



## **FACTSHEET 3**

# **SUICIDE STATISTICS**

Figures for suicide rates are not solely based on those officially classified as having committed suicide. This is because an official suicide verdict has to show beyond reasonable doubt that suicide was intended – reflecting the fact that until 1968 suicide was a criminal offence. An alternative verdict of probably suicide or “undetermined death” is given where conclusive evidence is not available and usually these two figures are combined to show suicide rates.

- Suicide is now amongst the three leading causes of death in the 15-44 age range (males and females).
- Suicide attempts are up to 20 times more frequent than successful suicides.
- In the last 45 years suicide rates have increased by 60% worldwide.
- Suicide is the most common cause of death amongst men aged 15-44 years.
- Men in unskilled occupations are four times more likely to commit suicide than those in professional work.
- Women born in India and East Africa had a 40% higher suicide rate than those born in England and Wales.
- Suicide is now the second most common cause of death amongst young people.
- Young lesbians and gay men are 2-3 times more likely to attempt suicide than other young people and may account for 30% of completed suicides in their age range.

*Source: [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)*

- The male suicide rate is higher than the rate for females in all UK countries.
- In 2002 there were 4,449 suicides and undetermined deaths in England, 3,301 of these deaths were male and 1,148 were females.
- Substance abuse is thought to be a highly significant factor in youth suicide.
- Adolescents who attempt to take their own lives appear to grow up in families with more turmoil than other groups of adolescents.
- Young people who suffer, or have suffered, abuse in the past are often at increased risk of suicide or self-harm.
- Within the prison population as a whole, young prisoners represent the largest group of at-risk individuals.
- In 2003 there were 94 self-inflicted deaths in prison.
- In 2002, 900 people over the age of 64 took their own lives (14% of all suicide deaths in the UK and Republic of Ireland).
- The most common means of suicide in older people are overdose of prescribed and over-the-counter drugs and hanging (the latter being far more frequent in older men).

*Source: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)*

