



KENTUCKY VIOLENT DEATH REPORTING SYSTEM (KVDRS)

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State Web Site:

<http://kvdrs.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

Sources of Information for the Database

Information is collected from death certificates, coroner/medical examiner reports, police reports, crime laboratory reports, toxicology reports, and child fatality review team reports and then combined into the KVDRS database. After all raw data is stripped of personal identifying information, it is sent to the national database to be combined with information from the other seventeen funded states. Together, this information provides a more complete picture of violent death. Without these pieces, the problem of violent death in Kentucky or in the nation cannot be accurately explained. This project is funded by Cooperative Agreement CE09-904 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. While there may be mandates for the data sources (i.e. death certificates and police), there is no federal or state mandate that requires the collection of this data. However, if the data were not collected, funding would be lost.

Description of the Data Collected

In Kentucky, information related to homicides, suicides, and firearm-related deaths have, in the past, remained inaccessible and unreliable. The coroner system is not centralized, and while police and forensic laboratory data are centralized and available, they have not been collected and combined with additional investigative information for violent death research purposes. By integrating multiple data sources to form a violent death surveillance system, formerly disparate pieces of information can be compiled and analyzed.

In addition to adult data, Kentucky collects Child Fatality Review (CFR) data using the pediatric module within the NVDRS. The Division of Maternal and Child Health (MCH) within the Department for Public Health collects CFR data and data is exchanged for use by both agencies.

Strengths of the Data

To improve coroner reporting *The Coroner Investigation Reporting System (CIRS)* has been designed, developed, and distributed to almost 72% of county coroners. This system is the first step in centralizing coroner investigation reports in the commonwealth for the benefit of not only the KVDRS, but of many other research activities. To date 17 counties participate in a web-based version of the CIRS, making reporting more efficient and timely in those counties.

The KVDRS has teamed up with the DPH/MCH to collect the state mandated CFR form when a child less than 18 years of age dies. If coroners use the KVDRS web-based data collection system and if the death is a child, the state mandated form becomes activated and common fields are programmed to automatically fill from the CIRS form to the CFR form. This simplifies the process of documenting investigative information for the coroner, and the DPH can access those reports through the KVDRS web site. This streamlines statewide coroner reporting.

Specific Uses of Information

A local minister requested statistics on teen suicide to use in a sermon following a teen suicide death within the community. Frequencies of teenage suicides were provided. The immediacy of the response allowed for a poignant "teaching moment" on teenage suicide in a Kentucky community.

KVDRS's project manager was interviewed for a statewide public television program about the KVDRS and Intimate Partner Violence. The program aired on *KET's Kentucky Health*

on KET1 in 2006 and has been shown again since then. The program can also be downloaded from the web site. The interview focused on violence in Kentucky homes and the problem of homicides followed by suicides and intimate partner violence (IPV). The KVDRS annual report is available on the KVDRS web site (www.kvdrs.ky.gov). Copies have been distributed to various requestors, such as local, state and federal government agencies, legislators and advocacy groups.

Data Limitations

KVDRS reports include only deaths occurring within Kentucky. The lag time to receive death certificate data for Kentucky residents who have died outside of Kentucky does not allow for their inclusion. Therefore, the counts of suicides, homicides, and unintentional firearm-fatalities in KVDRS reporting will differ from the Office of Vital Statistics and the National Center for Health Statistics who report on Kentucky residents regardless of where the death occurred.

System Evaluation

The data collection is routinely monitored utilizing quality control standards developed by CDC. Evaluation of quality is determined through quarterly and annual reports of these performance standards.

Data Set Availability

Statewide and county level aggregate summary data can be provided, beyond summaries in the annual report, upon request. In addition to reports, unidentified Excel data files may be requested.

This data set includes hundreds of variables including circumstantial data (i.e. precipitating events leading to a violent death), demographic and weapon information. Data are available from 2005 to 2009. National data are also available following the approval of a Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The NVDRS DSA was created to govern the protection and use of sensitive or potentially identifiable NVDRS data, as required by the NVDRS Data Re-release Plan. Prior to release of NVDRS restricted access microdata (RAD) by the CDC, a data sharing agreement must be established for any users who are not currently employed by the Division of Violence Prevention or the Office of Statistics and Programming, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC).

Average Yearly Sample Size	800-900
Smallest Geographic Level Released	County

If you would like to request data please provide the following information:

Name, organization, reason for data, and intended data usage. The request will need to include years, geographic level, and specific variables. There is no cost for data sets, but following data usage, a return email would be greatly appreciated specifying in what capacity the data was used (i.e. citation from a presentation, grant application or a report).

Send data requests to Dr. Sabrina Walsh, sabrina.walsh@uky.edu.

Data Release Policy

Data with cell counts less than 5 will need to be reported as "<5." No personal identifying information will be released.

Data Publications

The KVDRS program produces an annual statewide statistical summary of all homicides, suicides, and unintentional firearm fatalities, peer-reviewed publications, and contributes to state and national reports each year.

Suggested Data Citation

Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center (KIPRC) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *Kentucky Violent Death Reporting System Data*. Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky, College of Public Health, [data year].

Contributing Author

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