



Snohomish County's **Child Fatality Review: Youth Suicide**

November 6th, 2025

Purpose

The Snohomish County Child Fatality Review (CFR) is a prevention-oriented process that exists to review the circumstances surrounding the death of a child. The multidisciplinary review team identifies possible points of support, intervention, and prevention. CFR sessions result in recommendations for improving programs, systems, environments, and policies that impact children. The ultimate aim is to prevent future child deaths. The death of a child should invoke a community response. The circumstances in most child deaths are multidimensional with many factors, and responsibility should not rest in one place.

Summary

Twelve Snohomish County youth under 19 died by suicide between November 2023 and June 2025. Of those deaths, ten cases—representing all mechanisms of injury—were available and reviewed during the November 6, 2025 Child Fatality Review session. The deaths reviewed are a sample of those that occurred during this timeframe and may not provide a comprehensive portrayal of all child deaths that fall within this category. We continue to see that LGBTQ+ youth face significant mental-health challenges, including a heightened risk of suicide. Even when strong protective factors are present, many still need additional, affirming support that fit their lived experiences. We also observed increasing reliance on artificial-intelligence tools—such as chat bots—as a way to seek connection or navigate difficult questions, sometimes in place of supportive human interaction.

Participants

CFR members span a diverse set of sectors and disciplines that adequately represent Snohomish County and the community. For a full list of participants, please contact Wendy Burchill.

CONTACT YOUR CFR COORDINATOR:

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LEARN MORE:

Visit: <https://www.snohd.org/1821/Child-fatality-review-and-prevention>

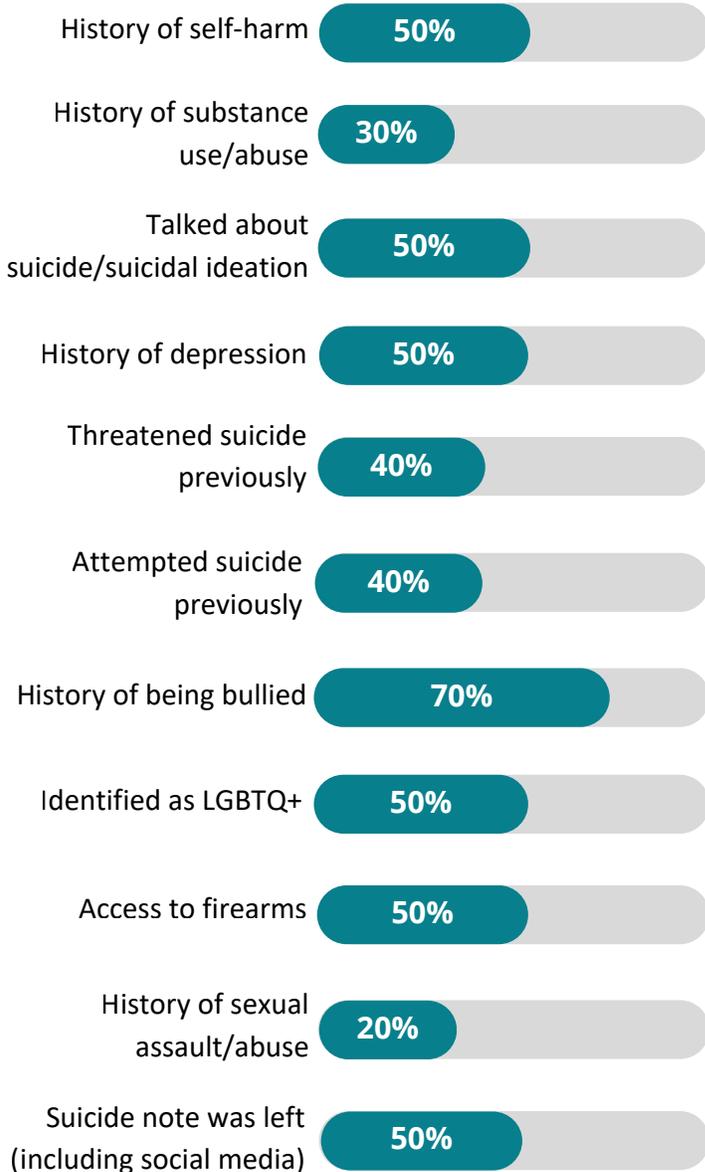
November 2025

Child Fatality Review

Focus Area: Youth Suicide

Key Findings¹

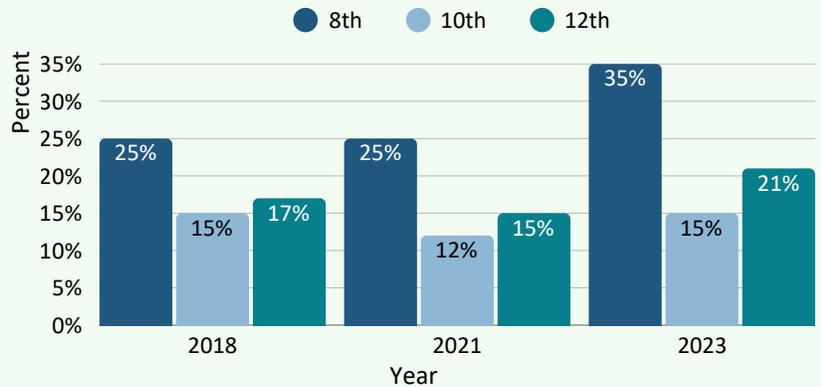
Risk factors present:



Community Context^{2,3}

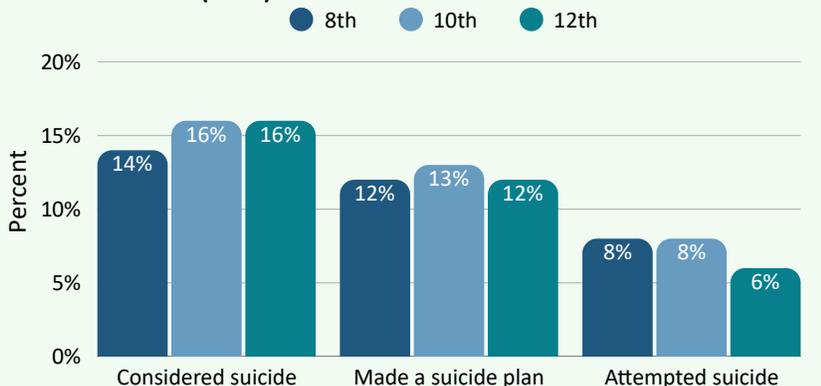
From 2020 to 2024*, 16 Snohomish County youth ages 10 to 17 died by suicide, across all injury mechanisms. Firearms were the leading cause of suicide death during this time period. According to the 2023 Healthy Youth Survey (HYS), students feel their access to firearms has increased since 2018 (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Percentage of 8th, 10th, and 12th Grade Students Reporting Access to a Firearm in Snohomish County, 2018-2023



HYS data shows trends in 8th, 10th, and 12th graders who considered attempting suicide, made a suicide plan, or attempted suicide in the past year (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Mental Health Indicators Among Snohomish County Students in the Past Year (2023)



*Date ranges in the Summary and Community Context sections differ as each relies on a separate database with its own update schedule.

Data Sources: 1. Snohomish County Medical Examiner's Office, 2. <https://www.askhys.net/SurveyResults/FactSheets>, 3. Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, Death Certificate Data, 1990–2023, Community Health Assessment Tool (CHAT), Jan 2025.

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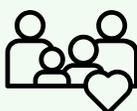
Recommendations

What could be done to prevent future events?



Increase public education on Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs).

- Learn more: [ERPO - Washington State Protection Orders](#)
- Target: Community



Strengthen support for online-school students.

- Target: Community, Schools



Expand community-wide education on suicide and mental health to help dispel stigma.

- Learn more: [Stigma and Suicide, Cultural Differences in Shame and Guilt as Understandable Reasons for Suicide](#)
- Target: Community



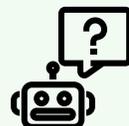
Clarify and modernize the Federal firearm background check form.

- Learn more: [Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives](#)
- Target: Community, Elected officials



Improve care-continuity communication between healthcare and schools.

- Target: Healthcare providers, Elected officials, Schools



Increase parents' and caregivers' awareness of AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) and how they shape youth's daily lives.

- Learn more: [Artificial intelligence and adolescent well-being](#)
- Target: Community

Questions to consider...

- ★ How do you store your firearms at home? Do you have a secure storage plan for you and your family?
- ★ How do you and/or your family store medications at home?
- ★ Do you know the risk factors and warning signs for suicide?
If you or someone you know is struggling with their mental health or thoughts of suicide, please call or text 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org.

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