

STARK COUNTY
SUICIDE REPORT

2018



Introduction

This report is an overview of suicide deaths in Stark County for 2018. Contextual information for Ohio and United States is provided where available.

This report is intended to enhance awareness about the magnitude of suicide among the Stark County community as well as identify areas of greatest need and consequently guide prevention strategies. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there is no single cause for a death by suicide, as suicide is a convergence of individual, relationship, cultural, and societal risk factors. Risk factors are characteristics associated with suicide and are not direct causes.

If using this information for reporting purposes, please utilize safe messaging guidelines as certain types of public messaging about suicide can increase risk among vulnerable individuals. The updated reporting recommendations were released in 2018 and are intended to serve as an evidence-based resource for journalists.

For safe messaging guidelines: <https://aas.dream.press/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Suicide-Media-Reporting-Extended-4-merged-1.pdf>.

Language Matters

Language matters when discussing issues of suicide as language reflects our attitudes and influences the attitudes of others. Use the phrase “died by suicide” instead of “committed suicide” or “completed suicide.” The word “commit” is associated with a crime and “complete” is associated with success. A suicide death is a tragedy and should not be associated with a crime or success. By changing the way we talk about suicide, we can change the way we think about suicide and reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and suicide.

Where do we go from here?

Stark County Mental Health & Addiction Recovery (StarkMHAR) is a multi-faceted county behavioral health board comprised of expert professionals, dedicated volunteers and concerned community leaders. StarkMHAR believes in hope, wellness and recovery for everyone. To accomplish this vision, the mission of StarkMHAR is to support wellness and recovery through innovation in funding, collaboration, education and advocacy. One major focus for StarkMHAR is to build and enhance public awareness of behavioral health as essential to community health.

The Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) is the only federally supported resource center devoted to advancing the implementation of the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. SPRC identifies suicide prevention as comprehensive: it requires a combination of efforts that work together to address different aspects of the problem. The model identifies nine strategies that form a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention and mental health promotion. Each strategy is a bold goal that can be advanced through a range of possible activities such as programs, policies, practices, and services. StarkMHAR is working with its partners to build upon each of these strategies. One specific example of this effort is Zero Suicide. Stark County has taken a vested interest in Zero Suicide, which requires a system wide approach to improve care of individuals. Fifteen behavioral health and healthcare organizations participated in a Zero Suicide Academy in August 2018 and are working to adopt the seven steps of the model to create system change and improved outcomes. Part of Zero Suicide is the identification of those at risk, therefore the recommendation is for individuals to be screened for suicide risk at every medical and behavioral health touch point.

StarkMHAR continues to work on strengthening access to care by ensuring that any Stark County resident has access to behavioral health services regardless of ability to pay. To learn more about Stark County Mental Health & Addiction Recovery’s Care Network, please visit: <https://starkmhar.org/care-network/care-network-providers/>.

For more information on a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention please visit: <https://www.sprc.org/effective-prevention/comprehensive-approach>

You Can Help

Given the stigma around mental illness and suicide, most people do not know who to speak to. If you are concerned about a family member or friend, have an honest conversation with them. Talk with that person in private, listen to their story, tell them you care, encourage them to seek treatment, and ask directly if they are thinking about suicide. Asking someone if they are thinking about suicide does not plant the idea in their mind. Rather, it opens up the conversation and decreases the stigma around suicide. If a person says they are considering suicide, stay with them and call the Stark County Crisis Hotline anytime at 330-452-6000 or National Suicide Prevention Lifeline anytime at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

Call to Action

The Stark County Suicide Prevention Coalition welcomes individuals or organizations that would like to join us to promote suicide prevention activities, reduce stigma around suicide and mental illness, and to empower individuals to get involved in saving lives. Our vision is a community with Zero Suicides. The Stark County Suicide Coalition is working to address specific strategies at the local level to create a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention. If you are interested in working together to save lives, contact Elena Aslanides-Kandis at 330-430-3949 or Elena.Kandis@StarkMHAR.org

Another option to make a difference is become trained as a suicide prevention gatekeeper. Just as individuals are trained in CPR to help save lives, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis. QPR stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer- the three simple steps that anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide. If you are interested in bringing this FREE training to your organization, please contact Elena Aslanides-Kandis at 330-430-3949 or Elena.Kandis@StarkMHAR.org.

If you or someone you know are in crisis, please immediately contact:

Crisis Hotline anytime at 330-452-6000 or
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline anytime at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or
Domestic Violence help line anytime at 330-453-SAFE (7233) or
Crisis Text Line Text 4hope to 741 741 anytime

Stark County Suicide Report 2018

YEAR	STARK COUNTY SUICIDES	STARK COUNTY RATE PER 100,000	NATIONAL RATE PER 100,000	STARK COUNTY POPULATION
1980	47	12.4	11.9	378,823 1980 CENSUS
1981	53	14.0	12.3	
1982	41	10.8	12.2	
1983	40	10.6	12.1	
1984	55	14.6	12.4	
1985	50	13.2	12.3	
1986	48	12.7	12.8	
1987	44	11.6	12.7	
1988	41	10.8	12.4	
1989	49	13.0	12.2	
1990	30	8.2	12.4	367,585 1990 CENSUS
1991	38	10.4	12.2	
1992	45	12.1	12.0	372,123 1992 CENSUS EST.
1993	38	10.2	12.1	
1994	45	12.0	12.0	374,615 1994 CENSUS EST.
1995	34	9.1	11.9	
1996	35	9.3	11.6	
1997	43	11.5	11.4	
1998	53	14.1	11.3	
1999	33	8.8	10.7	
2000	37	9.9	10.7	378,098 2000 CENSUS
2001	36	9.6	10.8	
2002	32	8.5	11.0	
2003	38	9.9	10.8	
2005	43	11.3	11.0	380,608 2005 CENSUS EST.
2006	44	11.3	11.1	
2007	35	9.4	11.5	
2008	45	11.6	11.8	
2009	40	10.5	12.0	
2010	58	15.4	12.0	375,586 2010 CENSUS
2011	49	13.1	12.7	
2012	56	14.9	12.9	
2013	62	16.5	13.0	
2014	57	15.2	13.4	
2015	59	15.7	13.8	375,736 CENSUS EST
2016	77	20.4	13.9	
2017	70	18.8	13.7	372,542 CENSUS EST
2018	71	19.06	14.4	
TOTAL	1,771			

Stark County Suicide Rates Compared to National Suicide Rates

In 2018, there were 71 individuals who died by suicide, according to the Stark County Coroner's Office, the second highest number recorded in Stark County since the community began keeping statistics in 1980. In the U.S., there is no complete count of suicide attempt data available. The CDC gathers data from hospitals on non-fatal injuries from self-harm as well as survey data. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention reports that on average there are 25 suicide attempts for every suicide. Based on this data Stark County had an estimated 1775 suicide attempts in 2018.

According to the Center for Disease Control for the calendar year 2017 (latest year for national statistics), suicide is the tenth (10) leading cause of death in the United States and is the second (2) leading cause of death for people ages 10 to 34. In 2017, 47,173 individuals died by suicide in the United States. Per the American Association of Suicidology (AAS), an average of one person every 11.7 minutes killed himself/herself. An estimated 25 suicide attempts occurred for each suicide death, or an estimated 1,179,325 suicide attempts.

Stark County Mental Health & Addiction Recovery continues to monitor and study local suicide data to inform the community and utilize this information to expand and enhance efforts in Stark County to impact and reduce the number of suicide deaths.

Risk Factors for Suicide

Suicide is complex. According to American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is no single cause for suicide. Suicide most occurs when stressors exceed current coping abilities of someone suffering from a mental health condition. Risk factors are characteristics or conditions that increase the chance that a person may try to take their life. Risk factors can be categorized into health factors, environmental factors and historical factors. They include: mental health conditions; serious physical health conditions including pain; access to lethal means (firearms and drugs); prolonged stress or stressful life events (rejection, divorce, financial crisis, etc.); exposure to another person's suicide or to sensationalizes accounts of suicide; previous suicide attempts; family history of suicide; and childhood abuse, neglect, or trauma.

National psychological autopsy studies reflect that more than 90% of individuals who died by suicide had one or more mental illness disorders and/or substance abuse disorders. In the CDC's June 2018 Vital Signs, it indicated that more than half of the people who died by suicide in the US in 2016 did not have a known mental health condition. This speaks to the importance of identifying individuals with mental health concerns. Major depression is the psychiatric diagnosis most commonly associated with suicide and it is often underdiagnosed. The American Psychiatric Association estimates that depression affects an estimated one in fifteen adults in any given year, and one in six people will experience depression at some time in their life. Those suffering from depression are at 25 times greater risk for suicide than the general population. The risk of suicide in persons with alcohol dependence is 50-70% higher than the general population, according to the American Association of Suicidology.

For Stark County, information about the individual who died by suicide is gathered by the Stark County coroner's investigators. The Stark County coroner's investigators interview family members who seek information about a variety of risk factors. The family members or loved ones may or may not have specific information about the mental illness and/or substance abuse issues of their loved ones. Stark County Mental Health & Addiction Recovery reviews the coroner's reports and records common risk factors indicated by the coroner's investigators.

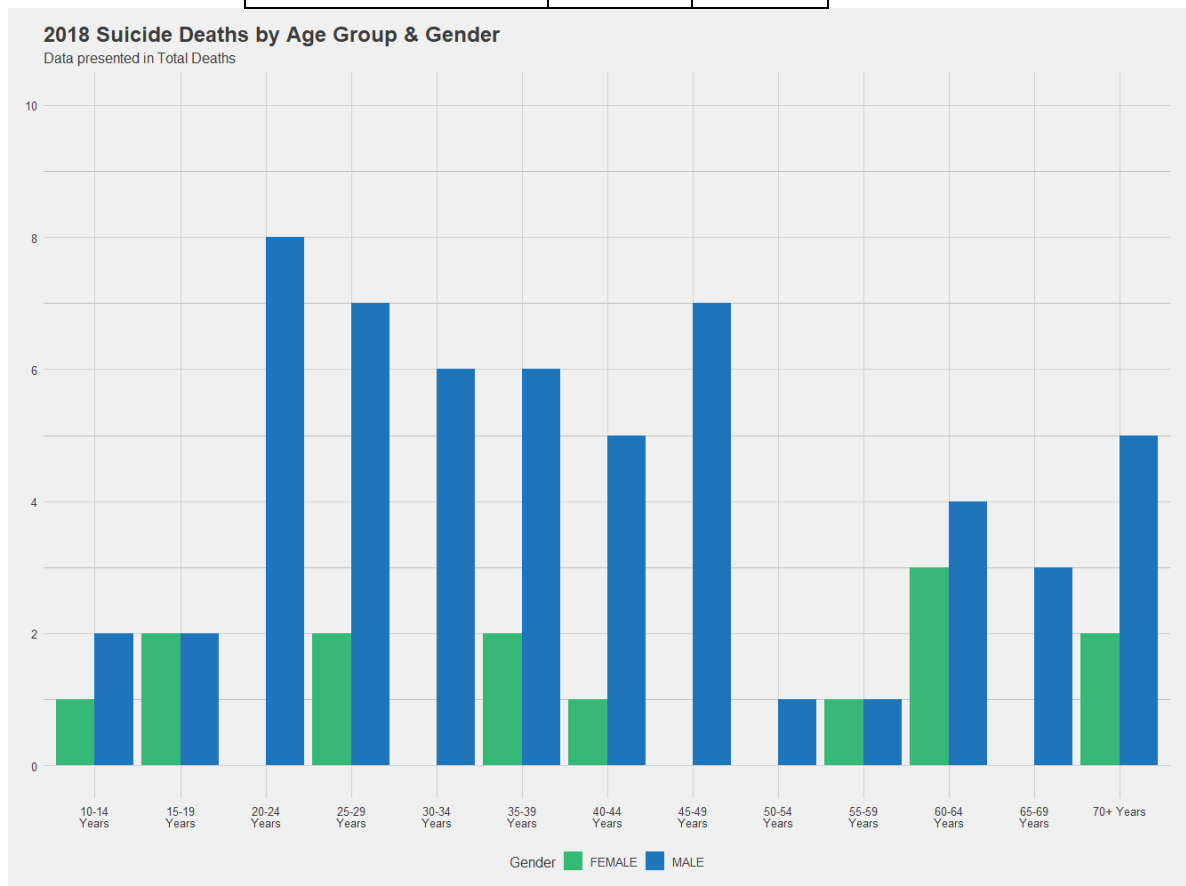
In 2018, common risk factors identified by family members/loved ones who shared information with the Stark County coroner's investigators include (in no order): loss (anticipated or actual, breakups/divorce, legal issues, relationship issues, or conflict); family history of suicide or previous suicide attempts; previous trauma; history of mental health disorders; alcohol/substance use disorders; major medical concerns, and chronic pain. Risk factors associated with loss, previous suicide attempts or thoughts, history of mental health disorders were the most common followed by major

medical concern/chronic pain, and alcohol or substance abuse. There was a significant correlation found between people who had a history of mental health and previous suicide attempts as well as people with substance use disorders and previous attempts.

Age

Of the 71 individuals who died by suicide in 2018, the youngest individual was a 13-year-old white female and the oldest individual was an 85-year-old white male. The charts below list the percentages and numbers of suicides in Stark County by age groups. According to national research organizations, suicide rates for men rise with age, most significantly after age 75. The suicide rates for women typically decline after age 60, after peaking in middle adulthood, ages 45-49. The following information shows individuals who died by suicide broken down by age group and gender.

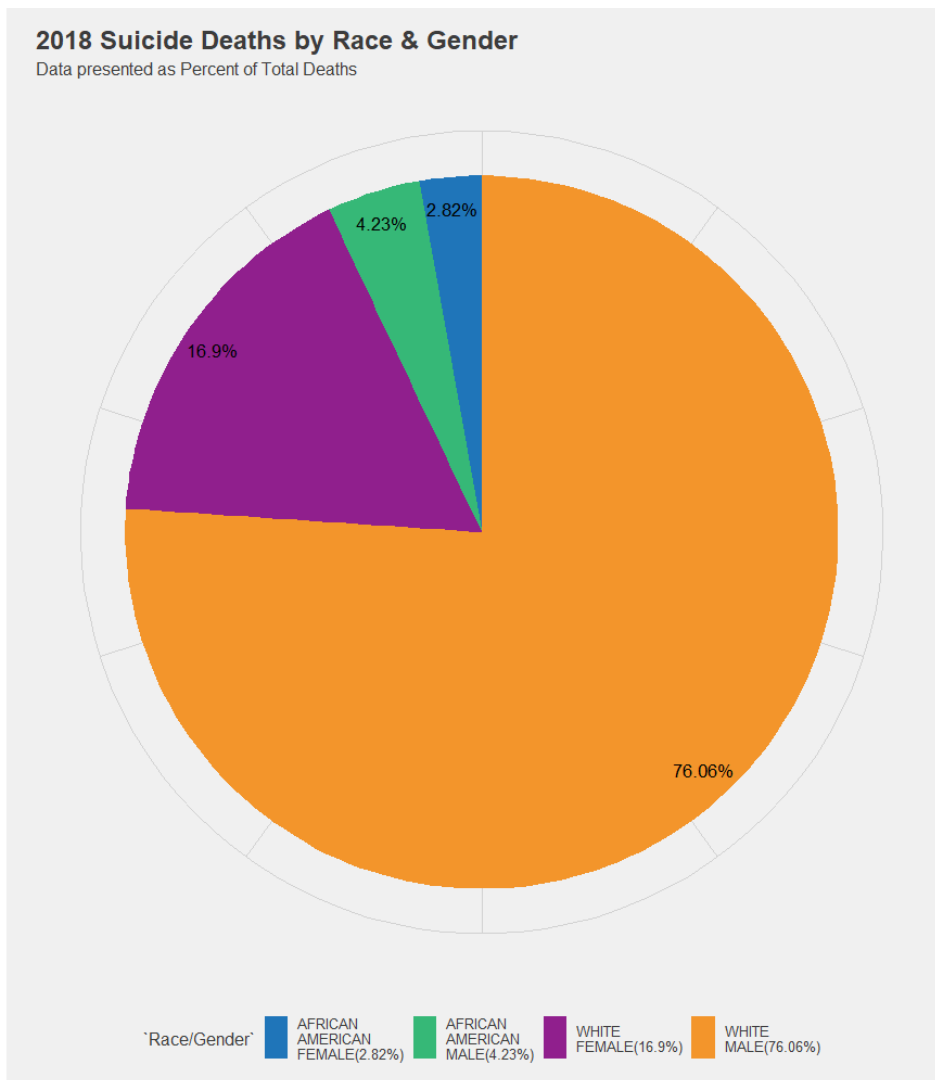
Age Groups	Females	Males
10-14 yrs	1	2
15-19 yrs	2	2
20-24 yrs	0	8
25-29 yrs	2	7
30-34 yrs	0	6
35-39 yrs	2	6
40-44 yrs	1	5
45-49 yrs	0	6
50-54 yrs	0	1
55-59 yrs	1	1
60-64 yrs	3	4
65-69 yrs	0	3
70 + yrs	2	6
Totals	14	57



Gender & Race/Ethnicity

Suicide impacts all genders, ages, economic levels, social, race and ethnic boundaries. Nationally in 2017, males died by suicide at the rate of 3.5 suicides for each female suicide. However, females continue to attempt suicide at the rate of 3 attempts for each male attempt. In Stark County in 2018, males died by suicide at a rate: 57 males (80.3%) to 14 females (19.72%). Nationally, suicide rates for whites in 2017 were 115.1 per day; non-whites were 14.1 per day. White males had the highest number of suicide deaths at 32,866 of the nation’s 47,173 suicide deaths. Black females had the lowest number of suicide deaths, at 641. The information below reflects the breakdown of Stark County suicides by gender and race/ethnicity.

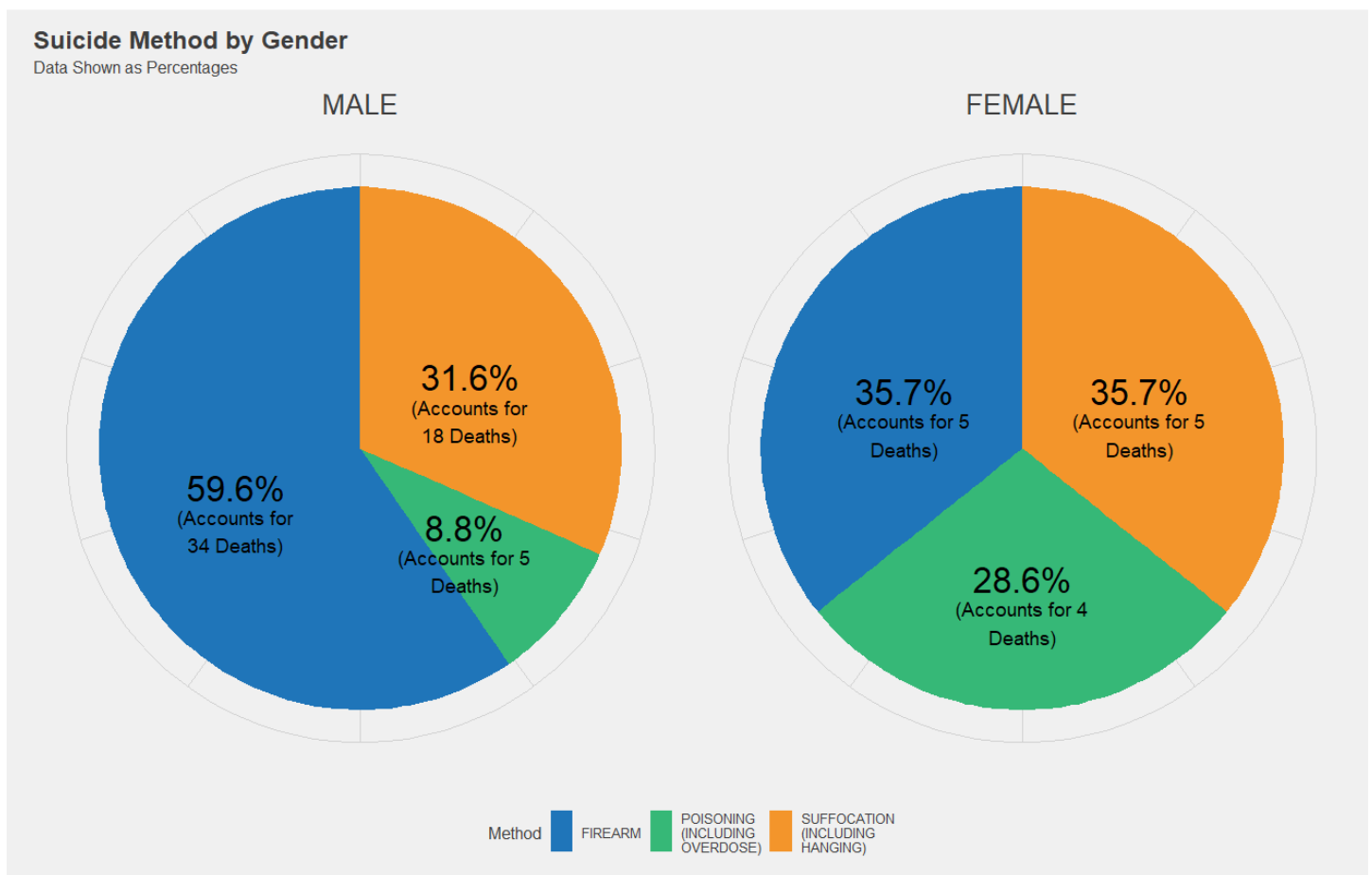
Race/Ethnicity	Female	Male	Total Percentage of Stark County Suicides in 2017
Asian	0	0	0%
Black/African-American	2.82(%)	4.23 (%)	7.05%
Multiracial	0	0	0%
White	16.9 (%)	76.06(%)	92.96%
Total	19.72 (%)	80.29(%)	100%



Methods of Suicide

According to the national statistics for 2017, firearms continue to be the leading method for suicide, at 50.6%. Suffocation/hanging and poisoning are the next two highest methods, 27.7% and 13.9% respectively. In Stark County, firearms also continued to be the leading method in 2018 at 54.9% of all suicide deaths, in comparison to 45.7% from 2017. The chart below identifies the methods used in Stark county by both genders who died by suicide in 2018.

Stark County 2018	Firearms	Poisoning (including overdoses)	Suffocation (including hangings)	Total Suicides
Females	5	4	5	14
Males	34	5	18	57
Total by Method	39	9	23	71

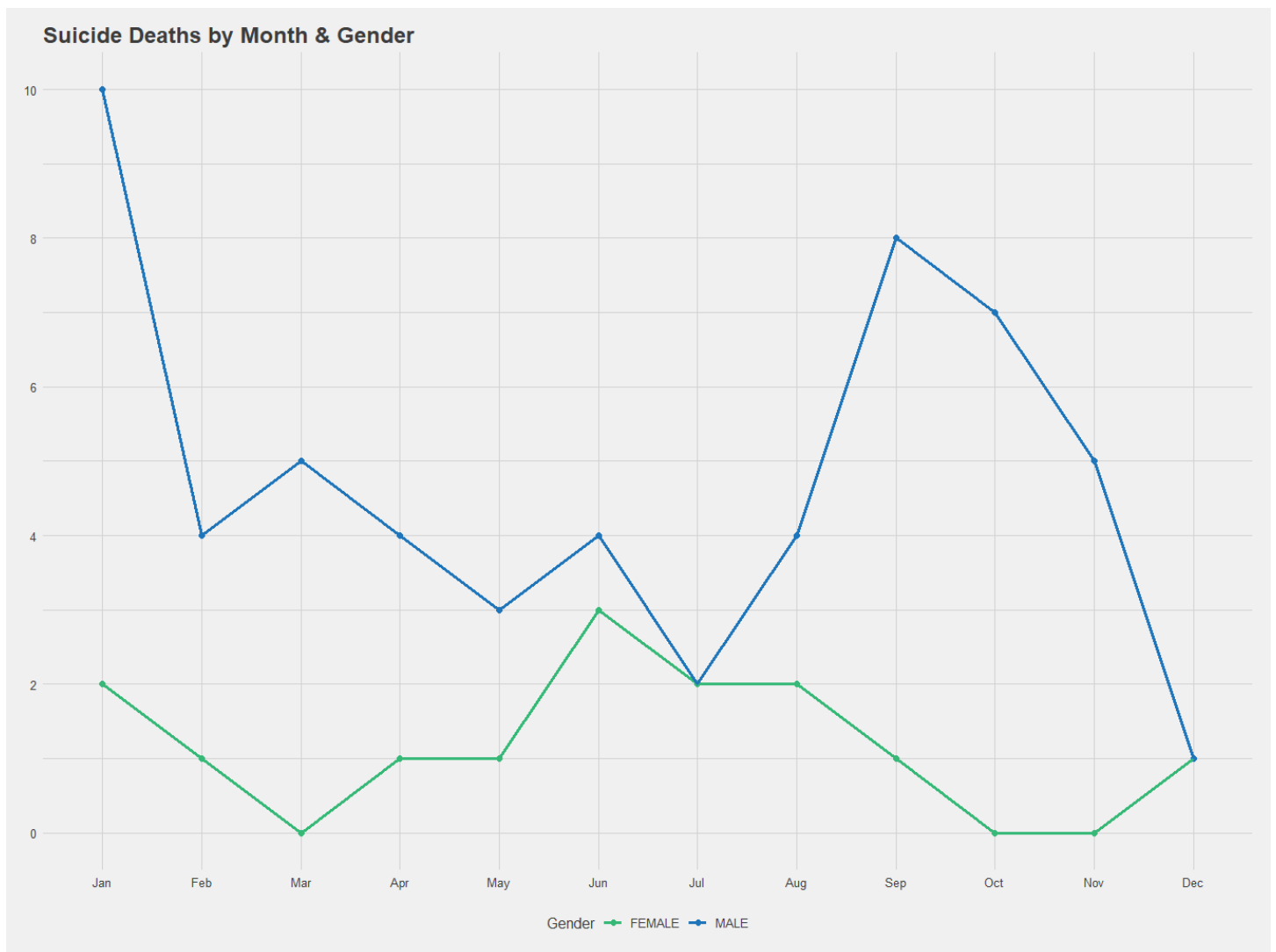


Suicides by Month in Stark County

The question often arises if suicides increase during the holidays. National statistics from the CDC do not support this idea and data reports that suicides typically rise in the Spring and Summer months (see link below). Most recently, as reported by the AAS, more suicides occur during the spring and summer months. The charts below identify the months suicides occurred in Stark County in 2018. There is no evidence of a pattern in either male or female suicide deaths.

<https://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/suicide/holiday.html>

Stark County 2018	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Females	2	1	0	1	1	3	2	2	1	0	0	1
Males	10	4	5	4	3	4	2	4	8	7	5	1
Total	12	5	5	5	4	7	4	6	9	7	5	2



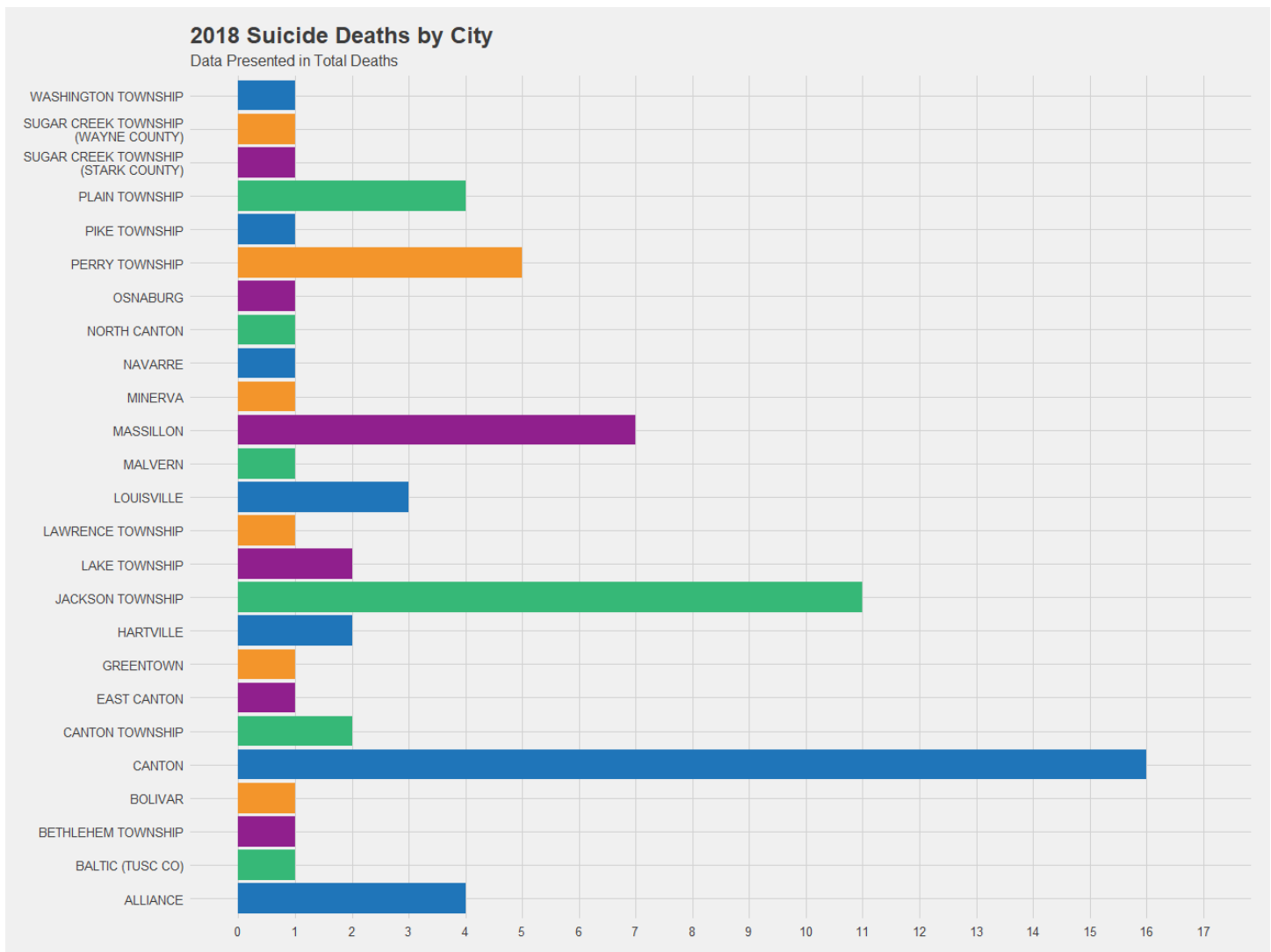
Stark County Locations

As demonstrated by the suicide numbers below, cities and townships, both large and small, experience suicides. Suicide does not discriminate based on a person's residence, which is typically the chosen location for a suicide death. Annual reports by the AAS reflect that certain states and their locations tend to have a higher occurrence of suicide; the highest number of suicide deaths tend to happen in the inter-mountain states. In the United States for the calendar year 2017 (the latest year for which statistics are available), Montana, Wyoming, Alaska, New Mexico, Idaho, Utah, and Colorado—all states in the West/Mountain Divisions – accounted for seven of the ten states with the highest suicide rates per 100,000 population.

Also, according to the AAS, in 2017, Ohio was ranked 33 out of a total of 50 states and the District of Columbia. Ohio's rate was 14.9 suicides for every 100,000 individuals, higher than 14.5 which was the national average. In 2018, Stark County had a rate of 19.06 suicides for every 100,000 individuals.

The chart below shows the suicides per area as they were investigated by the law enforcement department responsible for that jurisdiction in Stark County, 2018. Law enforcement agencies investigate suicides to rule out the possibility of homicide; suicides are no longer considered a crime in the United States.

Stark County 2018	Females	Males	Total	%
Alliance	0	4	4	5.60%
Baltic (Tusc Co)	0	1	1	1.41%
Bethlehem Twp	0	1	1	1.41%
Bolivar	0	1	1	1.41%
Canton	3	13	16	22.54%
Canton Twp	2	0	2	2.82%
East Canton	0	1	1	1.41%
Greentown	0	1	1	1.41%
Hartville	0	2	2	2.82%
Jackson Twp	5	6	11	15.50%
Lake Twp	1	1	2	2.82%
Lawrence Twp	0	1	1	1.41%
Louisville	0	3	3	4.23 %
Malvern	1	0	1	1.41%
Massillon	0	7	7	9.90%
Minerva	0	1	1	1.41%
Navarre	0	1	1	1.41%
North Canton	0	1	1	1.41%
Osnaburg Twp	0	1	1	1.41%
Perry Twp	0	5	5	7.04%
Pike Twp	0	1	1	1.41%
Plain Twp	2	2	4	5.61%
Sugar Creek Township (Stark)	0	1	1	1.41%
Sugar Creek Township (Wayne)	0	1	1	1.41%
Washington Township	0	1	1	1.41%



For those bereaved by suicide

Losing a loved one to suicide may be one the most difficult life circumstances one may face. The death of an individual by suicide presents special concerns in grieving that tend to complicate the healing process for survivors. Survivors of suicide, or people who have lost a loved one to suicide, can experience grief that is intense, complex, and long term. Grief does not follow a linear path and is unique to each individual. Support groups for survivors of suicide do exist and can be extremely helpful in navigating the grief process. There is a safe place in our community for survivors (families and loved ones of someone who have died by suicide) to share their loss with others who are experiencing similar thoughts and feelings. For information on joining the Survivors of Support group, contact Summit Psychological Associates, Inc at 234-718-2331 or visit <https://summit-psychological.org/>.

To learn more about suicide risk factors and warning signs:

<https://starkmhar.org/prevention-resources/suicide-prevention-coalition/suicide-risk-factors-warning-signs/>
<https://afsp.org/about-suicide/risk-factors-and-warning-signs/>

To learn more about Stark County Mental Health & Addiction Recovery’s Care Network and options for treatment:

<https://starkmhar.org/care-network/care-network-providers/>