

# Board of Supervisors Agenda Item Report

Submitting Department: Board of Supervisors

Meeting Date: September 12, 2023

## **SUBJECT**

Amador SPEAKS (Suicide Prevention Education Awareness Knowledge Support): Presentation by Ms. Stephanie Hess, MHSA Programs Coordinator and Amador SPEAKS representatives, relative to the efforts of the organization during the past year as well as future goals; and adoption and presentation of a Resolution recognizing the week of September 10th through September 16th 2023 as National Suicide Prevention Week.

## **Recommendation:**

Approve and present Resolution.

## **4/5 vote required:**

No

## **Distribution Instructions:**

Stephanie Hess, Behavioral Health

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- [2023 Amador County Suicide.pptx](#)
- [RES 23-0XX\\_Suicide Prevention Week.doc](#)



# Suicide Prevention in Amador County

SEPTEMBER 2023

# Suicide: A Long Term Challenge

Amador County has struggled with a high suicide rate for several years.

Rural areas are more susceptible for higher suicide rates, Amador County is no exception. Factors that contribute to this include:

- ▶ Firearm ownership is higher, and most suicide deaths occur by firearms
- ▶ Rural counties are home to higher numbers of groups that are disproportionately impacted by suicide, such as Veterans and Older Adults.
- ▶ Isolation; Transportation; Access to Services
- ▶ Stigma

# Suicide Death Data (2016-2021)

Year	# of Suicide Deaths	Veteran	Age
2016 & 2017	19		Youngest 16; Oldest 88; Majority of deaths aged 40-60
2018	14		Youngest 17; Oldest 90; All age groups represented proportionately
2019	13		Youngest 35; Oldest 85; Majority 50+
2020	12		Youngest 23; Oldest 79; Majority 40+
2021	15		Youngest 34; Oldest 85; Majority of deaths aged 34-54
2016-2021	73	17 Veterans	

Between 2016-2021 Amador County experienced 73 suicide deaths.

Veterans represent 25% of suicide deaths during this time period.

The majority of people dying by suicide are white, middle aged to older adult males.



# Rural Suicide: Cap Radio's Influence

Efforts to engage the community around suicide prevention efforts were unsuccessful until 2018 when Capital Public Radio decided to do a story on rural suicide, with a specific focus on Amador County.

Until this time, many community members had no idea that Amador was ranked with the third highest suicide rate in the state and that many factors contribute to this.

<https://www.caprado.org/news/project/2018/rural-suicide-one-california-countys-fight-to-save-lives/>



## Rural Suicide: One California County's Fight To Save Lives

A rural pocket of Northern California is seeing some of the highest rates of suicide in the state. We're exploring the mental health crisis in Amador County, and what's being done to solve it.

**PODCAST EPISODES**

**The 'S' Word: How Suicide Is Devastating Amador County And Rural Communities**  
Monday, September 10, 2018  
Amador has the **third-highest** suicide rate of any county in California — about three times the state average and the top 20 counties on the list are some of the most remote and least populous places in the state.

**Dying To Get Out: Stigma, 'Copycat Effect' Drive Youth Suicide In Rural Amador County**  
Tuesday, September 11, 2018  
Many young people say they don't have a healthy way to express feelings of being trapped and misunderstood. And teens who live in remote places are more likely to seek a fatal escape.

**Chronic Loneliness Is A Major Cause Of Suicide For Seniors, Especially in Rural California**  
Wednesday, September 12, 2018  
It's a health issue that presents a threat of early death equal to obesity. One-third of all people who took their lives in Amador County between 2010 and 2017 were over age 60.

**How Suicide Trainings, Community Connections Could Patch Holes In Amador's Mental Health Safety Net**  
Thursday, September 13, 2018  
Amador County residents and social service providers say there's a serious lack of services and awareness around mental illness in the community. They're planning to use a special cache of leftover state funding to solve the problem.

# Rural Suicide: Cap Radio's Influence

## Energy, Resolve After CapRadio's Gathering On Rural Suicide

Monday, September 24, 2018 | Sacramento, CA



Nearly 100 people convened in Jackson at an event organized by CapRadio and Amador County Behavioral Health following reporter Sammy Caiola's six-month investigation into the topic of rural suicide.

Vanessa S. Nelson / Capital Public Radio

After Capital Public Radio engaged the community in an effective way, it was apparent that this problem would never be addressed by one agency or organization or individual—that it would truly take a community.

# Amador SPEAKS

(Suicide Prevention Education Awareness Knowledge Support)

- Amador County's first suicide prevention coalition
- Formed in October 2018 and has met monthly ever since
- Core membership represents non-profit organizations, agencies, community members and those with a passion to address suicide in their community





# Amador SPEAKS

(Suicide Prevention Education Awareness Knowledge Support)

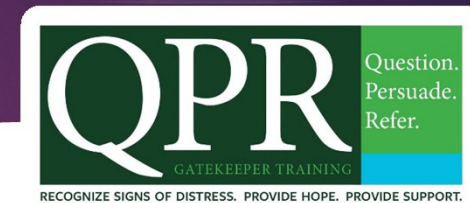


Amador SPEAKS operates under a strategic plan which is updated annually. Primary focus areas include:

- Training
- Data
- Community Engagement & Collaboration

# Amador SPEAKS: Training

- ▶ Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)
  - ▶ Suicide Gatekeeper Training (60-90 minutes long)
  - ▶ Over 600 individuals trained since October 2018
  - ▶ Offered in Spanish & English
- ▶ El Rotafolio, Living Works START, safeTALK, ASIST
- ▶ Trainings @ Amador SPEAKS Coalition Meetings



# Amador SPEAKS: Data

Data is critical to suicide prevention and awareness efforts. Data helps identify unmet needs, which then determines where to target outreach efforts.

- ▶ Data Subcommittee (est. 2022) – Annual Data Review
- ▶ California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Partnership

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# Suicide Trends in Amador County

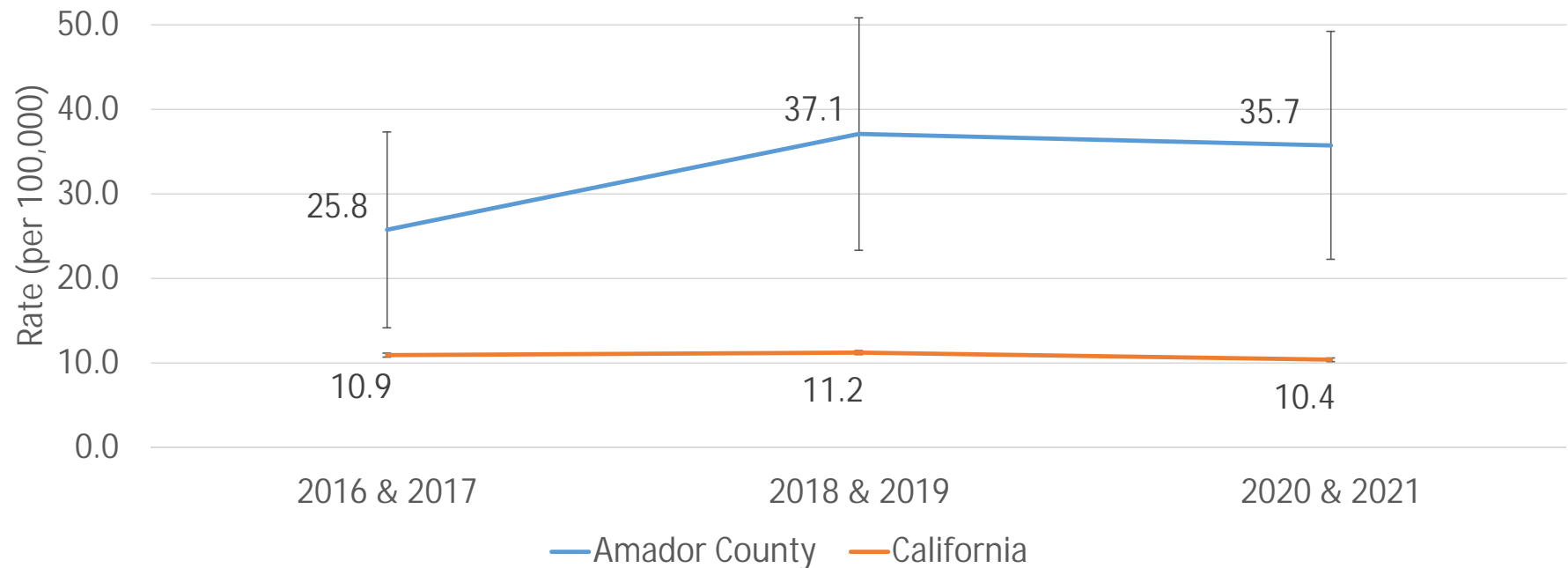
Office of Suicide Prevention  
Injury and Violence Prevention Branch  
California Department of Public Health



# Overview: Today's Presentation

- Data compiled from the California Comprehensive Death Statistical Master File
  - Records cause of death among other information from all death certificates across the state
    - For this presentation, Census data and CDCR data also utilized as noted
- Considerations with smaller populations
  - Censored values are due to concerns with potential identification down to an individual
    - To overcome this, we can aggregate data through time
  - 95% Confidence intervals have been included

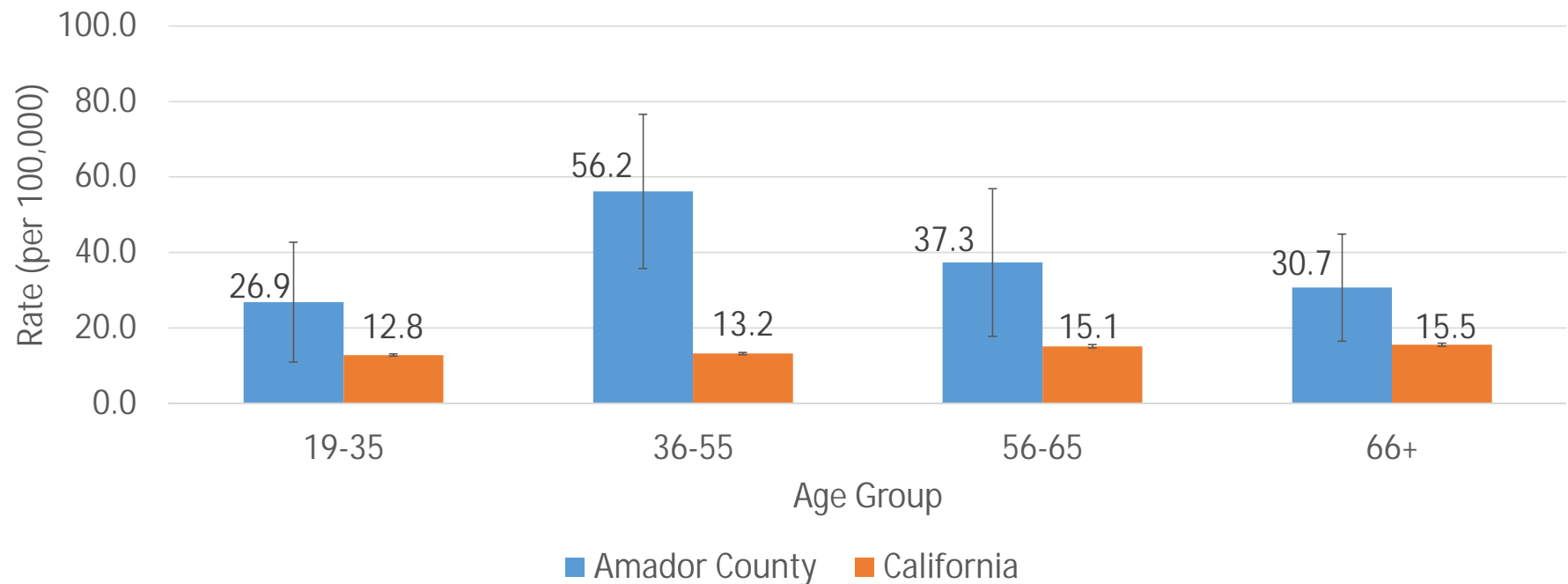
# Amador County and California: Suicide Rate Through Time



Source: 2016-2021 deaths: CDPH, CA Comprehensive Master Death File (CCMDF); CA Dept. of Finance P-3 Population Projection File (2010-2060)



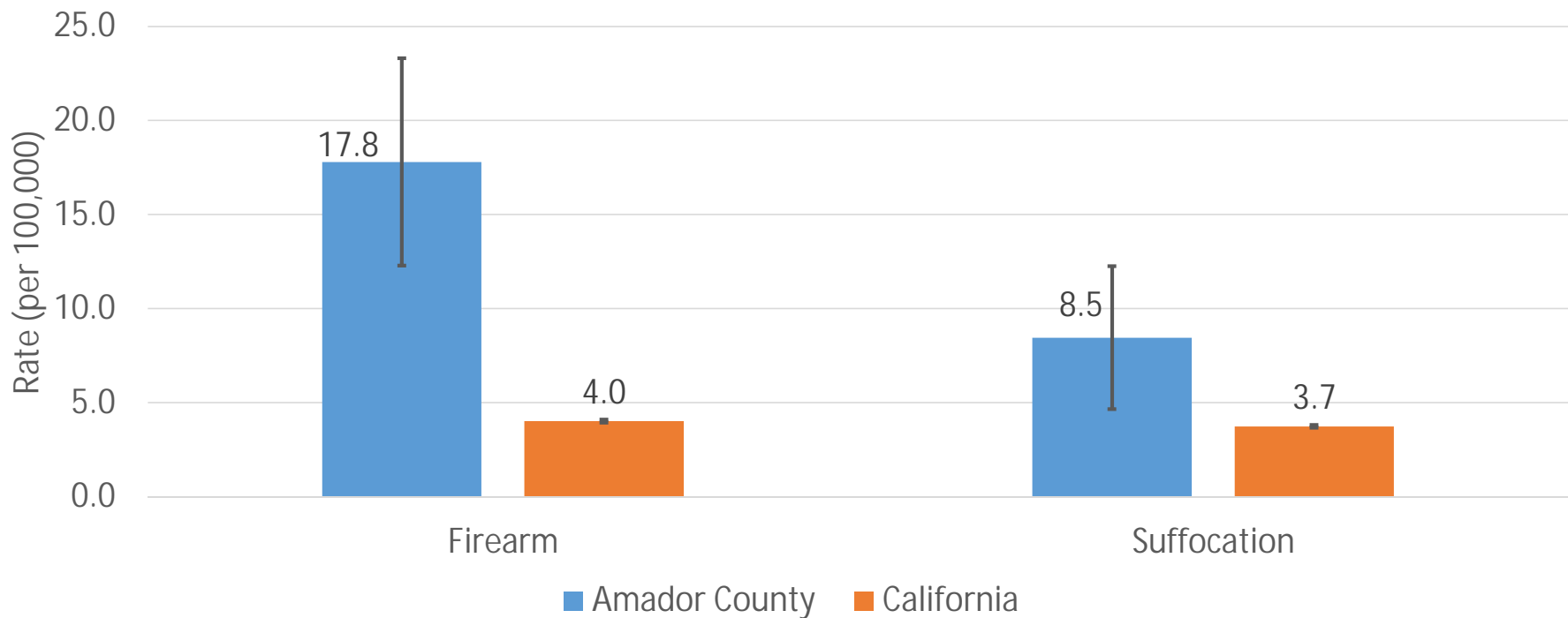
# Amador County and California: 2016-2021 Suicide Rate by Age



Source: 2016-2021 deaths: CDPH, CA Comprehensive Master Death File (CCMDF); CA Dept. of Finance P-3 Population Projection File (2010-2060)



# Amador County: Method of Suicide (2016-2021)

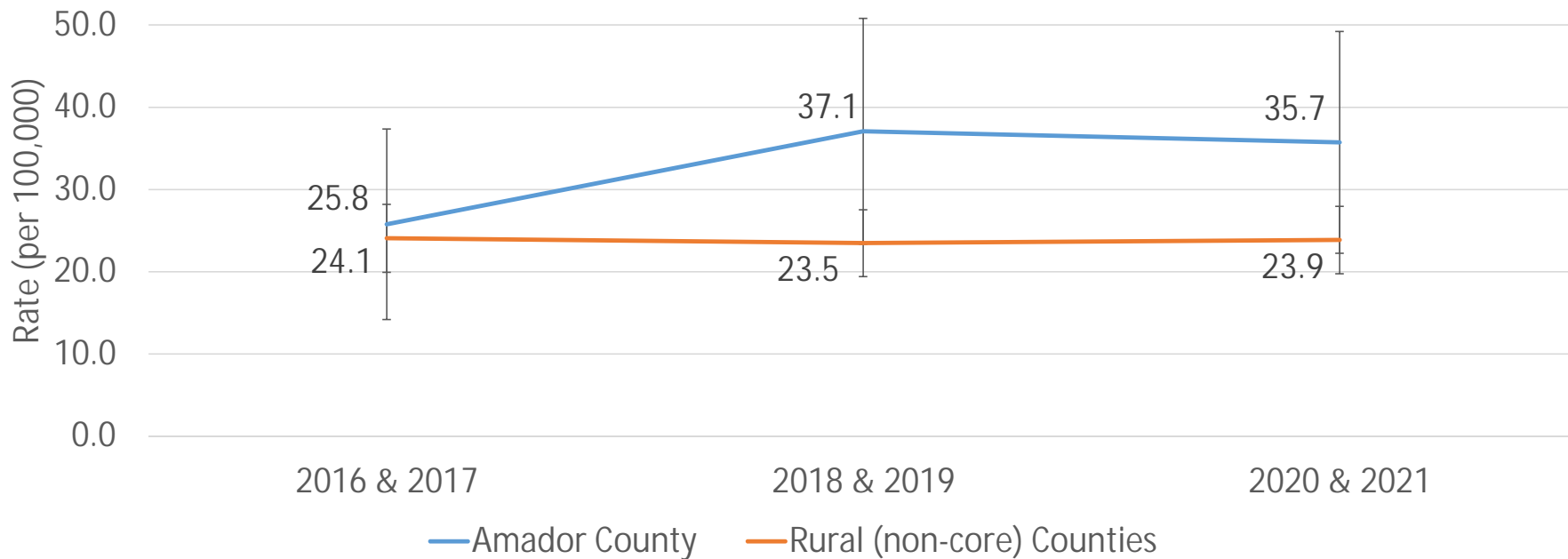


Source: 2016-2021 deaths: CDPH, CA Comprehensive Master Death File (CCMDF); CA Dept. of Finance P-3 Population Projection File (2010-2060)



# Amador County and Rural (non-core) Counties: Suicide Rate Through Time

Non-core counties (13 in California): Population smaller than 250,000 and without urban cluster of 10,000 or more



Source: 2016-2021 deaths: CDPH, CA Comprehensive Master Death File (CCMDF); CA Dept. of Finance P-3 Population Projection File (2010-2060); County classification: 2013 National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) Urban-Rural Classification Scheme

Center for Healthy Communities  
Injury and Violence Prevention Branch

# Prison Suicides

- CDCR reports an incarcerated suicide rate of 15.2 per 100,000 across California in 2021
  - Compare this rate to 12.9 for all Californians 18 and older

	2016 & 2017	2018 & 2019	2020 & 2021
Mule Creek State Prison (Amador County)	2	4	4
Amador County	19	28	27
% of Suicides - Incarcerated Individuals	10.5%	14.3%	14.8%

Source: 2016-2021 deaths: CDPH, CA Comprehensive Master Death File (CCMDF); CA Dept. of Corrections and Rehabilitation 2021 Annual Report on Suicides



# Veteran Suicides

- Approximately 25% of Amador County suicides are known to have served in the armed forces as listed on their Death Certificate
  - For the entire state of California, this value is about 15%
    - 3.8% of Californian's are estimated to be veterans
    - 9.2% of Amador County residents are estimated to be veterans
  - While Amador County sees a larger proportion of veteran suicide deaths than the state (1.6 times more), the county's population disproportionately includes more veterans (2.4 times more).

Source: 2016-2021 deaths: CDPH, CA Comprehensive Master Death File (CCMDF); Veteran and population count estimates: US Census Bureau Quick Facts

# Summary

- Suicide rates in Amador County have increased since 2016 & 2017, but that increase appears to be leveling off in recent years
- Suicide rates were highest for those 36-55 years of age
- Rates for suicide by firearm were higher than any other method, with the second most common method being suffocation
- Amador County has a higher rate of suicide than other rural “non-core” counties
- While individuals from Mule Creek State Prison have made up a generally small portion of Amador Counties suicides, this portion has increased in recent years
- One quarter of total suicides in Amador County are Veteran suicides, which reflects the large Veteran population in the county

# Questions?

Jonah Cox, PhD:

[Jonah.Cox@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Jonah.Cox@cdph.ca.gov)

[Suicide.Prevention@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Suicide.Prevention@cdph.ca.gov)

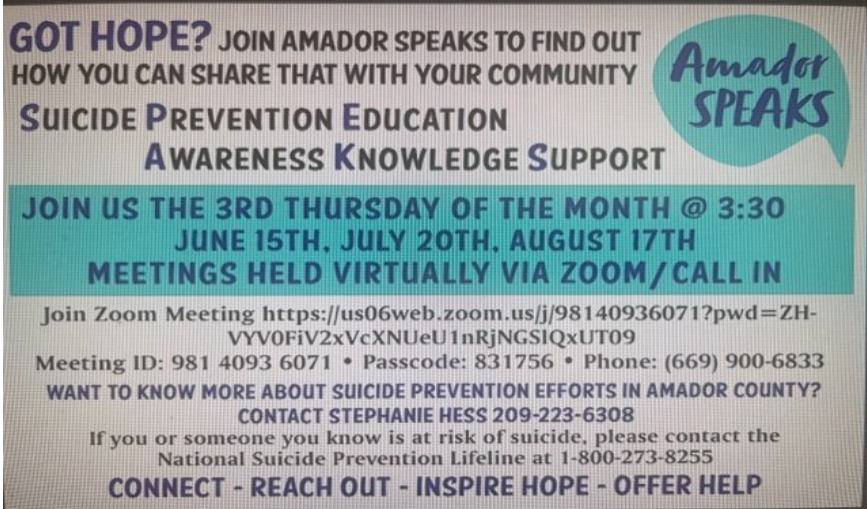
For additional data needs, please see the EpiCenter website:

<https://skylab4.cdph.ca.gov/epicenter/>

- Includes information on suicide deaths as well as self-harm ED visits and hospitalizations
- Can be looked at by county, region, and with multiple different specified demographic characteristics

# Amador SPEAKS: Community Engagement

- ▶ Amador SPEAKS Meetings – Monthly, 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday @ 3:30 p.m.
  - ▶ Guest Speakers
  - ▶ Trainings/Workshops
  - ▶ Advertise meetings monthly in Amador Ledger Dispatch & Community Announcement Emails
- ▶ Outreach & Engagement
  - ▶ Marketing Materials
  - ▶ KVGC Radio
  - ▶ Community Events & Initiatives



**GOT HOPE?** JOIN AMADOR SPEAKS TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN SHARE THAT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

**SUICIDE PREVENTION EDUCATION  
AWARENESS KNOWLEDGE SUPPORT**

**JOIN US THE 3RD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH @ 3:30  
JUNE 15TH, JULY 20TH, AUGUST 17TH  
MEETINGS HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM/CALL IN**

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/98140936071?pwd=ZH-VYV0FiV2xVcXNUeU1nRjNGSIQxUT09>  
Meeting ID: 981 4093 6071 • Passcode: 831756 • Phone: (669) 900-6833

**WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT SUICIDE PREVENTION EFFORTS IN AMADOR COUNTY?  
CONTACT STEPHANIE HESS 209-223-6308**

If you or someone you know is at risk of suicide, please contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255

**CONNECT - REACH OUT - INSPIRE HOPE - OFFER HELP**

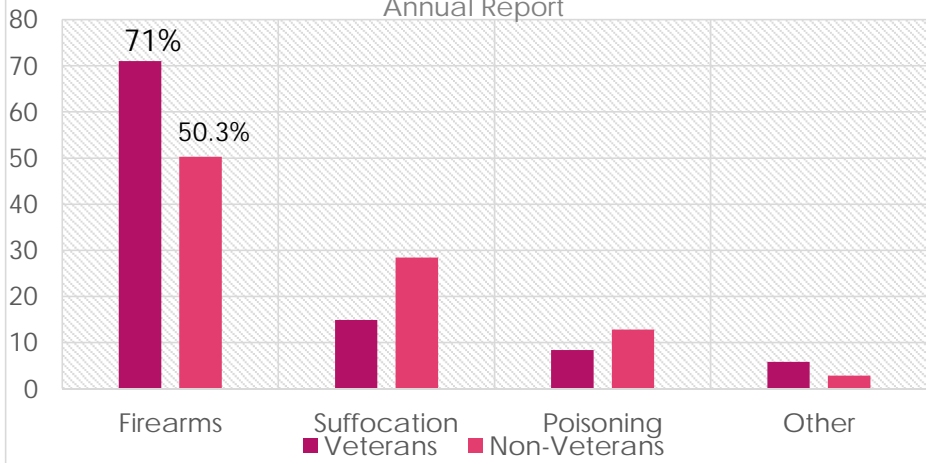
# Amador SPEAKS: Community Engagement

- ▶ 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Tools for Tomorrow Community Event (formerly Heart of Hope) is an affair that focuses on suicide prevention
  - ▶ September 8<sup>th</sup> @ First 5
- ▶ Lethal Means Safety
  - ▶ Gun Lock Boxes & Trigger Locks – available for free!
  - ▶ Lethal Means Safety Training – September 21<sup>st</sup>



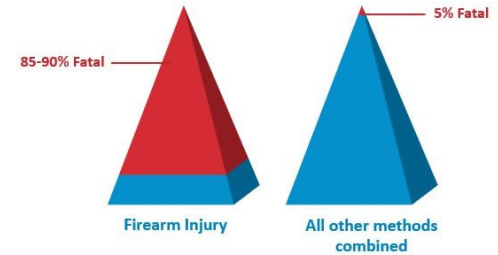
# Department of Veteran Affairs and Lethal Means Safety

\* Adapted from the 2022 VA National Suicide Prevention Annual Report

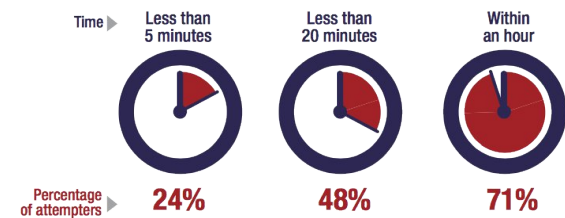


## What are lethal means?

Lethal means are objects that may be used by individuals experiencing a suicidal crisis. They can include things like firearms, medications, alcohol, opioids, other substances, ropes, cords, or sharp objects. If a Veteran is in crisis or is having thoughts of suicide, these items can become deadly if they're easily accessible.



CDC WISQARS: Deaths from death certificate data; nonfatal incidents estimated from national sample of hospital emergency departments



Source: Simon, T.R., Swann, A.C., Powell, K.E., Potter, L.B., Kresnow, M., and O'Carroll, P.W. Characteristics of Impulsive Suicide Attempts and Attempters. *SLTB*. 2001; 32(supp):49-59.



# What the future holds...

- ▶ Amador SPEAKS Strategic Plan Update – 2023
- ▶ Amador SPEAKS Spring Event
- ▶ Suicide Prevention – Community Effort
  - ▶ What can you do? What Will you do?

**Share Hope Together**  
FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

**KNOW THE SIGNS. FIND THE WORDS. REACH OUT.**

[suicideispreventable.org](https://suicideispreventable.org)

SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK: SEPTEMBER 10TH - 16TH, 2023  
WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY: SEPTEMBER 10TH, 2023





QUESTIONS?



THANK YOU

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE  
COUNTY OF AMADOR, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

IN THE MATTER OF:

RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING SEPTEMBER )  
10<sup>th</sup> THROUGH SEPTEMBER 16<sup>th</sup> 2023 )  
AS NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION )  
WEEK )

RESOLUTION NO. 23-0XX

WHEREAS, the week of September 10<sup>th</sup> through 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023 is National Suicide Prevention Week and September is National Suicide Prevention Month, a time in which individuals, organizations and communities around the country join their voices to amplify the message that suicide can be prevented; and

WHEREAS, it is recognized that people of all ages benefit from common tenets of wellness, such as access to effective health and behavioral health care, social support, and a sense of meaning and purpose; and

WHEREAS, attitudes and perceptions about aging, behavioral health challenges, and suicide have a significant impact on individual wellness and the willingness to reach out for support and services that can alleviate distress; and

WHEREAS, cultivating and maintaining wellness is a lifelong pursuit, and individuals of all ages can benefit from integrating wellness into their daily routine to prevent or reduce the severity of a broad range of health and behavioral health problems;

WHEREAS, knowing the signs of suicide, finding the words to talk with someone that may be thinking of suicide, and reaching out to local resources are actions everyone can take to care for themselves and others; and

WHEREAS, all Californians are urged to take action for suicide prevention and promote mental health and wellness as we strive towards zero suicides; and

WHEREAS, September 10<sup>th</sup> through 16<sup>th</sup> is recognized across the United States as Suicide Prevention Week and September is recognized as Suicide Prevention Month, providing the opportunity to educate and engage everyone in our community to find their role in suicide prevention; NOW, THEREFORE,

THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, by Amador SPEAKS, Amador County's Suicide Prevention Coalition and all members of the Amador County Board of Supervisors on this 12<sup>th</sup> Day of September 2023, that the week of September 10<sup>th</sup> through 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022 be declared 'SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK' and that the month of September be declared 'SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH'.

The foregoing resolution was duly passed and adopted by the Board of Supervisors in the County of Amador at a regular meeting thereof, held on the xx day of xxxx, 20xx, by the following vote:

(RESOLUTION NO. 23-0xx)

(M/DD/YY)

AYES:

NOES:       None

ABSENT:     None

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Chairman, Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:  
JENNIFER BURNS, Clerk of the  
Board of Supervisors, Amador County,  
California

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Deputy