

Finding ways to prevent violent deaths in Iowa by understanding contributing circumstances.

IDPH • University of Iowa

Spring 2020

# IAVDRS Newsletter

*For Calendar Year (CY) 2018 there were 638 deaths entered into the database. As of April 2020, there have been 650 deaths entered for CY2019 and data continue to be collected and entered into the system.*

## What is the Iowa Violent Death Reporting System?

The Iowa Violent Death Reporting System (IAVDRS), as part of the National Violent Death Reporting System network, is the only state-based reporting system that pools more than 600 unique data elements from multiple sources into a usable, anonymous database. This system covers all types of violent death-including homicides and suicides-in all settings for all age groups. As such, this system is far more comprehensive than what is available elsewhere and data can be used to develop and tailor violence prevention efforts. To help find ways to prevent violent deaths, the IAVDRS links information about the “who, when, where and how” from data on violent deaths and provides insights about “why” they occurred.

### Quick Facts about IAVDRS

- ✓ The Iowa Department of Public Health receives funding from CDC to administer the program.
- ✓ The program collects data from death certificates, medical examiner reports and law enforcement records to identify circumstances that contribute to these types of violent deaths:
  - Homicides
  - Suicides
  - Deaths resulting from law enforcement intervention
  - Deaths of undetermined intent
  - Deaths resulting from terrorism
- ✓ Iowa first received funding in 2014.
- ✓ Data collection began for deaths that occurred in calendar year 2015 from the 7 most populous counties in Iowa.
- ✓ Statewide data collection began in calendar year 2016 and continues to this day.
- ✓ IDPH has contracted with the University of Iowa’s Injury Prevention Research Center (UI-IPRC) since 2014 to conduct day-to-day data collection and abstraction, and data analysis and evaluation.
- ✓ The program has 15 months after the end of a calendar year to “close out” data for deaths that occurred each year. Data for 2018 will “close out” in Spring 2020 and analysis will begin shortly after.
- ✓ The program has put out an annual “Suicide in Iowa” report for 2015, 2016 and 2017 deaths. A 2018 report is forthcoming after data close out is complete.
- ✓ More information can be found at the program’s website: <https://idph.iowa.gov/disability-injury-violence-prevention/iavdrs>.

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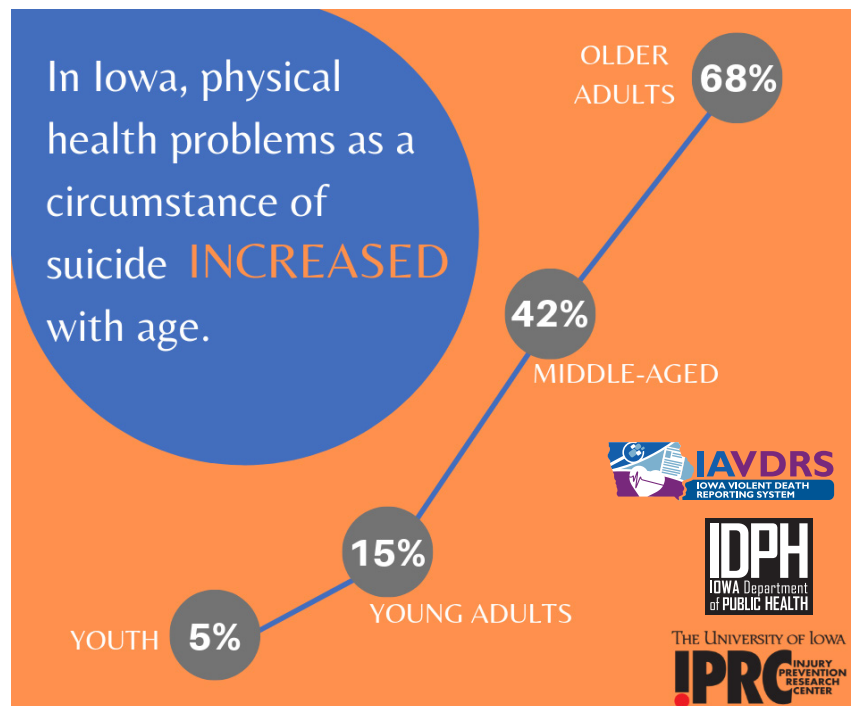


## Notable Data from 2017 Suicide Report

- ✓ In 2017, the majority (76.4%) of violent deaths in Iowa were classified a suicide.
- ✓ The remaining deaths from violence in Iowa were attributed to homicide (16.6%), undetermined (6.2%) and legal intervention (0.8%).
- ✓ Males accounted for 80.7% of suicide victims and females accounted for 19.3% of suicide victims in 2017.
- ✓ Firearm use was the manner of death in 45.7% of suicides, followed by asphyxiation (30.9%) and poisoning (17.0%).
- ✓ The age groups with the largest proportion of suicide deaths were people aged 25-44 and 45-64 (32% of the deaths in each group), followed by older adults (65 years or older, 18%) and youth (ages 10-24) which comprised 17% of suicide deaths.
- ✓ Intimate partner problems contributed to more suicide among young adults (followed by youth and middle-age adults) than to those in the older adult group.

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In Iowa, physical health problems as a circumstance of suicide **INCREASED** with age.



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## Your IAVDRS Staff

### ***Tiffany Conroy, Program Director***

Tiffany started at IDPH in 2016 as the Violence Prevention Coordinator, and assumed the role of Injury Prevention Program Manager in 2018. Tiffany has a Masters Degree in Social Work from Loyola University in Chicago and a BA in Political Science from the University of Iowa. Prior to joining IDPH, Tiffany was a trauma therapist in Chicago for six years, working with children, youth and families affected by complex trauma and prenatal substance exposure. Tiffany approaches her work with an intersectional and trauma-informed lens, and seeks to address shared risk and protective factors across multiple forms of violence to prevent future violence, and to support survivors of harm that has already happened.



### ***Lisa Roth, Project Coordinator***

Lisa Roth is the current Deputy Director of the University of Iowa's Injury Prevention Research Center (UIIPRC). She has a background in Community Health Education and more than 20 years of experience in the field of public health and injury prevention. In her role as Deputy Director at the UI IPRC she oversees outreach activities and community collaborations. She is the project coordinator for the IAVDRS system, managing the day-to-day data abstraction and analysis activities. Lisa is also engaged in dissemination activities with data providers and other interested partners.



### ***Jon Davis, Data Analyst***

Jon Davis is a postdoctoral research scholar with the University of Iowa Injury Prevention Research Center. Jon has a PhD in Epidemiology from the University of Iowa and a Master of Science in Occupational and Environmental Health from Wayne State University. He began working with IAVDRS in 2019 and supports data analysis and management.



### ***Marlene Callahan, Data Abstractor***

Marlene is the Data Abstractor for the Iowa Violent Death Reporting System, and is a Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT). As Data Abstractor, she requests and abstracts information from the death certificate, ME-1/ Autopsy report and law enforcement reports, and enters the de-identified data into the CDC National Violent Death Reporting System database. She has an extensive background in records management and health information management, and maintaining the quality, accuracy, integrity and confidentiality of electronic and hard-copy data.



## Where Have We Been?

The IAVDRS team was busy in 2019! We are thankful for the opportunity to get out across the state and raise awareness about the program, to share data, and to thank data providers face-to-face. In the fall of 2019 we traveled to 5 of the 6 LEIN (Law Enforcement Intelligence Network) Regions in Iowa to provide an overview of the IAVDRS and region-specific data to each region. Staff are complying with social distancing requirements and will visit the final region once restrictions are lifted. In addition to the LEIN meetings, staff exhibited at the Iowa Police Chiefs Association Annual Training, the Iowa Association of County Medical Examiners Fall Meeting, the Iowa Division of the International Association for Identification, and the Iowa State Police Association Conference.

*Please contact Tiffany if you have a suggestion for an upcoming meeting or conference for which you're interested in having staff attend or present.*

# IAVDRS Newsletter

## Supporter SPOTLIGHT! Mitch Mortvedt

Assistant Director – Field Operations  
Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation

Mitch Mortvedt attended the University of Northern Iowa where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology. He was hired in 1994 by the Iowa DCI, where he has held a variety of assignments ranging from the Special Enforcement Operations Bureau (casinos) to the Major Crime Unit (MCU), where he has spent the majority of his career. While assigned to MCU he investigated crimes such as homicides and child deaths, sexual assaults, kidnappings, bank robberies, corruption by public officials, officer-involved shootings, embezzlements and any felony level criminal act. He also serves as the DCI representative on the Iowa Child Death Review Team, the Iowa Violent Death Reporting System team and the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative team. In 2014, he was promoted to Assistant Director of the DCI's Field Operations Unit where he oversees the DCI's Major Crime Unit, Sex Offender Registry Unit and the Cyber Crime Unit.



Mitch has two sons that will be headed into their freshman and junior years in high school. He loves spending time watching their many activities and sporting events, going to Iowa football games with them, as well as golfing, hunting, fishing and doing about anything outside that the three of them can think of.

## Data to Action

### Coming Soon!

If you have an example of how you've put IAVDRS data into action, please send it to Tiffany at [Tiffany.Conroy@idph.iowa.gov](mailto:Tiffany.Conroy@idph.iowa.gov).



### For more information:

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515-242-6514



More information coming soon once dates/plans for future events are finalized!

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## Partnering Together



<http://www.idph.iowa.gov>

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IOWA VIOLENT DEATH  
REPORTING SYSTEM

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