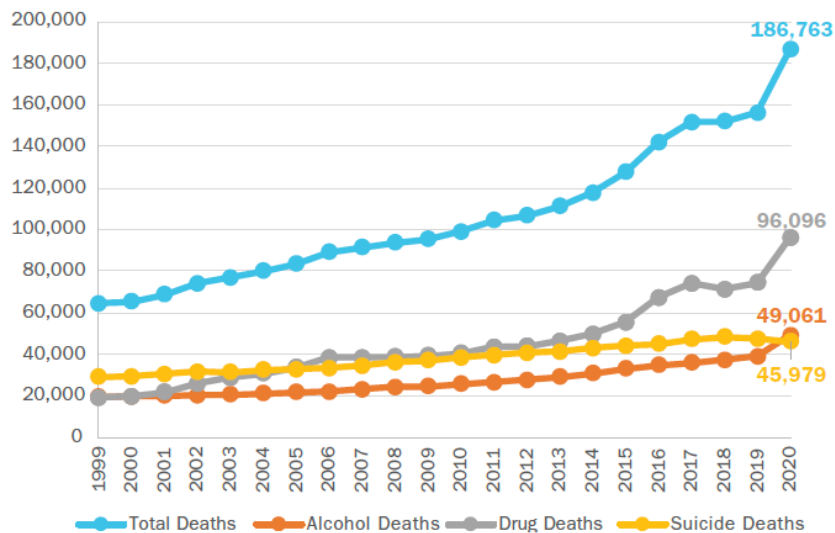


# Pain in the Nation: The Epidemics of Alcohol, Drug, and Suicide Deaths

**Annual Deaths from Alcohol, Drugs, and Suicide in the United States, 1999–2020**

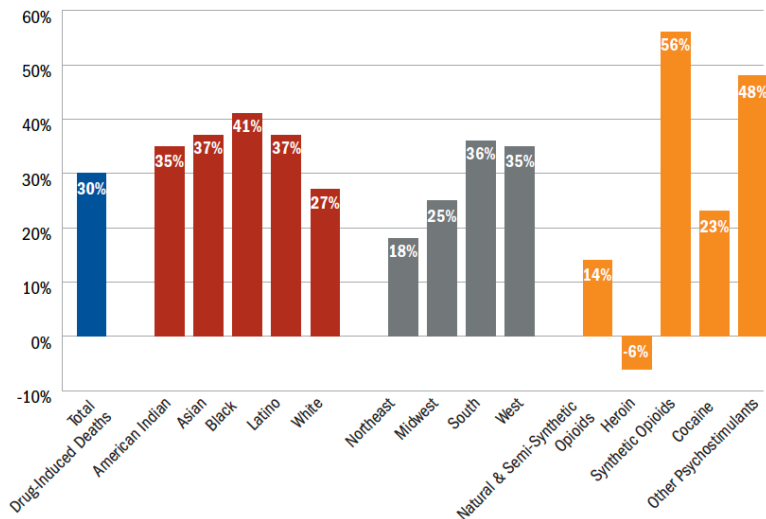


Source: TFAH and WBT analysis of National Center for Health Statistics data

## 2020 Key Trends and Takeaways

- Large increases in combined alcohol and drug deaths
- Disproportionate increases for young adults and communities of color
- Small overall decline in suicide rate

**Percent Change in Age-Adjusted Rates of Drug-Induced and Drug-Specific Overdose Mortality, 2019–2020**



Source: TFAH and WBT analysis of National Center for Health Statistics data

For the full report go to:

<https://www.tfah.org/report-details/pain-in-the-nation-2022/>

## Major Findings

1. The year 2020 had the highest number of deaths from alcohol, drugs, and suicide and the biggest one-year rise in the combined mortality rate ever recorded.
2. Drug-induced mortality increased by 30 percent, with large increases across populations. In 2020, 96,096 Americans died from drug-induced causes—the highest number ever recorded.
3. The increase in drug-induced deaths was largely driven by deaths from synthetic opioids, cocaine, and psychostimulants.
4. All communities of color saw disproportionate increases in drug deaths—with Black people experiencing the largest increase (41 percent) between 2019 and 2020.
5. The overall suicide rate decreased 3 percent in 2020 compared with 2019. This was the second year in a row with a decline in the overall suicide rate, though the rate is still 30 percent higher than in 2000. In 2020, 45,979 Americans died from suicide.
6. Although overall suicide mortality declined slightly, it increased among American Indian, Black, and Latino populations.
7. Alcohol-induced death rates increased 27 percent in 2020 and spanned demographic groups. 49,061 Americans died from alcohol-induced causes in 2020.
8. Alcohol-induced death rates in 2020 were highest among American Indians and Alaska Native peoples.

## Key Recommendations for Congress



Address upstream drivers of behavioral health concerns by increasing funding for the CDC Social Determinants of Health, Adverse Childhood Experiences, Core State Violence and Injury Prevention, and Comprehensive Suicide Prevention programs



Promote resiliency programs in schools by supporting SAMHSA's Project AWARE and the Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Program and by passing the Campus Prevention and Recovery Services for Students Act and the Early Childhood Mental Health Support Act



Prevent substance misuse and overdose by increasing funding for the Drug-Free Communities Support Program, the Overdose Mapping and Application Program, and CDC efforts to monitor and prevent excessive alcohol use



Promote equity and diversity in mental health services by supporting SAMHSA's Minority Fellowship Program and HRSA's Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training grants and by passing the Pursuing Equity in Mental Health Act



Sustain an effective crisis care system, including insurance coverage for a range of crisis response services, by passing the Behavioral Health Crisis Services Expansion Act



Transform the mental health and substance use prevention system by strengthening enforcement efforts under the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act and passing the Strengthen Kids' Mental Health Now Act to raise Medicaid reimbursement for pediatric mental health services