

VIOLENCE IN TENNESSEE -- MORTALITY (HOMICIDE/SUICIDE) AND MORBIDITY (ASSAULT, DEPRESSION, AND SUICIDE ATTEMPTS)

Homicide²⁰

- The age-adjusted homicide* rate for Tennessee for the period 1994-1996 was 11 per 100,000 population. This was 6% below the rate for the period 1990-1992. The Year 2000 target rate is 7.2 per 100,000 population. The age-adjusted homicide rate for black males in Tennessee was 41.5 per 100,000 for 1990-1992. It declined 9% to 37.7 for 1994-1996.
- For the period 1994-1996, the homicide rate for Tennessee children under 3 years of age was 5.9 per 100,000. This represented a decline of 3% since 1990-1992. The Year 2000 national target is 3.1 per 100,000.
- The homicide rate for black children under age 3 for 1994-1996 was 13.6 per 100,000, a 20% decline since 1990-1992. For 1994-1996 the rate for black children in this age- group was four times higher than the corresponding rate for white children. This compares with a six-fold differential for 1990-1992.

Weapons And Assaults -- Adolescent Violence

- As in 1995, 24% of Tennessee students in 1997 had carried a weapon such as a gun, knife or club in the 30 days preceding the survey. Male students were 4.5 times more likely than female students to have carried a weapon (41% versus 9%, respectively). Carrying weapons decreased by ascending grade level, with 9th graders most likely and 12th graders least likely to report carrying weapons. Twenty-seven percent of 9th graders, 24% of 10th graders, 23% of 11th graders and 20% of 12th graders carried weapons. This apparent drop by grade level is influenced by loss of students to school from 10th grade to 12th grade. School leavers may be more likely to engage in such risky behavior.
 - 8% of high school students carried a gun on one or more of the past 30 days with males students being more than 7 times more likely than female students to do so (15% versus 2%).
- One-third of students reported that they were in a physical fight at least once in the past 12 months. Male students (41%) were more likely than female students (26%) to have reported this behavior. Students in the 9th grade were more likely to report

²⁰Homicide here excludes deaths due to legal intervention. For the period 1994-1996, homicides attributable to legal intervention accounted for only 0.2% of all homicides. These are excluded for comparability with U.S. data. Data from the HIT/SPOT Web site include these deaths due to legal intervention.