

OHIO SUICIDE PREVENTION FOUNDATION

Suicide Prevention in the Black Community

Anyone can experience suicidal thoughts – no matter age, race, gender, socioeconomic status, or cultural background – yet some populations are more at risk than others. The Black community is particularly at a higher risk, and the suicide rate has continued to increase when the rate for other populations has declined or remained the same. According to the Ohio Department of Health, from 2019 to 2020, the suicide rate for Black males increased 8 percent and for females, 14 percent. ¹

Risk & Protective Factors

Across all racial and ethnic groups, the circumstances that increase suicide risk are:

- Prior suicide attempts
- Substance use
- History of mental illness
- Serious illness like chronic pain
- Legal or financial problems ²

For Black individuals, these circumstances are often compounded by factors specific to race, including:

- Stigma within the community
- Racism and discrimination
- Racial bias from medical professionals

Because of these factors, Black individuals who report suicidal thoughts or attempts are less likely to seek or receive psychiatric services when compared to white individuals. ³

For Black individuals, the best means to support healing and prevent suicide are effective mental health care, social and emotional support from peers, including family, community, and other social and cultural institutions. ⁴ When someone feels like they can openly speak about their experience, they are more likely to find resources and support.

Resources

To find additional resources and support, visit:

Life is Better with You Here:
www.withyouhere.org

The Black Mental Health Corporation:
www.theblackmental-healthcorporation.com

Black Mental Health Ohio:
www.blackmental-healthohio.com

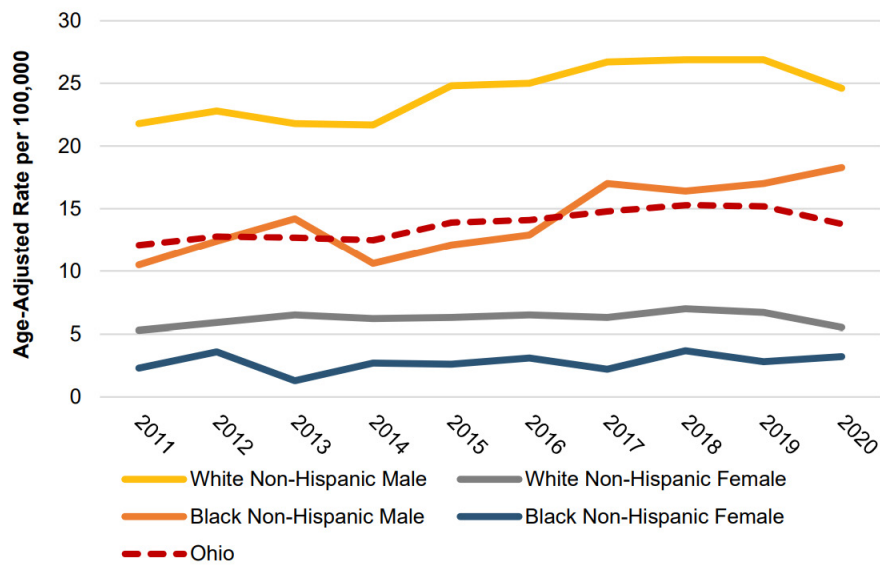
Black Girl Smile:
www.blackgirlsmile.org

African American Male Wellness Agency:
www.aawellness.org

Call BlackLine
1 (800) 604-5841
www.callblackline.com

Text STEVE to 741-741:
www.stevefund.org

Age-Adjusted Rate of Suicide Deaths by Race/Ethnicity and Sex, Ohio, 2011–2020¹



References

- 1 Ohio Department of Health. "Suicide Demographics and Trends, Ohio, 2020." <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/44fe447c-a4c5-4ac1-a613-ca0690308abe/2020+Suicide+Fact+Sheet>.
- 2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Risk and Protective Factors." <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/factors/index.html>
- 3 Suicide Prevention and Resource Center. "Risk and Protective Factors: Black Populations." https://sprc.org/sites/default/files/resource-program/Risk%20and%20Protective%20Factors%20Black_0.pdf
- 4 University of Southern California. "Suicide, negative interaction and emotional support among black Americans" <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22534818/>

OSPF's Work

To address suicide in the Black community, the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation has launched the Life is Better with You Here campaign, which creates spaces for Black individuals to come together and find support. We've also hosted listening sessions in Akron, Cleveland, Zanesville, Cincinnati, and Columbus to open a dialogue for communities to share about the impact suicide has had on them. We are working with the Health Policy Institute of Ohio to create a report on what we've learned in these sessions that will inform our programming for a larger statewide summit in the summer of 2023.

As we continue to offer support for the most vulnerable populations in our state, OSPF is committed to building partnerships with local governments, faith-based institutions, schools, and neighborhoods to break down barriers and prevent the loss of more lives to suicide.

ABOUT OHIO SUICIDE PREVENTION FOUNDATION

OSPF gives hope to those in crisis, strength to those in the struggle, and comfort to those in grief. OSPF is a non-profit organization that works tirelessly to help all of Ohio's communities reduce the risk of suicide. Our work includes supporting those impacted by suicide, raising awareness of mental health issues, and coordinating community resources and evidence-based prevention strategies across the state.



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