



COLORADO Child
Fatality
Prevention
System

Firearms-related Deaths in Colorado, 2011-2015

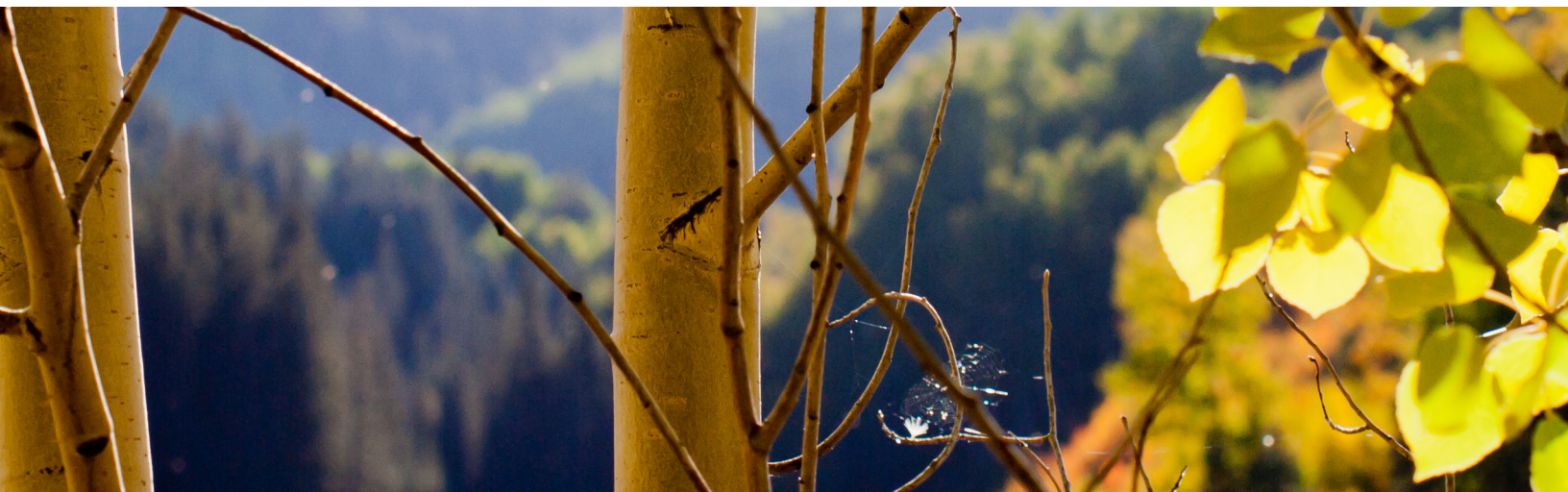


Introduction

The Child Fatality Prevention Act (Article 20.5 of Title 25, Colorado Revised Statutes) established the Child Fatality Prevention System (CFPS), a statewide, multidisciplinary, multi-agency effort to prevent child deaths. Although not codified in Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) until 2005, CFPS has been conducting retrospective reviews of child deaths in Colorado since 1989. CFPS applies a public health approach to prevent child deaths by aggregating data from individual child deaths, describing trends and patterns of the deaths and recommending prevention strategies. The identified strategies are implemented and evaluated at the state and local levels with the goal of preventing similar deaths in the future.

The data presented within this data summary come from comprehensive, statutorily-mandated reviews of deaths among those under 18 years of age occurring in Colorado between 2011 and 2015. Local child fatality prevention review teams are responsible for conducting individual, case-specific reviews of fatalities of children meeting the statutory criteria. Reviewable child deaths result from one or more of the following causes: undetermined causes, unintentional injury, violence, motor vehicle/other transport-related, child maltreatment, sudden unexpected infant death (SUID) and suicide. During Fiscal Year 2017, local teams completed reviews of deaths that occurred in 2015.

The CFPS review process includes deaths of Colorado residents occurring in Colorado, as well as deaths of out-of-state visitors who died in Colorado, and non-residents who were transported to a Colorado hospital and died. These criteria are different than those used in other reports of child fatality data and in many other Colorado government data sources. As a result, the data presented in this data summary may not match other statistics reported at both the state and national levels. This data brief provides an overview of firearms-related deaths occurring in Colorado among those under 18 years of age between 2011 and 2015. For more information on CFPS data, access additional cause-specific data briefs here: <http://www.cochildfatalityprevention.com/p/reports.html>.

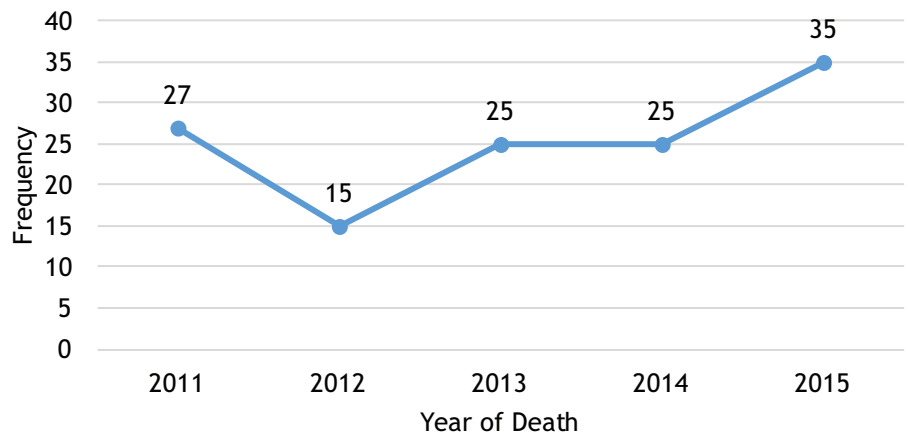


Firearms-related Deaths in Colorado, 2011-2015

Overview of Firearms-related Deaths

CFPS analyzes circumstance data of fatalities involving firearms in Colorado, regardless of manner. Between 2011 and 2015, 127 fatalities among those under 18 years of age resulted from firearms discharges. Figure 1 shows that the number of yearly firearms-related fatalities for the period ranged from 15 in 2012 to 35 in 2011, averaging 25.4 fatalities per year. The rate of firearms-related deaths has been increasing since 2012, and this difference was statistically significant when comparing 2012 (1.12 per deaths 100,000 population) to 2015 (2.66 per 100,000 population) (data not shown). Among these fatalities, suicide was the leading manner of death (63.0 percent, n=80), followed by homicide (30.0 percent, n=38), accident (4.7 percent, n=6) and deaths of undetermined manner (2.4 percent, n=3).

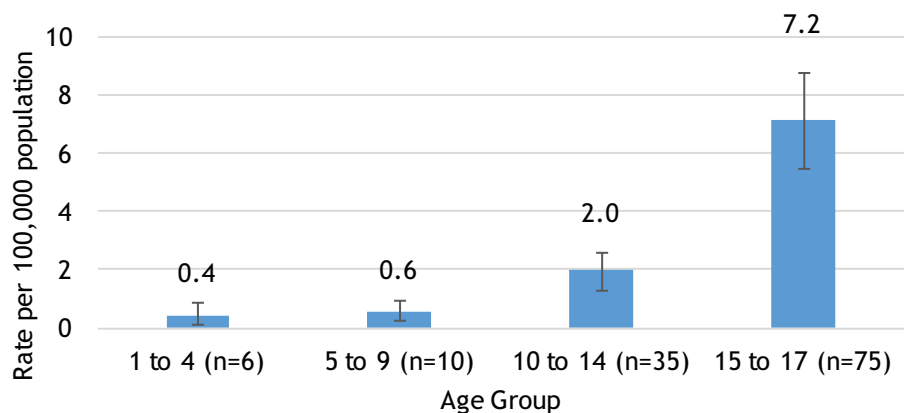
Figure 1. Firearms-related deaths occurring in Colorado by year of death, 2011-2015 (n=127)



Demographics

Of the 127 firearms-related fatalities occurring in Colorado from 2011 through 2015, 59.1 percent (n=75) occurred among those 15 through 17 years of age and 27.6 percent (n=35) among those 10 through 14 years of age, representing 86.6 percent (n=110) of all firearms-related fatalities. Additionally, the rates of firearms-related deaths were significantly higher among 10 to 14 year olds and 15 to 17 year olds relative to other age groups (Figure 2). Of the 127 firearms-related fatalities, 81.1 percent (n=103) of the decedents were male, 22.8 percent (n=29) were of Hispanic origin and 92.9 percent (n=117) were white. The rate of firearms-related fatalities was significantly higher for males (3.15 per 100,000 population) than for females (0.78 per 100,000 population).

Figure 2. Age specific rates of firearms-related fatalities occurring in Colorado among Colorado residents by age group, 2011-2015



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Circumstances of firearms-related fatalities in Colorado

Figure 3 demonstrates the types of fatal firearms involved in firearms-related deaths in Colorado. The weapon type most commonly associated with these fatalities was a handgun (61.4 percent, n=78), followed by hunting rifles (12.6 percent, n=16), shotguns (11.8 percent, n=15) and assault rifles (3.1 percent, n=4). Information on weapon type was missing for 9.4 percent (n=12) of the cases.

Figure 3. Firearms-related fatalities occurring in Colorado by weapon type, 2011-2015 (n=127)

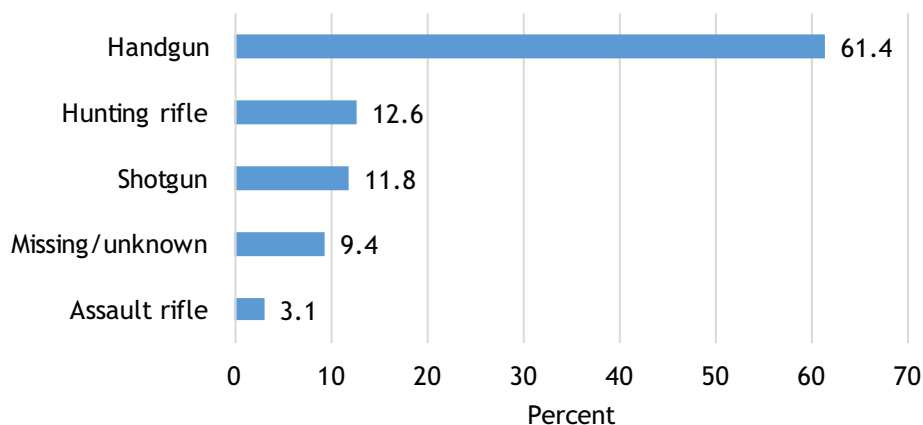
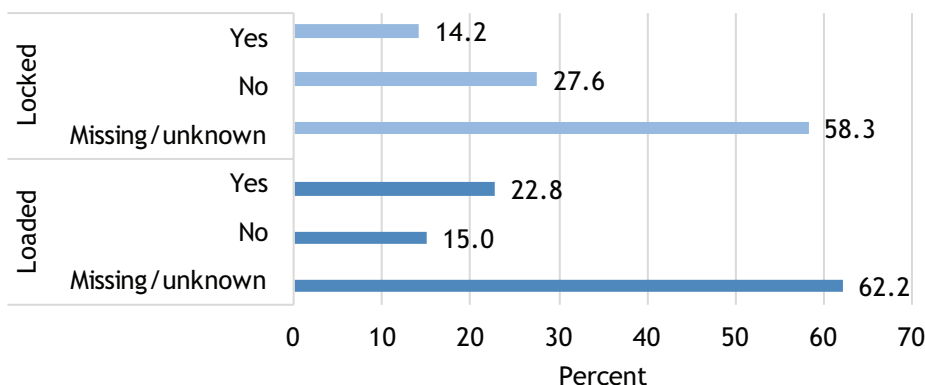


Figure 4 demonstrates the weapon storage status for firearms involved in fatalities in Colorado between 2011 and 2015. As can be observed, only 14.2 percent (n=18) of firearms involved in the death of an infant, child, or youth in Colorado were known to have been stored in a locked storage location. These firearms were stored unlocked 27.6 percent (n=35) of the time, and this information was missing or unknown for 58.3 percent (n=74) of these firearms. Moreover, these firearms were stored unloaded only 15.0 percent (n=19) of the time, and this information was missing 62.2 percent (n=79) of the time.

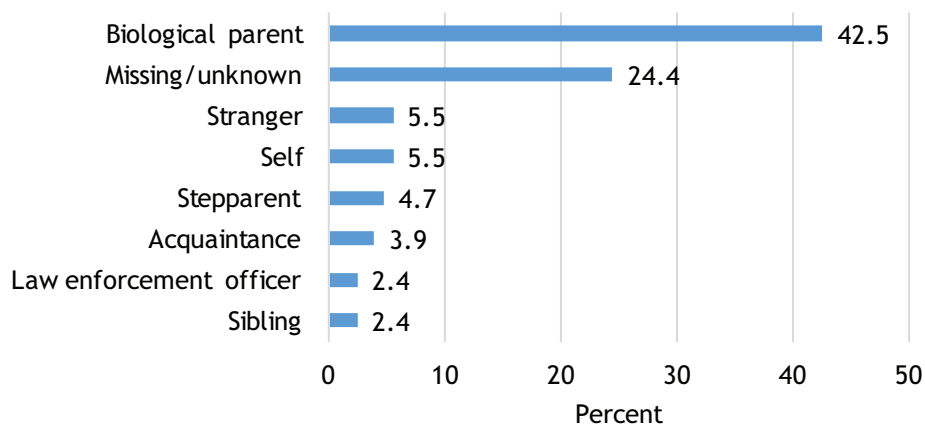
Figure 4. Firearms-related fatalities occurring in Colorado by firearms storage status, 2011-2015 (n=127)



Firearms-related Deaths in Colorado, 2011-2015

Figure 5 demonstrates ownership of firearms involved in firearms-related fatalities in Colorado by relationship to the decedent. As can be observed, the most commonly reported owners of firearms involved in the deaths of infant, children and youth in Colorado were biological parents (42.5 percent, n=54), strangers and the decedents themselves (5.5 percent, n=7 each). This information was missing or unknown for 24.4 percent (n=31) of these deaths. Sex of the owners of fatal firearms involved in deaths of infants, children, and youth were also known and 63.8 percent (n=81) were male and 6.3 percent (n=6) were female. Information on sex of fatal firearm owners was missing or unknown for 29.9 percent (n=38) of these deaths.

Figure 5. Firearm ownership for firearms-related fatalities occurring in Colorado, 2011-2015 (n=127)



For more information about CFPS data, please contact the CFPS Support Team at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment: support@cfps.freshdesk.com

