



Youth Suicide Report

Proviso Township and Suburban
Cook County

DECEMBER 2024



Cook County DEPT. of
Public Health

BUILDING
HEALTHIER
COMMUNITIES



YOUTH SUICIDE

IN SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY

In the United States, suicide rates have been rising, and disparities across racial and ethnic groups are becoming more pronounced. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for American youth and young adults ages 10 to 24.

This age group represents 15% of all suicide deaths. Suicide rates among 10-24 year olds increased by 52% from 2000 to 2021 (CDC, 2024). Suicide rates among Black youth ages 10 to 19 increased by a distressing 78% from 2000 to 2020 (Sheftall, 2023).

Every life lost to suicide greatly impacts the community. For those left behind, the grief can be especially complex. Grief after a suicide often comes with additional feelings of guilt, blame, and isolation due to the stigma surrounding suicide, which differs from other forms of loss (Spillane et al., 2017).

Three young adults in Proviso Township died by suicide over a 6-month period, from November 2018 to April 2019, leaving the community shaken. In response, community members and organizations mobilized to support suicide prevention efforts, including introducing suicide screening at Proviso high schools. The Proviso Township Youth Services Department's Community Wellness Strategy Taskforce requested youth suicide data from Cook County Department of Public Health to enhance these efforts in 2023.

The health department's analysis revealed 36 suicide deaths among youth ages 15 to 24 in Proviso Township from 2006 to 2020, further demonstrating the need for prevention programming and services. A recent CCDPH school health survey also showed that 15% of suburban Cook County high school students reported seriously considering suicide in 2022.

This report highlights the impact of suicide among youth and young adults in Proviso Township and includes mental health resources for youth and families in the western suburbs.



YOUTH SUICIDE IN PROVISO TOWNSHIP AND SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY

SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY

531

There were **531** non-fatal suicide attempts among 15-18 year olds in 2020.¹

15%

15% (16,540) of high school students reported having seriously considered attempting suicide in 2022.²

9

The youngest child to attempt suicide in 2019 was **9 years old**.¹

1. Suburban Cook County, IL; Cook County Hospital Discharge; 2016 to 2020

2. Youth Suburban Cook County, IL; Youth Risk Behavior Survey; 2022; 9th to 12th Graders

FROM 2006-2020, 36 YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS AGES 15-24 DIED BY SUICIDE IN PROVISO TOWNSHIP.³

3. Illinois Department of Public Health; Vital Records; 2006 to 2020

SUICIDE RISK FACTORS⁴

- Depression
- Hopelessness
- Loss of control
- High conflict or violent relationships
- Social isolation
- Frequent bullying
- Family/loved one's history of suicide
- Substance misuse
- Historical trauma
- Discrimination

SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS⁵

- Physical changes in appearance or hygiene
- Increase in alcohol or drug use
- Sudden drop in grades
- Social withdrawal
- Talking about suicide or preoccupation with death
- Giving away belongings
- Risky or reckless behaviors (such as reckless driving or unsafe sex)
- Self-harm behaviors such as cutting
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having nothing to live for
- Researching suicide methods
- Researching and/or acquiring weapons

4. Anderson et al., 2015; Lopez et al., 2016 5. American Psychological Association, 2024

A 2019 *Forest Park Review* article after three youth suicide deaths highlighted the community's concerns. Here is an excerpt:

FOREST PARK
REVIEW

News ▾ Opinion Community Forest Park Eats Forest Park History Obituaries Public Notices

NEWS

'This is a community crisis'

Emergency meeting held following string of Proviso East student suicides

by Michael Romain April 9, 2019

Rajeska Jackson (pictured with microphone) addresses students and community members during a meeting on April 7 at Proviso East that was designed to brainstorm ways of preventing another student's suicide. | Photo provided

Residents in and around Proviso Township are groping for solutions after yet another 15-year-old Proviso East student from Maywood died by suicide — the third 15-year-old East student from Maywood to die by suicide in less than six months.

The most recent suicide happened on April 5. The victim was an African-American female who was a member of the girls' basketball team at the high school.

In November 2018, a Hispanic female, also a member of the girls' basketball team at East, committed suicide. Her death was followed by the death of a Hispanic male who lived in Maywood, attended East and took his life last December.

TESTIMONIALS

Data on suicide reveals only part of the story. In late 2018 and early 2019, three students from Proviso East High School tragically died by suicide. Micheal Romain, a journalist for the *Village Free Press* and *Forest Park Review*, spoke with educators, treatment providers, and community members about these heartbreaking events. Their testimonies highlight the profound impact of suicide on the Proviso Township community.

We're trying to let students know that we love them...Counselors have been deployed from D209's feeder districts to handle what mental health experts are calling a local crisis.

Ned Wagner, District 209 Board President

We do ourselves, our children, a disservice when we don't talk about it... [Depression] is not who [a person is], but a condition that people experience."

Regina Dillard, Proviso East High School Alumni

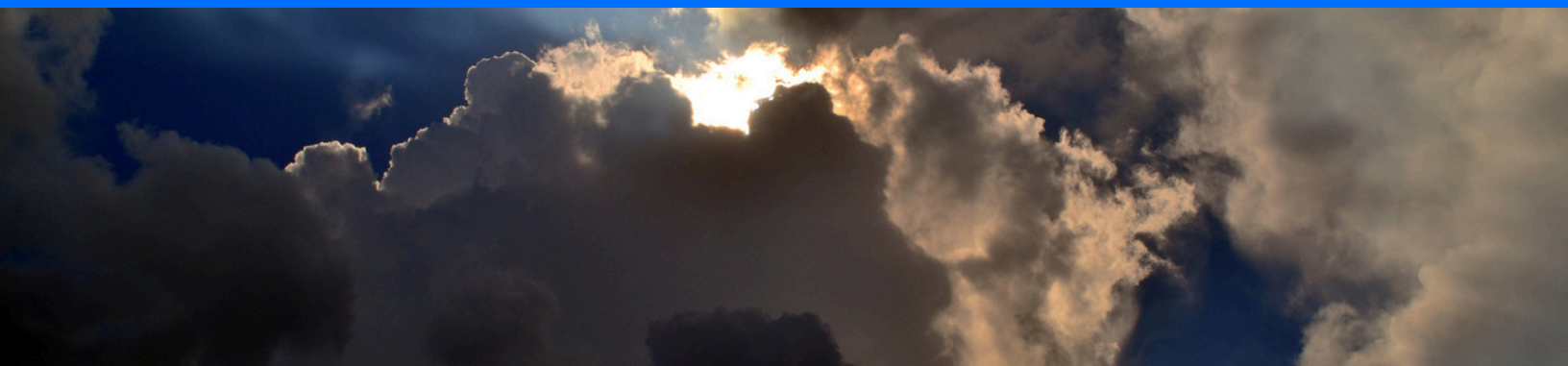
Many of the symptoms I experience as an individual living with PTSD – from depression to anxiety to hypervigilance to violence to apathy to numbness to an inability to truly communicate and build relationships – I'm seeing in our youth. But I was in a war.

Anthony Clark, Oak Park Teacher and Community Activist

We look at this as a community crisis.

**Rajeska Jackson, District 209 Employee and
Co-Founder of Best of Proviso Township**

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From 2016 to 2022, 79 young people ages 0 to 24 died by suicide in suburban Cook County. In 2020, suicide attempt rates among youth and young adults were highest among those aged 15-18 years (379.4 per 100,000), followed closely by young adults aged 19-24 years (227.2 per 100,000). The suicide attempt rate was 54.6 per 100,000 for youth ages 14 and under. The youngest person to attempt suicide during this timeframe was nine years old.

Table 1. Hospitalization Rates (per 100,000) for Suicide Attempts by Age, Suburban Cook County, 2016-2020.

Age in Years	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
0-14	42.0	49.8	53.5	57.6	54.6
15-18	352.3	298.2	352.3	368.0	379.4
19-24	155.2	178.0	316.4	261.1	227.2
25-34	147.8	176.1	157.9	167.3	137.4
35-44	93.4	87.4	98.5	95.2	69.4
45-54	88.8	82.8	82.8	67.9	65.2
55-64	52.8	62.0	45.7	49.7	48.0
65 and up	19.8	24.4	24.0	26.4	21.1

Source: Cook County Hospital Discharge data

A 2022 health survey of high school students in suburban Cook County public schools showed that the rate of suicide attempts among high school students was 20% lower than the national rate. Nationally, 9.0% of high school students reported attempting suicide in 2021 compared to 7.4% in suburban Cook County in 2022 (CDC, 2024). Female students reported suicide attempts more frequently than male students (10.7% vs. 4.4%). Additionally, 8% of students reported experiencing an injury, poisoning, or overdose requiring medical treatment as a result of their suicide attempt (Table 2).

RISING SUICIDE RATES AMONG YOUTH

According to the CDC, suicide rates among youth and young adults ages 10-24 rose by 52% from 2000 to 2021 (CDC, 2024). During this period, there was a 78% increase in suicide rates among Black youth ages 10-19 (Sheftall, 2023). Table 2 shows more than one third of suburban Cook County youth reported having depression. Those who identified as female were more than two times as likely to have reported depression, suicide-related thoughts, plans and attempts.

Table 2. Percent Reporting Suicide-related Indicators Among Youth by Gender, Suburban Cook County, 2022.

Topic	Female	Male	Female: Male Risk Ratio	Overall
Depression	47.6%	21.3%	2.2	34.0%
Seriously considered attempting suicide	21.6%	8.2%	2.6	14.7%
Made a suicide plan	17.8%	7.1%	2.5	12.3%
Ever attempted suicide	10.7%	4.4%	2.4	7.4%
Injured from suicide attempt	12.0%	3.6%	3.3	8.2%

Source: Suburban Cook County, IL; Youth Risk Behavior Survey; 2022; 9th to 12th Graders

DISPARITIES AMONG SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2022, Black high school students in suburban Cook County reported attempting suicide three times more than their White peers (11% vs. 3%) (Table 3). Additionally, depression affected a greater percentage of Multiracial (51%), Hispanic (37%), and Black (36%) students, who reported experiencing persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness lasting two weeks or more, disrupting daily activities. This proportion was notably higher than that of White students, at 29% (Table 3).

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Table 3. Percent Reporting Suicide-related Indicators Among Youth by Race, Suburban Cook County, 2022.

Topic	Black	Hispanic	White	Asian	Multiracial	All Other	Overall
Depression	35.8%	36.8%	29.1%	28.2%	50.5%	33.9%	34.0%
Seriously considered attempting suicide	15.9%	15.5%	11.8%	15.5%	26.3%	14.9%	14.7%
Made a suicide plan	13.7%	13.9%	8.0%	15.4%	24.2%	22.3%	12.3%
Ever attempted suicide	10.9%	8.8%	3.4%	7.0%	16.7%	14.9%	7.4%
Injured from suicide attempt	11.8%	8.9%	4.2%	19.8%	3.3%	0.0%	8.2%

Source: Suburban Cook County, IL; Youth Risk Behavior Survey; 2022; 9th to 12th Graders

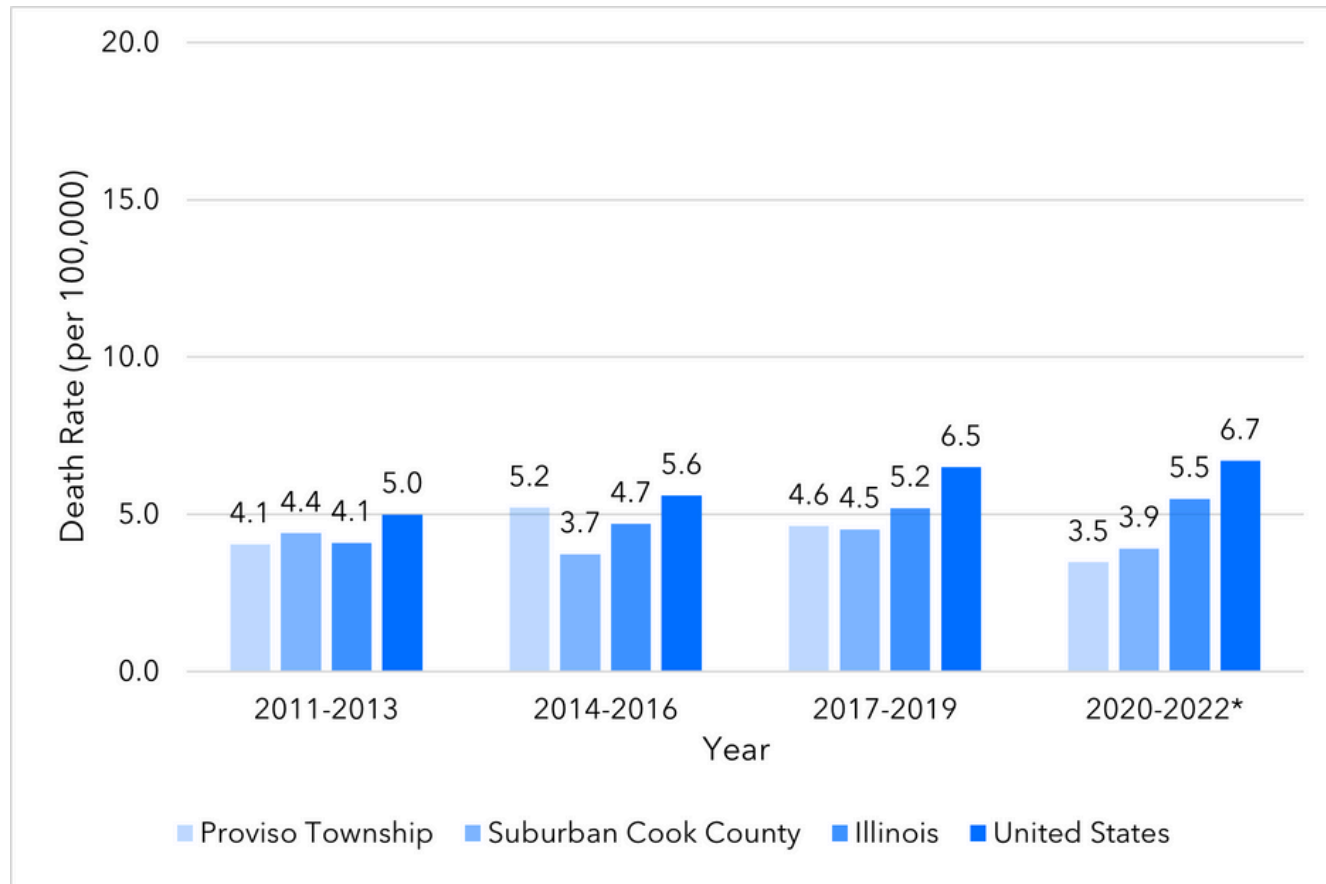
TRENDS IN SUICIDE RATES IN PROVISO TOWNSHIP

Between 2006 and 2020, data from Proviso Township indicated that the suicide rate among youth and young adults aged 15-24 was 9.8 per 100,000 population. In the past decade, suicide deaths among Proviso Township youth and young adults ages 24 and under have shown a steady decline. The suicide death rate dropped from 5.2 per 100,000 population in 2014-2016 to 3.5 per 100,000 population in 2020-2022, a rate now lower than that in suburban Cook County (3.9), Illinois (5.5), and the national average (6.7) (Figure 1).



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Figure 1. Suicide Death Rates for Persons Aged 24 Years and Under by Geographic Location, 2011-2022.



Sources: IDPH Vital Records (death counts from death certificates with suicide defined as the underlying cause of death); CDC, National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) National Vital Statistics System, CDC WONDER

*Note: United States and Illinois data only goes up to 2021 and not 2022.

Significant differences in suicide rates exist by gender and race across all age groups in Proviso Township. From 2006 to 2020, the male suicide rate was 4.5 times higher than that of females, with rates of 16.2 per 100,000 population for males compared to 3.6 per 100,000 population for females. Suicide deaths predominantly occurred among White, Black, and Hispanic residents in Proviso Township. Among these groups, White residents had the highest suicide death rate at 14.7 per 100,000 population, followed by Black residents at 5.8 per 100,000 population, and Hispanic residents at 4.4 per 100,000 population.

CRISIS AND SUPPORT CALL LINES

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide or experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis, 988 provides a connection to free, confidential support. At the beginning of the call, callers have the option to select the Veterans Crisis Line or the Spanish-Language Crisis Line.

- **Call:** 988. Press 3 to reach LGBTQIA+ affirming counseling.
 - **Text:** 988. Text Q to reach LGBTQIA+ affirming counseling.
 - **Hours:** 24/7
-

NAMI Chicago Helpline

The NAMI Chicago Helpline is a free and confidential resource that provides a listening ear, guidance, and connection to the right mental health and social service resources, over the phone. The helpline is available for people calling for their own needs, those supporting a loved one, and providers who need resources for a client. Support is available in both English and Spanish.

- **Call:** 833-NAMI-CHI (626-4244)
 - **Hours:** Monday - Friday, 9AM-8PM; Saturday and Sunday, 9AM-5PM
-

The Trevor Project

The Trevor Project is a support network for LGBTQ+ youth and provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention resources. Through The Trevor Project you can reach out to a counselor if you're struggling, find answers and information and get the tools you need to help someone else.

- **Call:** 1-866-488-7386
 - **Text:** START to 678678
 - **Hours:** 24/7
-

Teen Line

Teen Line is an anonymous, non-judgmental space for youth. Through this hotline, teens can access personal peer-to-peer support from highly-trained teens supervised by adult mental health professionals.

- **Call:** 800-852-8336; 8PM-12PM CST
- **Text:** 839863; 8PM-11PM CST

LOCAL IN-PERSON RESOURCES

The Loft at Eight Corners

In collaboration with NAMI Metro Suburban, Pillars Community Health launched The Loft, a space designed to engage youth in their mental health journey. The Loft offers individual and group services, including mental wellness education and skill-building to equip youth and their families with strategies for self-management; crisis prevention, intervention, stabilization; and referrals to other resources. Services are available on a walk-in or scheduled basis.

- **Location:** 9049 Monroe Ave, Brookfield, IL 60513
 - **Ages served:** 7-12th grade aged youth and their families
 - **Hours:** Monday - Friday: 1PM-8 PM; Saturday - Sunday: 10AM-6PM
 - **Learn more:** <https://loft8corners.org>
-

Healthcare Alternative Systems (H.A.S.) Living Room

The Living Room is a refuge for individuals in crisis—a safe, welcoming, and judgment-free space offering free, confidential, and immediate emotional support on a walk-in basis. The Living Room provides an accessible, comforting alternative to the emergency room during times of stress and crisis. Counseling services are always free and confidential.

- **Location:** 1917 West Roosevelt Road, Broadview, IL
 - **Ages served:** 18 years old and over
 - **Hours:** 12PM-8PM, 7 days a week
-

NAMI Metro Suburban Living Rooms

Whether you are in an emotional crisis, or just need a safe place to speak with someone who understands, you can go to a Living Room location where you can find someone to talk to. The Living Rooms are available to anyone who is feeling scared, anxious, angry, sad, or just needs someone to talk to. Services are free of charge, with no identification or insurance needed. The Living Rooms are accessible by walk-in or by calling in advance.

- **Summit Location:** 7602 63rd Street, Summit, IL
- **Ages served:** 18 years old and over
- Bilingual Support in Spanish available
- **Hours:** 24/7

- **LaGrange Location:** 4731 Willow Springs Road
- **Ages served:** 18 years old and over
- **Hours:** 24/7

- **Learn more:** <https://namimetsub.org/recovery-programs/the-living-room/>

ACCESSING SUICIDE AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH DATA

For comprehensive data on suicide and youth mental health, please visit the Cook County Department of Public Health's (CCDPH) Health Atlas page at cookcountyhealthatlas.com. This data platform, co-designed by the health department and its partners, aims to enhance public health awareness and promote health equity. The information on the platform is regularly updated to provide the most current insights.

REQUESTING ADDITIONAL DATA

The Cook County Department of Public Health is also available to respond to data requests from partner agencies, universities, and the general public. For access to additional data not included in this report, please visit the CCDPH website at cookcountypublichealth.org/epidemiology-data-reports/external-data-request-form to submit your data request.

CONTACT US

If you have questions, please contact:

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