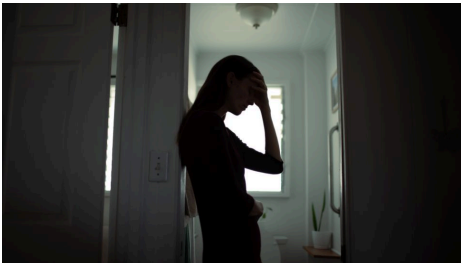


# USU's Utah Women & Leadership Project Releases New Research on Suicide in Utah

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The Utah State University [Utah Women & Leadership Project](#) (UWLP) released a new research snapshot, [Suicide Among Utah Girls and Women: A 2026 Update](#), providing an overview of suicide trends in the state and how they vary by gender, age, race, ethnicity, and geography. Drawing on the most recent data from a variety of sources, the report highlights persistent challenges, demographic disparities, and areas where targeted prevention efforts are urgently needed.

Cindy Jenkins, co-author of the report, said suicide remains one of Utah's most pressing public health issues.

"Suicide is a complex, multifaceted problem that affects individuals, families, and communities across Utah, and its impacts extend far beyond mortality rates," she said. "Utah continues to experience higher suicide rates than the national average, with notable differences across gender and age groups."

The snapshot reports that Utah's age-adjusted suicide rate is 20.6 deaths per 100,000 people, significantly higher than the national rate of 14.9. Although Utah's rate has fluctuated over the past decade, it remains consistently elevated.

Key findings include:

- Men die by suicide at much higher rates than women, accounting for nearly three-quarters of suicide deaths in Utah.
- Women attempt suicide more often, reflecting different patterns of risk and help-seeking behavior.
- Youth and young adults continue to experience high rates of suicidal ideation and attempts, with suicide remaining the leading cause of death for Utahns ages 10 to 24.
- Middle-aged adults (35–54) also show elevated suicide rates, aligning with national patterns.
- Native American and White Utahns experience the highest suicide rates among racial and ethnic groups.

The research shows that suicide is influenced by multiple factors – including mental health conditions, substance use, economic stress, relationship challenges, and access to lethal means – requiring comprehensive, evidence-based prevention strategies. For girls and women, risk can be heightened by depression, anxiety, eating disorders, body image concerns, bullying, trauma, intimate partner violence, reproductive and hormonal changes, minority stress among LGBTQ+ populations, and limited access to supportive relationships or care.

## Regional Differences Across Utah Counties

Suicide rates vary substantially across Utah's counties. Rural counties – including Duchesne, Uintah, Carbon, and San Juan – show some of the highest suicide rates in the state. These regions face unique challenges, including limited access to mental health providers, longer travel distances for care, and higher rates of firearm ownership.

Counties along the Wasatch Front generally report lower suicide rates, though youth suicide remains a concern statewide.

## Policy Implications for Utah

Inspired by the work of the [Utah Suicide Prevention Committee and Coalition](#) and other key partners, the report outlines several policy priorities to strengthen suicide prevention efforts:

- Expand access to mental health services, particularly in rural and underserved regions.
- Increase evidence-based prevention programs in schools, workplaces, and community settings.
- Strengthen crisis response systems, including continued investment in 988 and SafeUT.

- Reduce access to lethal means, especially firearms, through safe storage education and community partnerships.
- Support families and communities affected by suicide through postvention resources and coordinated care.

"As Utah continues to navigate rapid demographic change, mental health challenges, and persistent disparities, these findings highlight both progress and urgency," said Susan R. Madsen, founding director of UWLP and coauthor of the report. "Utah must continue to aggressively focus efforts on prevention, early intervention, and access to high-quality mental health care for individuals and families across the state."

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The [Utah Women & Leadership Project](#) strengthens the impact of Utah girls and women through research, resources, and statewide engagement. Its premier initiative – [A Bolder Way Forward](#) – creates opportunities for Utahns to learn, collaborate, and drive meaningful change across 18 areas of focus. For more information, visit the UWLP website at [utwomen.org](http://utwomen.org). The UWLP is affiliated with [USU Extension](#).

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