KidsData

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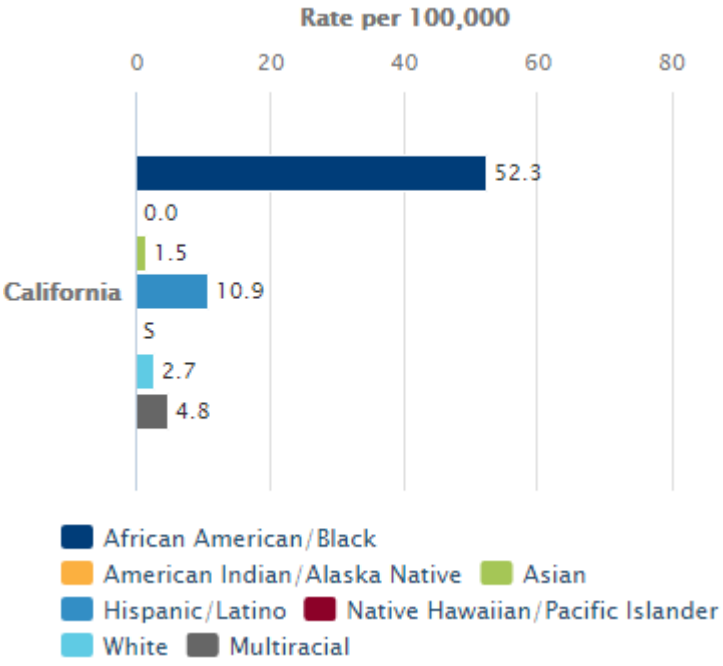
Injuries Among California Children and Young Adults

Firearm Injury Hospitalizations Among Children and Young Adults Ages 24 and Under: 2021

Locations	Rate per 100,000
California	10.1
Alameda County	17.3
Contra Costa County	15.6
Fresno County	11.4
Kern County	10.9
Los Angeles County	12.2
Orange County	3.8
Riverside County	9.0
Sacramento County	9.5
San Bernardino County	14.5
San Diego County	7.2
Santa Clara County	4.0

Definition: Number of hospital discharges for firearm-related injuries per 100,000 children and young adults ages 0-24 (e.g., in 2021, the rate of hospitalization for firearm injuries among California young people ages 0-24 was 10.1 per 100,000).
Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, EpiCenter; California Dept. of Finance, Population Estimates and Projections (Jul. 2023).

Firearm Injury Hospitalizations Among Children and Young Adults Ages 24 and Under, by Race/Ethnicity: 2021



Definition: Number of hospital discharges for firearm-related injuries per 100,000 children and young adults ages 0-24, by race/ethnicity (e.g., in 2021, the rate of hospitalization for firearm injuries among Hispanic/Latino young people ages 0-24 in California was 10.9 per 100,000).
Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, EpiCenter; California Dept. of Finance, Population Estimates and Projections (Jul. 2023).

What It Is

On kidsdata.org, measures of non-fatal injuries among children and young adults are based on hospital discharges. Data are available as:

- Single-year numbers and rates by age group for injuries overall, intentional injuries (assault and self-harm), and unintentional injuries among young people under age 21, at the county, state, and national level
- Three-year injury rates for young people under age 21, by age group and intent (assault, self-harm, and unintentional) for counties, California, and the U.S.
- Single-year numbers and rates for firearm-related injuries among young people under age 25 at the county and state level, and, for California only, the number and rate by intent, by intent and age group, by intent and sex, and by race/ethnicity

Why This Topic Is Important

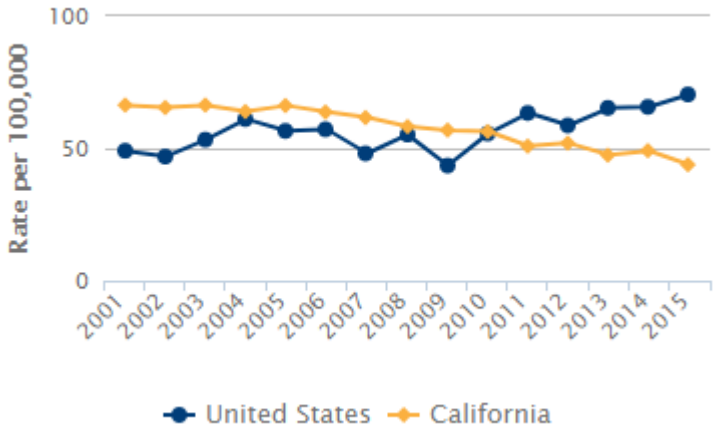
Millions of children and young adults are treated for non-fatal injuries in U.S. emergency rooms each year, and hundreds of thousands require hospitalization. Although most of these injuries are unintentional—resulting from accidents such as falls or car crashes—the intent to cause harm, such as through assault or self-injury, accounts for a large and growing share of youth injury hospitalizations nationwide. For some young people, injuries can lead to chronic pain, permanent disability, mental health problems, and decreased ability to participate in educational and social activities. Family members often must care for an injured child, which can cause stress and lost income. Considering medical and other expenses, work loss, and reduced quality of life, non-fatal injuries among U.S. children and young adults under age 25 are estimated to cost more than $545 billion per year.

Injuries caused by firearms, which may be intentional or unintentional, disproportionately affect young people—particularly adolescents, males, and youth of color. The need for public health efforts aimed at preventing youth firearm injuries and violence, while addressing inequities across communities, is urgent.

How Children Are Faring

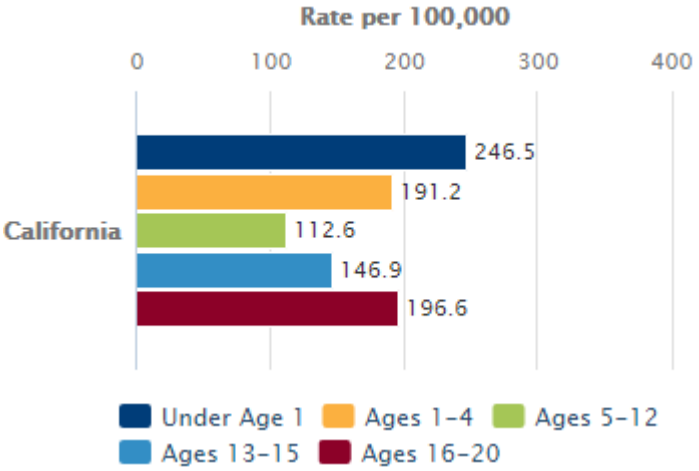
In 2021, there were 1,315 hospital discharges for non-fatal firearm-related injuries among

Intentional Injury Hospitalizations Among Children/Youth Ages 0-20



Definition: Number of hospital discharges for non-fatal self-inflicted and assault injuries per 100,000 children and youth ages 0-20, by age group (e.g., in 2015, there were 5 intentional injury hospitalizations per 100,000 California children ages 5-12).
Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, EpiCenter (Feb. 2020); California Dept. of Finance, Population Estimates and Projections (Jan. 2020); CDC, WISQARS (May 2020).

Unintentional Injury Hospitalization Rate, by Age Group: 2015



Definition: Number of hospital discharges for non-fatal unintentional injuries per 100,000 children and youth ages 0-20, by age group (e.g., in 2015, there were 112.6 unintentional injury hospitalizations per 100,000 California children ages 5-12).
Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, EpiCenter (Feb. 2020); California Dept. of Finance, Population Estimates and Projections (Jan. 2020); CDC, WISQARS (May 2020).

California young people under age 25—a rate of 10.1 hospitalizations per 100,000 youth. This figure is up from 2019 (7.9 per 100,000) but not as high as in 2016 (10.5 per 100,000), the first year for which comparable data are available. Twenty California counties recorded more than 10 youth hospitalizations related to firearms in 2021, with injury rates ranging from fewer than 4 per 100,000 (Orange) to more than 25 per 100,000 (Solano).

Across years with data, older teens and young adults experience higher rates of firearm injury when compared with younger age groups, yet hospitalization rates among children under age 15 statewide have been climbing steadily, doubling between 2016 and 2021. Young males in California were hospitalized for firearm injuries at seven and a half times the rate of their female counterparts in 2021 (17.4 vs. 2.3 per 100,000), while the rate of discharge among African American/black youth (52.3 per 100,000) was almost five times higher than for Hispanic/Latino youth (10.9 per 100,000), almost 20 times higher than white youth (2.7 per 100,000), and almost 35 times higher than for Asian youth (1.5 per 100,000).

The rate of overall injury hospitalization among California young people ages 20 and under was 214 per 100,000 in 2015, down from 484 per 100,000 in 1991—a difference that amounts to more than 23,000 fewer discharges for non-fatal injuries statewide. Across counties with data in 2013-2015, injury hospitalization rates ranged from 133 (San Luis Obispo) to 347 (Tuolumne) per 100,000.

Between 1991 and 2015, statewide discharge rates for *unintentional* injuries, which accounted for a majority of injury hospitalizations among children and young adults ages 0-20, also dropped by more than 50% overall and in all age groups but infants ages under age 1, whose rates fell less than 20%. In 1991 infants had the second lowest rate of discharge for unintentional injuries among age groups (298 per 100,000), whereas by 2012 they had the highest (249 per 100,000). By contrast, rates of discharge for *intentional* injuries consistently are highest among teens ages 16-20 (108 per 100,000 in 2015), followed by children ages 13-15 (80 per 100,000 in 2015).

View references for this text and additional research on this topic:
https://pwww.kidsdata.org/topic/55/injuries/summary