

Illinois Violent Death Reporting System



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IVDRS: Unique Information to Inform Prevention

Homicide and suicide are among the top five leading causes of death in Illinois for people under age 35. The Illinois Violent Death Reporting System (IVDRS) was developed to help prevent these deaths. IVDRS provides the fullest possible picture of the circumstances of violent death in Illinois, including both homicide and suicide.

IVDRS is a comprehensive system that centralizes information already collected by city, county and state-wide agencies. It combines data from medical examiners and coroners, law enforcement, public health officials and crime labs to provide a fuller understanding of patterns and predictors of violent death

in Illinois. Through identification of these patterns and predictors officials and organizations will gain knowledge to put effective prevention policies and programs into place.

IVDRS is being phased in across Illinois over a five year period. The first year of IVDRS data, covering deaths occurring in 2005, includes information from Cook, Kane and Peoria counties. The overall 2005 homicide rate in the three counties is 10.3 homicide deaths per 100,000 three-county residents, while the overall suicide rate is 7.7 deaths per 100,000 three-county residents (Table 1).

In 2004, in Illinois, there were 1,904 violence-related deaths; 1,028 suicides and 876 homicides. The Illinois homicide rate (2004) was 6.8 deaths per 100,000 Illinois residents, which was larger than the U.S. homicide rate of 5.9 deaths per 100,000 U.S. residents in 2004. The Illinois suicide rate for 2004 was 8.1 suicide deaths per 100,000 Illinois residents which was less than the U.S. suicide rate of 10.9 deaths per 100,000 U.S. residents in 2004.

Comparable 2005 violent death data on a national and statewide level is not yet available from WISQARS, the CDC's injury Web site. When comparing IVDRS deaths in these three counties to the most recent statewide figure, IVDRS has accounted for approximately 60% of all Illinois violent deaths for 2005.

TABLE 1: Homicide and suicide rates for the U.S., Illinois and the three counties participating in IVDRS

	U.S.	Illinois	Three IVDRS Counties
Homicide (N)	17,729	1,028	623
Homicide rate	5.9	6.8	10.3
Suicide (N)	35,469	876	456
Suicide rate	10.9	8.1	7.7

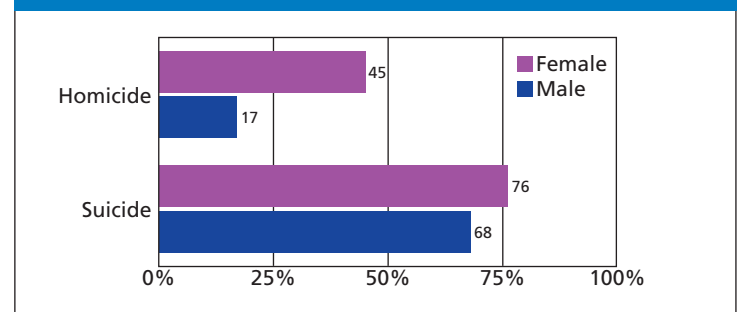
Note: comparable year data are not yet available. U.S. and Illinois 2004; IVDRS 2005.

IVDRS Reveals Women at Greater Risk of Murder at Home

Risk 2.5 times greater than men

IVDRS data for 2005 show that women are at much greater risk of being murdered in their home. Forty-five percent of 108 female homicide victims were killed at home, while 17% of 505 male homicide victims were killed at home. However, men and women commit suicide at home with similar frequency (Figure 1). This strongly suggests the significant role that domestic violence plays in the homicide of women.

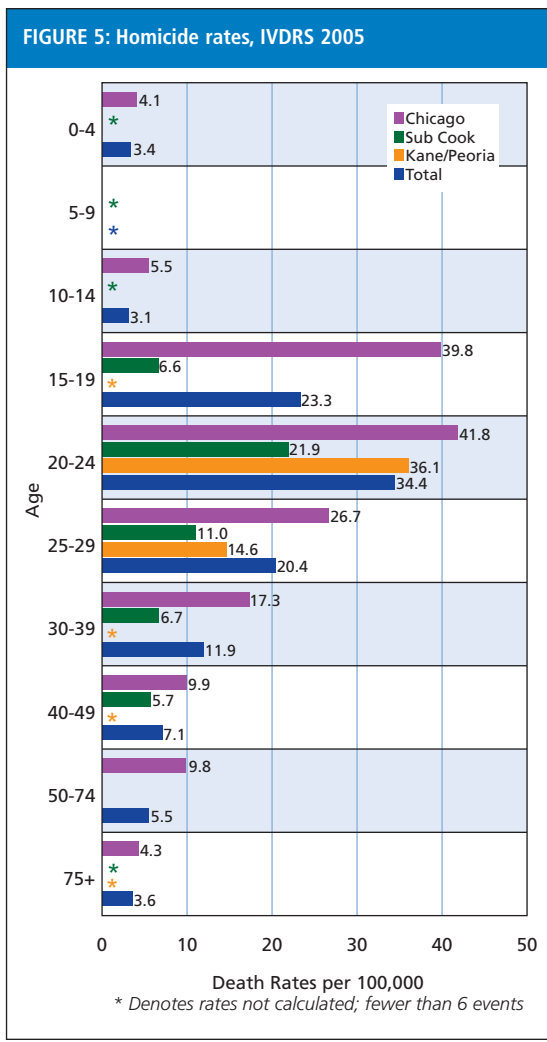
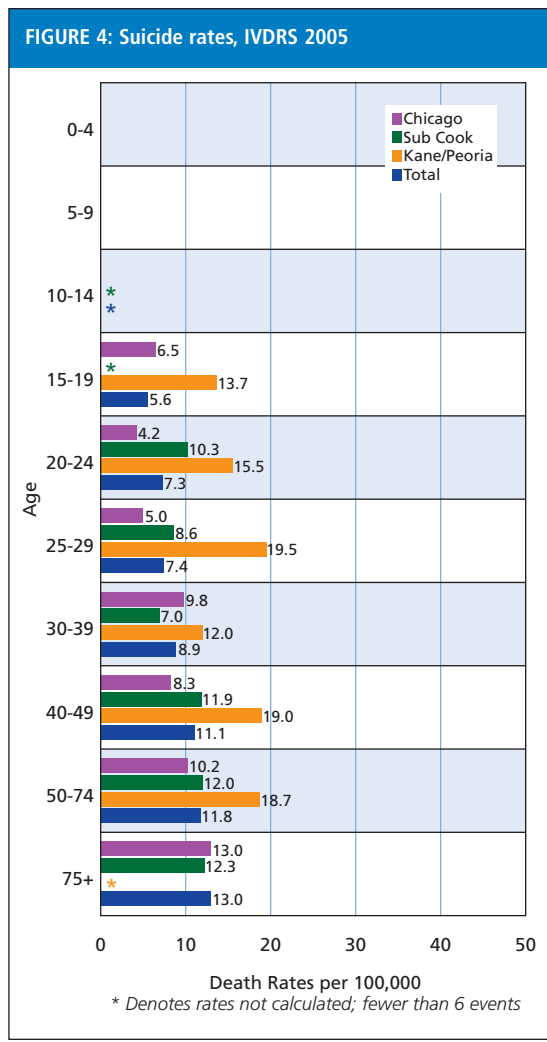
FIGURE 1: Percent male and female homicide and suicide victims who die at home, IVDRS, 2005: Cook, Kane and Peoria, IL counties



Homicide and Suicide Rates by Age, IVDRS, 2005

The total suicide rate for three IVDRS counties increases steadily as the residents get older. The suicide rate for elderly residents, age 75 years and older, is 13.0 deaths per 100,000 Cook, Kane and Peoria residents. The suicide rate for the elderly is twice that for 15-19 year old residents of Cook, Kane and Peoria counties (5.6 deaths per 100,000). Kane and Peoria counties have the highest suicide rates of any IVDRS location (Figure 4).

The homicide rate for IVDRS three county residents peaks for persons 20 to 24 years old (34.4 deaths per 100,000 Cook, Kane and Peoria residents). This trend is similar for all locales: Chicago (41.8), Suburban Cook (21.9) and Kane/ Peoria (36.1). Chicago residents experience the highest homicide rates for all age groups (Figure 5).



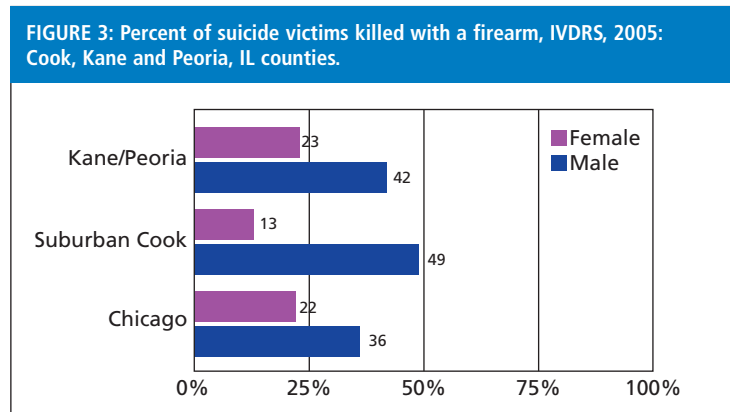
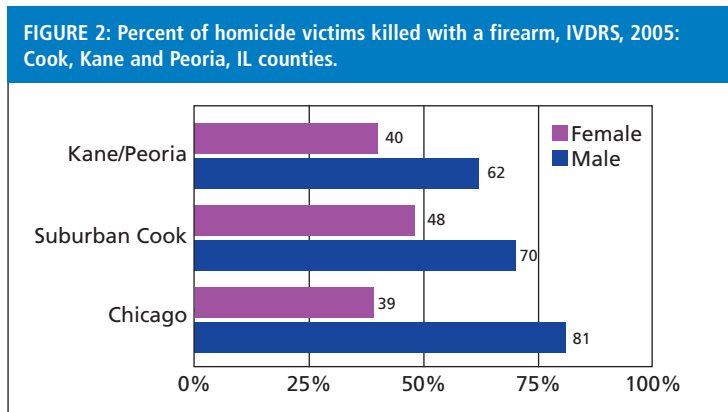
Firearms and Violent Death

Firearms were the most common means of violent death. Males were more likely to be firearm victims than females.

Over half of all violent deaths in the three counties covered by IVDRS involved firearms. Firearms account for more violent deaths than all other means combined.

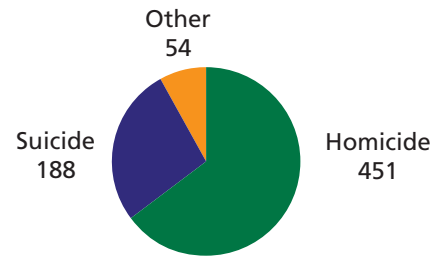
Homicide: Firearms continue to be the primary weapon used in homicides. In Chicago, the 375 male homicide victims were twice as likely to be killed with a firearm as females. In the other IVDRS jurisdictions, males were also more likely to be killed by a firearm (Figure 2).

Suicide: Males use firearms to complete suicide more frequently than females, but females are at risk for firearm suicide as well (Figure 3). Overall, 71% (435) of homicides and 36% (164) of suicides were committed with firearms.



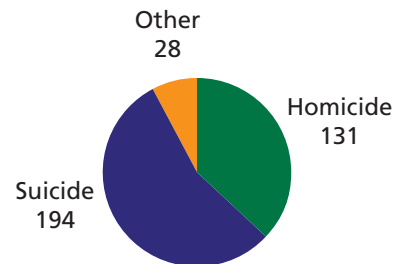
Chicago

	Homicide		Suicide		Other	
	N	Rate	N	Rate	N	Rate
Total	451	15.6	188	6.5	54	1.9
Male	378	26.9	145	10.3	44	3.1
Female	73	4.9	43	2.9	10	0.7
% firearm	74%		32%			
% at home	19%		65%			



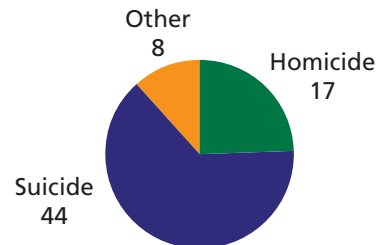
Suburban Cook County

	Homicide		Suicide		Other	
	N	Rate	N	Rate	N	Rate
Total	131	5.3	194	7.8	28	1.1
Male	100	8.3	139	11.6	23	1.9
Female	31	2.4	55	4.3	5	*
% firearm	65%		39%			
% at home	30%		71%			



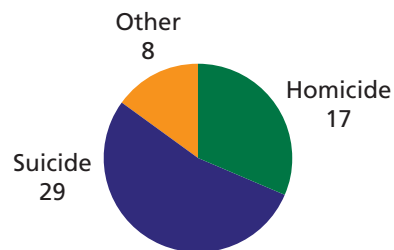
Kane County

	Homicide		Suicide		Other	
	N	Rate	N	Rate	N	Rate
Total	17	4.2	44	11.1	8	2.0
Male	14	6.9	38	19.2	4	*
Female	3	*	6	3.0	4	*
% firearm	53%		36%			
% at home	35%		84%			



Peoria County

	Homicide		Suicide		Other	
	N	Rate	N	Rate	N	Rate
Total	17	9.3	29	15.8	8	4.4
Male	15	17.0	22	24.9	3	*
Female	2	*	7	7.4	5	*
% firearm	65%		41%			
% at home	29%		66%			



See notes on methodology, page 4.

Murder-Suicide in IVDRS: Women Are the Most Frequent Victims

- Fourteen murder-suicide incidents were recorded in the 2005 IVDRS data system.
- All homicide victims were female except one child, the son of the perpetrator.
- All of the perpetrators /suicide victims were male.
- Firearms were used as a weapon in 10 out of the 14 murder-suicide incidents, or 70% of the time.
- Nine of the victims were either married to or divorced from the suspects. Three of the relationships were girlfriend/boyfriend relationships. One relationship was undefined.
- **Children were present at eight of the murder-suicide incidents, or 57% of the time.**

Substance Use a Key Indicator

One of the most important aspects of IVDRS is that it looks at the circumstances surrounding each violent death, such as location, relationships of victims and offenders, precipitating events and toxicology results from autopsies.

Nearly all of the homicide and suicide victims are tested for alcohol, while other drugs are screened to varying degrees depending on the circumstances.

Of the 558 homicide victims tested for alcohol, 40% of the male victims and 31% of the female victims tested positive for alcohol (Figures 5 and 6). For suicide victims tested, the numbers were about the same with 38% of the males and 29% of the females testing positive for alcohol.

Victims are tested for other substances more selectively. IVDRS data for 2005 shows that of 73 tested, 48% of female suicide victims tested positive for anti-depressants, compared to 25% of the males tested. Cocaine was tested for in 555 homicide victims, with females testing positive for cocaine 25% of the time, and males testing positive only 10% of the time (Figures 6 and 7).

FIGURE 6: Percent homicide victims testing positive for substance use, IVDRS, 2005, Cook, Kane and Peoria, IL Counties

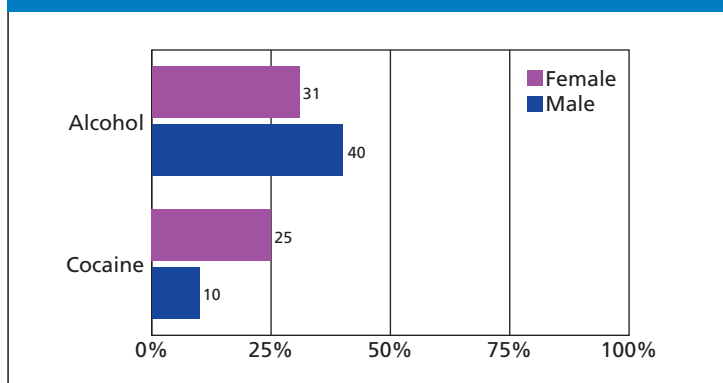
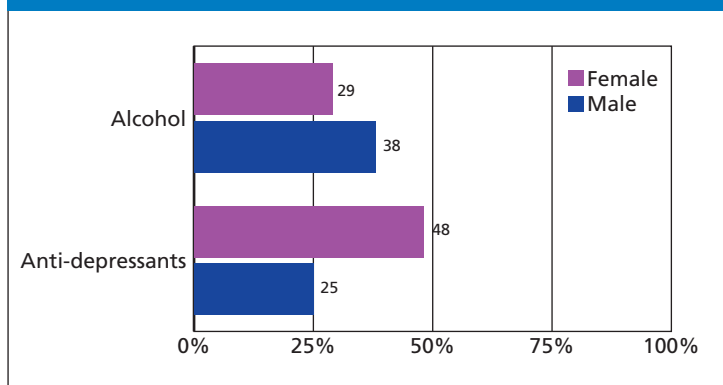


FIGURE 7: Percent suicide victims testing positive for substance use, IVDRS, 2005, Cook, Kane and Peoria, IL Counties



WHAT IS A VIOLENT DEATH?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) establishes standards for all of the state-level Violent Death Reporting Systems, such as the one in Illinois.

The CDC defines violent death as homicide, suicide, unintentional firearm death, death from legal intervention, death related to terrorism and death from undetermined causes. An undetermined death is one in which the cause of death is known, such as gunshot wound, or drowning, but the manner of death (i.e., whether the death was homicide, suicide or accidental) is not known.

NOTES ON METHODOLOGY

- Cook County (which includes Chicago) is the source of the majority of IVDRS data; the data cannot be understood as representative of Illinois as a whole.
- Rates are not computed for fewer than six cases.
- "Other" category includes unintentional firearm deaths, death from legal intervention, deaths related to terrorism and undetermined.
- All data is accurate as of the date received and is subject to change due to ongoing investigations. Numbers will not always match as data is incomplete in some cases.
- All population data calculated using 2000 U.S. Standard Population at www.census.gov.
- Data for U.S. and Illinois (Table 1) from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [online]. (2005) [May 2007]. Available from URL: www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars

FUTURE ISSUES

IVDRS plans to release newsletters three times this year. Future issues will focus on victimization disparities; suicide circumstances; homicide circumstances.

ILLINOIS VIOLENT DEATH REPORTING SYSTEM

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