

OHIO SUICIDE PREVENTION FOUNDATION

Suicide Prevention in Ohio's Hispanic Community

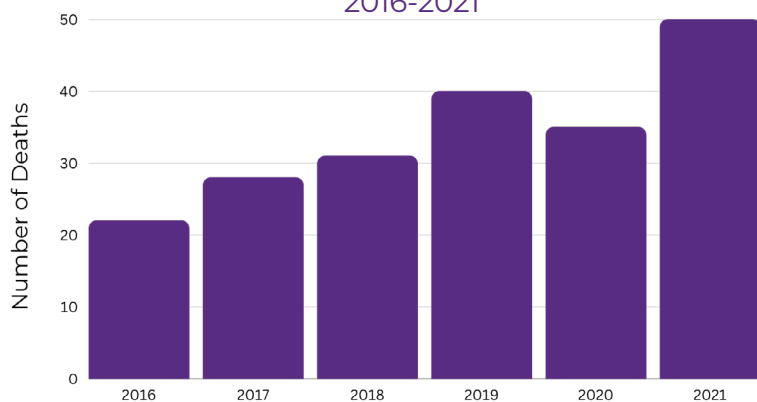
As the fastest growing population group, Ohio's Hispanic community is comprised of more than 505,000 people, accounting for 4.2 percent of the state's total population. According to the 2021 American Community Survey by the U.S. Census Bureau, Ohio's Hispanic population more than doubled since 2000 and has more than tripled since 1980.¹ Suicide is a growing concern among this population as they are disproportionately affected by economic, social, and health consequences.²

A Closer Look

According to preliminary data from the Ohio Department of Health, from 2020 to 2021, suicide deaths among Hispanic Ohioans increased 43 percent, with males experiencing higher rates than females. For Hispanic American youth, the numbers are even more staggering.

On average, from 2012 to 2021, the number of suicide deaths among male Hispanic youth (ages 10-24) was nearly four times the number of deaths among their female counterparts. From 2020 to 2021, suicide deaths among male Hispanic youth increased 14 percent while deaths among female youth decreased 24 percent.³

Number of Suicide Deaths in Ohio's Hispanic Community, 2016-2021



Data Provided by the Ohio Department of Health

Growing Concerns

Living in a prolonged state of fear and being separated from the home and culture one has always known can have a profound impact on an individual's mental health and well-being. Because so many Hispanic-Americans experience this, mental health and suicide have become growing concerns for the community.

Resources

- Ohio Hispanic Coalition ohiohispaniccoalition.org
- Teleayuda Ohio teleayudaohio.com
- Apoyo Latino cincinnatiatlano.org
- Catholic Charities of Southwestern Ohio ccswoh.org
- Live Another Day liveanotherday.org/bipoc/latinx
- Casa de Paz Cincinnati casadepazcinci.org
- The Healing Center (Cincinnati) healingcentercincinnati.org
- Santa Maria Community Services (Cincinnati) santamaria-cincy.org/espanol
- Ohio Latino Affairs Commission ochla.ohio.gov/latino-community/resources
- Urban Minority Outreach mha.ohio.gov/get-help/prevention-services/urban-minority-outreach

Risk Factors

According to the American Psychiatric Association:

Although Hispanics are the largest ethnic minority group living in the United States, anti-Hispanic discrimination is still prevalent—and on the rise, especially with the controversies surrounding undocumented immigrants from Latino countries. Stereotyping of Hispanics in the current sociopolitical climate continues to affect Hispanics negatively. Discrimination is a contributing factor in social inequality and health disparities and is associated with adverse mental health outcomes in Hispanics. Discriminatory experiences for Hispanics are specifically associated with an increase in emotional stress, social isolation, and symptoms of depression and anxiety. Additionally, research suggests that everyday discrimination increases the probability of Hispanics reporting suicidal thoughts and behaviors.⁴

In addition to racial discrimination, other risk factors specific to the Hispanic-American community include:

- Life experiences
- Migration
- Cultural estrangement
- Drug/alcohol usage
- Fear of deportation⁵

Lowering the Risk

In Hispanic cultures, commitment to family, and having healthy and strong bonds is crucial. It has been reported that Hispanic youth who have supportive relationships with their parents are less likely to attempt suicide.⁶ Hispanic female youth also benefit from positive relationships with their mothers, specifically, which can reduce withdrawn and depressive behaviors and suicide attempts.⁶

In addition, ethnic identity is positively associated with self-esteem among Hispanic adolescents, and has been shown to moderate the relationship between perceived discrimination and depression.⁶

According to Dr. Ruby Castilla-Puentes, president of the American Society of Hispanic Psychiatry, Hispanic individuals can leverage many cultural characteristics that define the countries of the Latin American region to head off mental health disorders before they devolve into depression or suicidality.²

To ensure that Ohio's Hispanic-American Population has adequate support, we must also ensure that barriers to mental health care such as insurance coverage are addressed. Interpretation services for Spanish-speaking individuals is also crucial in making sure a person is able to seek help.

References

- 1 Ohio Department of Development. Ohio Hispanic Americans: Snapshot from the 2021 American Community Survey. devresearch.ohio.gov/files/research/P7002.pdf
- 2 American Psychiatric Association. Suicide and Self-Harm: Cultural Connections May Help Protect Hispanic/Latino Youth. 2022. psychiatry.org/news-room/apa-blogs/suicide-and-self-harm-hispanic-youth
- 3 Ohio Department of Health. Preliminary Data Summary: Ohio Suicide Deaths Q2 2023. odh.ohio.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/fe753abd-6236-43f4-b18f-e0b943b93024/
- 4 American Psychiatric Association. Stress & Trauma Toolkit for Treating Hispanics in a Changing Political and Social Environment. psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/diversity/education/
- 5 National Library of Medicine. Risk and protective factors for three major mental health problems among Latino American men nationwide. pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24707037/
- 6 Suicide Prevention Resource Center. Risk and Protective Factors: Hispanic Populations. sprc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Risk-and-Protective-Factors-Hispanic_0

ABOUT OHIO SUICIDE PREVENTION FOUNDATION

OSPF gives hope to those in crisis, strength to those in the struggle, and comfort to those in grief. OSPF is a non-profit organization that works tirelessly to help all of Ohio's communities reduce the risk of suicide. Our work includes supporting those impacted by suicide, raising awareness of mental health issues, and coordinating community resources and evidence-based prevention strategies across the state.



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