

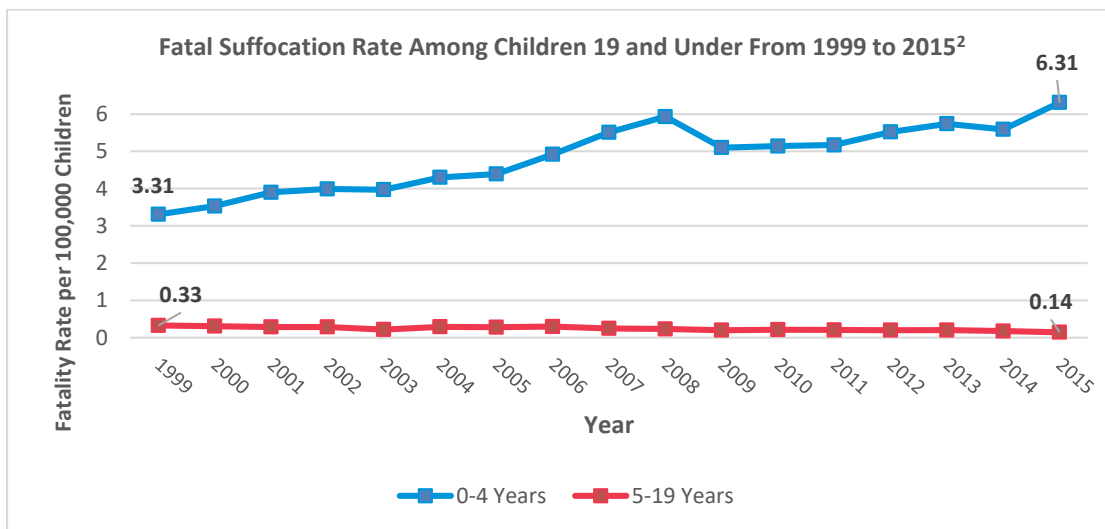
Suffocation Fact Sheet

LAST UPDATED JANUARY 2017

Suffocation is the leading cause of unintentional injury death for children under 1 year, and 3rd leading cause for children age 1 to 4 years.¹

Fatalities

- In 2015, **1,345** children died from suffocation, at a rate of **1.64** per 100,000 children.²
- Since 1999, there has been a **58 percent decrease** in the fatality rate due to suffocation among children 5 to 19 years, but a **91 percent increase** in rate among children under 5 years.²



Non-Fatal Injuries

- In 2014, **25,518** children were seen in emergency departments for nonfatal suffocation or inhalation injuries.³

Risk Factors

- A majority of children who suffocated were **under the age of 1 year** (81 percent).²
- More **boys** than **girls** suffocated- 60 percent versus 40 percent.²
- Twice as many **white** children die from suffocation every year (856 versus 424 deaths), but the fatality rate for **black** children is double that of white children (3.1 versus 1.38 per 100,000).²

In 2015, the U.S. lost over **2.2 billion** dollars due to suffocation injuries and fatalities. On average, each death costs **1.3 million** dollars and each injury roughly **\$110,000**.⁶



- Compared to the other races, **Asian and Pacific Islander** children have the lowest numbers and rates of death from suffocation.²
- Children of **Hispanic** ethnicity are two times **less likely** to suffer a fatal suffocation than the counterparts who are not Hispanic (1 versus 1.8 per 100,000).²
- Although they account for smaller numbers of suffocation deaths, children living in **non-metro** areas have higher fatality rates than those living in metro areas (2.4 versus 1.5 per 100,000 children).⁴
- Choking hazards include **toys, household items, and food**.⁵
- Children age 5 and under are especially at risk of choking because the size of their windpipe is only about the size of a drinking straw in diameter.⁵

Suffocation Deaths Among Children 19 and Under Between 2012 and 2015²

| State | # Deaths | Rate* | State | # Deaths | Rate* |
|----------------|----------|-------|---|----------|-------|
| Louisiana | 200 | 5.41 | Kansas | 36 | 1.15 |
| South Dakota | 34 | 4.85 | Kentucky | 49 | 1.45 |
| Mississippi | 103 | 4.21 | Oklahoma | 46 | 1.45 |
| Missouri | 193 | 4.14 | Virginia | 89 | 1.42 |
| Alaska | 23 | 3.72 | Idaho | 20 | 1.4 |
| Michigan | 275 | 3.67 | Arizona | 69 | 1.28 |
| South Carolina | 113 | 3.1 | Wisconsin | 54 | 1.23 |
| Indiana | 156 | 2.94 | Utah | 35 | 1.18 |
| Florida | 338 | 2.49 | Iowa | 29 | 1.18 |
| Nevada | 54 | 2.47 | Alabama | 43 | 1.16 |
| Tennessee | 120 | 2.41 | Maine | 10 | 1.14 |
| Wyoming | 11 | 2.39 | Texas | 265 | 1.12 |
| Ohio | 175 | 1.98 | Pennsylvania | 99 | 1.08 |
| New Mexico | 33 | 1.97 | Washington | 56 | 1.05 |
| Illinois | 193 | 1.93 | North Carolina | 80 | 1.04 |
| West Virginia | 22 | 1.72 | Nebraska | 13 | 0.83 |
| Minnesota | 70 | 1.64 | New York | 111 | 0.78 |
| Georgia | 136 | 1.63 | New Jersey | 47 | 0.7 |
| Colorado | 68 | 1.63 | California | 178 | 0.58 |
| Oregon | 46 | 1.6 | Maryland | 26 | 0.58 |
| Montana | 12 | 1.59 | Massachusetts | 16 | 0.33 |
| Arkansas | 36 | 1.53 | *Fatality rate per 100,000 children; states are listed from highest to lowest fatality rate | | |

* The following states had fewer than 10 deaths reported so are not listed: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, Vermont



References

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2. CDC. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS). National Center for Injury Prevention and Control Website. Fatal Injury Reports, 1999-2015, for National, Regional, and States (RESTRICTED). Atlanta, GA; 2016. Accessed: January 12, 2017. [Search criteria: 2015, unintentional, ICD-10 W75-W84, ages 19 and under.] Available from: <https://webappa.cdc.gov/cgi-bin/broker.exe>.
3. CDC. WISQARS. Non-Fatal Injury Reports: Unintentional Inhalation/Suffocation Nonfatal Injuries and Rates per 100,000. Atlanta, GA; 2016. Accessed: January 12, 2017. [Search criteria: 2014, United States, all races, both sexes, ages 0 to 19, all dispositions, unintentional, suffocation/inhalation] Available from: <https://webappa.cdc.gov/cgi-bin/broker.exe>
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2015 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released 2015. Data are from the Multiple Cause of Death Files, 1999-2012, as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Atlanta, GA; 2016. Accessed: January 12, 2017. [Search criteria: 2015, 0-19 years, all races, all genders, W75-W84]. Available from: <https://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html>.
5. New York State, Department of Health. Choking Prevention for Children. Accessed June 16, 2016. Available at: https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/choking_prevention_for_children.htm.
6. CDC. WISQARS Cost of Injury Report. Atlanta, GA; 2015. Accessed: October 21, 2016. Available from: <http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/nfirates2001.html>

For more information or questions, contact Angie Steel in the Research department at Safe Kids Worldwide via email asteel@safekids.org or phone #202-662-0611.

