From 2010-2014 there were more than 14,000 deaths in the United States among children 0-17 years of age that resulted from violence or unintentional firearm injuries. This equates to nearly 8 deaths each day. Data from the Oklahoma Violent Death Reporting System (OKVDRS) were used to determine the extent of violent deaths among Oklahoma’s infants and children.

From 2010-2014, 265 infants and children 17 years of age and younger died as a result of violence, an average of 53 deaths per year.

Forty-seven percent (125) of the deaths were suicides, 47% (124) were homicides, and 6% (16) were unintentional firearm injury deaths.

72% of the children were males and 28% were females.

26% were age 4 or younger, 29% were ages 5-14, and 46% were ages 15-17.

The highest violent death rate was among Native Americans (6.6 per 100,000 population), followed by blacks (6.4) and whites (4.8). Among children of Hispanic ethnicity, the violent death rate was 3.6.

Violent death rates were highest among children 15-17 years of age in nearly all racial and gender groups. Among black and Hispanic females, violent death rates were highest among females 0-4 years of age.

Black males 15-17 years of age had the highest rate of violent death among all racial and gender groups, followed by Native American males 15-17 years of age (35.6 and 30.8, respectively) (Table 1).

Among children 15-17 years of age, 72% of the deaths were suicides, 26% were homicides, and 3% were unintentional firearm injury deaths.

Table 1. Violent Death Rates Among Children 0-17 Years By Age, Gender, Race, and Ethnicity, Oklahoma, 2010-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>White N</th>
<th>White Rate</th>
<th>Native American N</th>
<th>Native American Rate</th>
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<td>0-4</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>30.8</td>
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<td>16.5</td>
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<td>Females</td>
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</table>

1Violent deaths include homicides, suicides and unintentional firearm injuries
- Children 4-12 years of age had the lowest number of violent deaths; the number of violent deaths peaked at age 17.
- Among persons 15-17 years of age, the suicide rate among males (16.9) was 3 times higher than the rate among females (5.7), and the homicide rate among males in this age group (5.6) was over 2 times higher than the rate among females (2.4).
- Among infants (less than one year of age), the homicide rate among males (9.7) was over twice that of the homicide rate among females (4.7).
- Among children 1-4 years of age, the homicide rate among males was over one and a half times the homicide rate among females (5.2 and 3.3, respectively).
- Compared to violent deaths among adults 18 years of age and older, children 0-17 years of age had a higher percentage of homicides (47% vs. 24%) and unintentional firearm deaths (6% vs. 1%) (Figure 2).
- Suicide accounted for 73% of violent deaths among adults and 47% of violent deaths among children.
- Weapons most commonly used in homicides of children 0-17 years of age were firearms (35%), blunt force (32%) and sharp instruments (7%).
- Weapons most commonly used in suicides of children 0-17 years of age were firearms (54%) and hanging/suffocation (44%).
- Fifty-three counties experienced one or more violent deaths of children with over a third (37%) of the deaths occurring in Oklahoma and Tulsa Counties (Figure 3).
- There were no violent deaths of infants and children during this time period in 24 counties.

Prepared by: Brandi Woods-Littlejohn, MCJ
Injury Prevention Service

The Oklahoma Violent Death Reporting System (OKVDRS) is a statewide surveillance system for suicides, homicides, undetermined manner deaths, unintentional firearm injury deaths and legal intervention deaths. Data are collected from medical examiner reports, death certificates, law enforcement reports, and child fatality review data. The data are included in the National Violent Death Reporting System and can be accessed at http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/.

https://okvdrs.health.ok.gov

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