



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

Major National Findings


Combined Death Rate

 The combined death rate increased by 11 percent from 2020 to 2021 and included increases for all age, sex, racial/ethnic, and geographic groups.


2x Between 2011 and 2021, annual alcohol, drug, and suicide deaths more than doubled—from 104,379 deaths in 2011 to a staggering 209,225 deaths in 2021.


 These increases between 2011 and 2021 included a 65 percent rise in deaths among youth ages 10 to 17, along with rising rates of poor mental health and suicidal behavior.

Suicide Deaths


 The overall age-adjusted suicide rate increased 4 percent in 2021, rising to nearly the peak rate in 2018. In 2021, 48,183 Americans died from suicide.

Drug Deaths

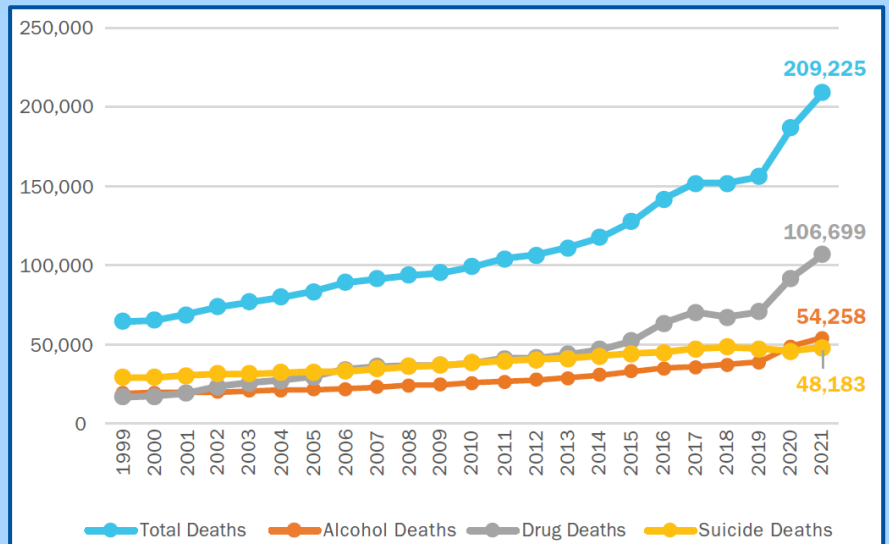
 From 2020 to 2021, the death rate from synthetic opioid overdoses increased 23.

 The age-adjusted drug overdose mortality rate increased by 14 percent from 2020 to 2021, with larger increases among certain communities of color, youth, and older adults.

Alcohol Deaths

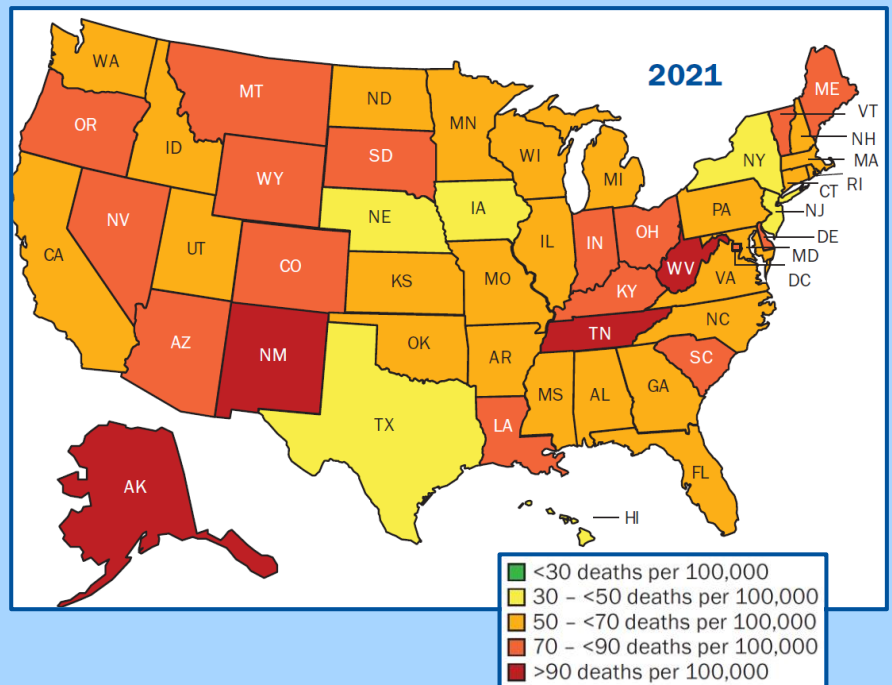
 The age-adjusted rate of deaths from alcohol-induced causes was 10 percent higher in 2021 compared with 2020.

Annual Deaths from Alcohol, Drugs, and Suicide in the United States, 1999–2021



Source: TFAH analysis of National Center for Health Statistics data

Annual Age-Adjusted Deaths per 100,000 from Alcohol, Drugs, and Suicide, 2021



For the full report, go to:

<https://www.tfah.org/report-details/pain-in-the-nation-2023/>

Key Recommendations for Congress



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



Improve mental health services in schools by passing the Advancing Student Services in Schools Today Act, the Campus Prevention and Recovery Services for Students Act, and the Student Mental Health Rights Act



Prevent substance misuse and overdose by increasing funding for the Drug-Free Communities Support Program, harm-reduction programs to reduce overdose and infections, and CDC efforts to monitor and prevent excessive alcohol use



Promote equity and diversity in mental health services—including through outreach to communities of color and culturally appropriate care—by passing the Pursuing Equity in Mental Health Act and the Health Equity and Accountability Act



Modernize crisis care and other mental health services by expanding emergency department programs through the Effective Suicide Screening and Assessment in the Emergency Department Act and ensuring post-disaster care through the Crisis Counseling 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 expand the pediatric workforce

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