Homicide Trends and Characteristics, Texas vs. United States

Homicide is a leading cause of death in the United States and Texas for certain age groups. In 2015 in the US, homicide was among the top five causes of death for individuals between the ages of 1-44 years. In Texas, homicide was the third leading cause of death among adolescents and young adults ages 15-34 years, following unintentional injury and suicide.1

Homicide and nonfatal assaults are preventable. The following data brief summarizes the burden of homicide in Texas and describes which populations are at greatest risk.

Rates of homicide have decreased over time. In 2015 in Texas, there were 1,538 deaths due to homicide. Overall, homicide rates have decreased significantly in Texas and the US from 2000-2015, but rates have been increasing in Texas since 2011. In 2015, the rate of homicide was 5.7 per 100,000 in the US compared to 5.6 per 100,000 in Texas.

Homicide rates are greatest among those who are young, male, and non-Hispanic black. In 2015, rates of homicide in Texas were 3.7 times greater among males compared to females, 7.0 times greater among 15-24 year olds compared to 0-14 year olds, and 4.7 times greater among non-Hispanic blacks compared to non-Hispanic whites.

The majority of homicides are due to firearm-related injuries. In 2015, the rate of firearm homicide was 4.0 per 100,000 in Texas vs. 4.2 per 100,000 in the US. Rates of homicide by firearm were over 5 times greater than homicide rates by other causes. Unspecified injury and cut/pierce injuries were the second and third leading causes of homicide in Texas, respectively.

Data Source: CDC WONDER; CDC WISQARS