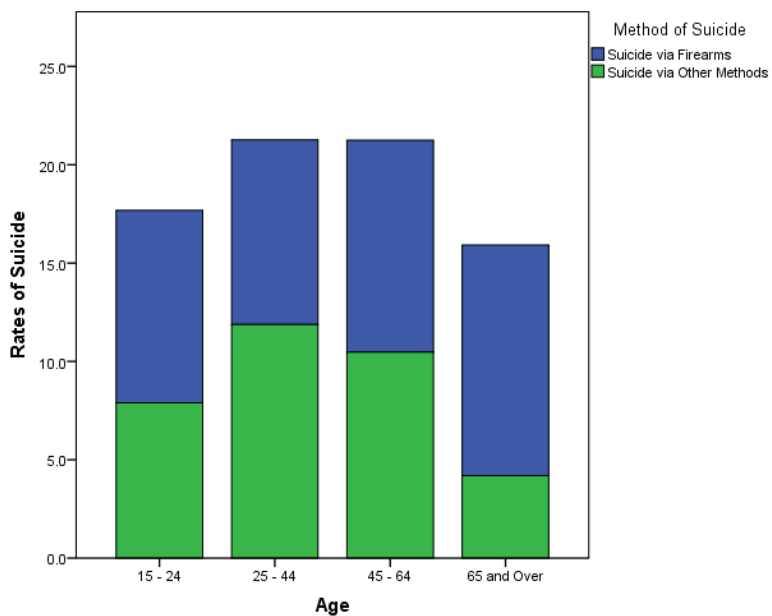


Figure 3: Suicide Rates by Gender by Methods per 100,000, 1999-2016 in EJC

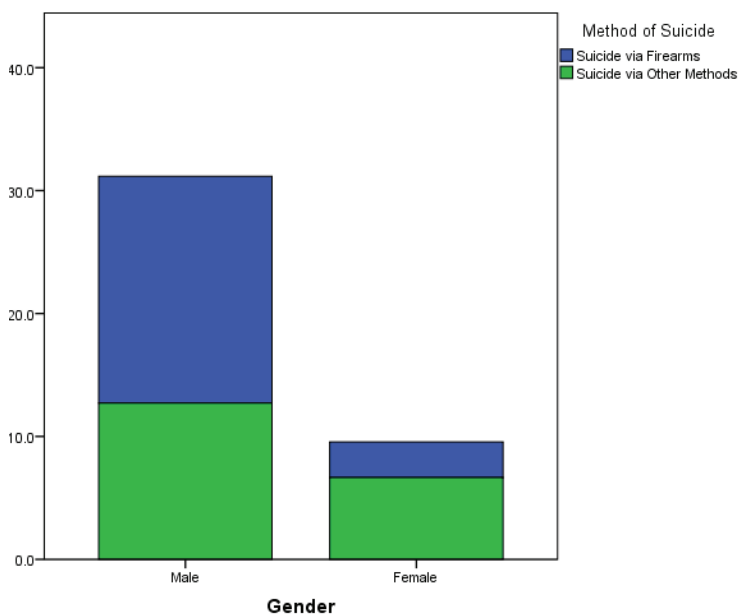
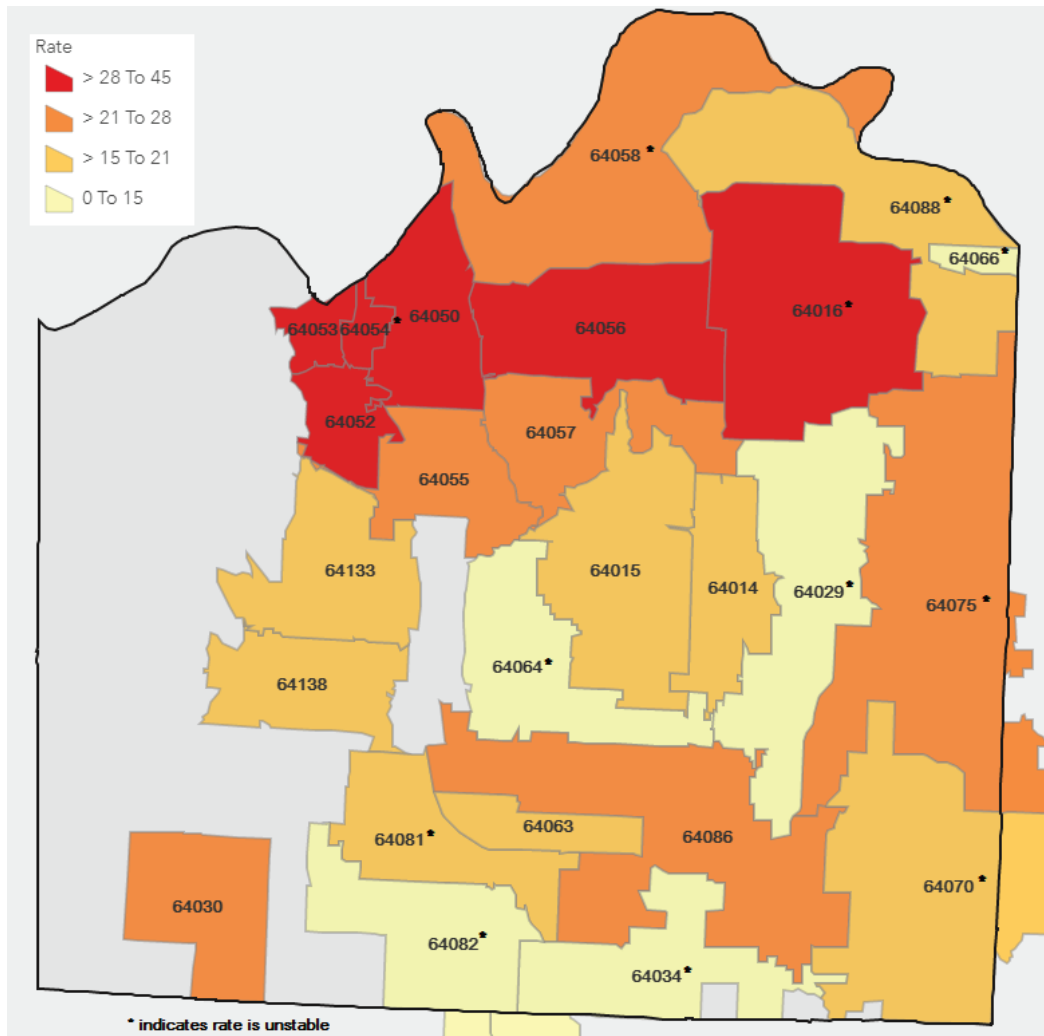


Figure 4: Rates of Suicide by Location per 100,000, 1999-2016



What You Can Do

Understand the signs of someone needing help:

- Most people who take their lives exhibit one or more warning signs.
- Examples: Increase use of drugs/alcohol, withdrawing from activities, loss of interest, depression, talks of feeling hopeless or suicidal

Become an advocate:

- Learn more about opportunities in Jackson County for trainings or volunteer work through local organizations like First Call or Rediscover

If you or someone you know is in crisis:

- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or the Missouri Access Crisis Intervention line at 999-279-2132
- Contact the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Greater Kansas City for information on mental illness, support groups or referrals
- If it is a life-threatening emergency, dial 911



Your Health. Our Purpose.

Works Cited

1. National Institute of Mental Health. (April 2018). Suicide. Retrieved from <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/suicide.shtml>.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (April 2016). Increase in Suicide in the United States, 1999-2014. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db241.htm>.
3. Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (2017). Death, Missouri Information for Community Assessment. Retrieved from <https://webapp01.dhss.mo.gov/MOPHIMS/MOPHIMSHome>.
4. American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. (2018). Risk Factors and Warning Signs. Retrieved from <https://afsp.org/about-suicide/risk-factors-and-warning-signs/>.