



COLORADO

**Department of Public
Health & Environment**

Integrating National and Local Efforts for Suicide Prevention in Colorado

Texas Suicide Prevention Symposium 2024

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Overview

- Introduction to OSP
- Suicidality in Colorado
- OSP's programs and priorities
- Emerging strategies

Colorado Office of Suicide Prevention (OSP)



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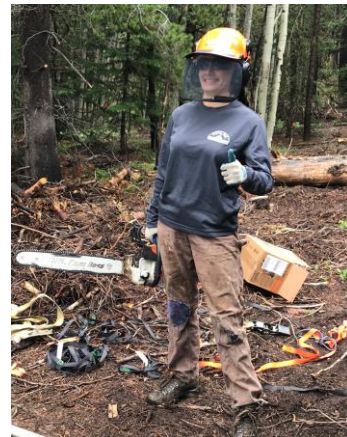


Katherine Harvey



Bryce Sedlmayr

Katherine Harvey, Rural Strategies Specialist



- MPH in Population Mental Health
- Former 4-H Extension Agent
- Lifelong rural resident

OSP Equity Statement

The Office of Suicide Prevention works to reduce suicidal despair, attempts, and deaths by identifying and dismantling oppressive systems.

We envision a transformed Colorado that honors the overlap of race, ethnicity, gender and sex identity, sexual orientation, education, age, language, religion, ability, marital status, and geography.

We aim to work together with our community partners towards prioritizing equity in all of our programs and practices.

What we want you to know



- The **preventability** of suicide
- Sharing stories of **hope** and **resilience**
- Suicide and suicide prevention are **community issues**
- **Prevention, intervention, and postvention** efforts are all important

Statistics are merely
“ aggregations of numbers ”
with
the tears wiped away.

— Dr. Irving Schikoff



Suicide in the U.S.

Each year:

12 million adults think seriously about suicide

3.2 million make suicide plans

1.2 million make a suicide attempt

49,449 suicide deaths reported in 2022.

Recovery and resilience are the true norms.

[LiveThroughThis.org](https://www.livethroughthis.org)
[NowMattersNow.org](https://www.nowmattersnow.org)

Data source: CDC

For every 1 death by suicide...

There are 4 hospitalizations for suicide attempts...

8 emergency department visits related to suicide...

27 self-reported suicide attempts...

and 275 individuals who seriously considered suicide.

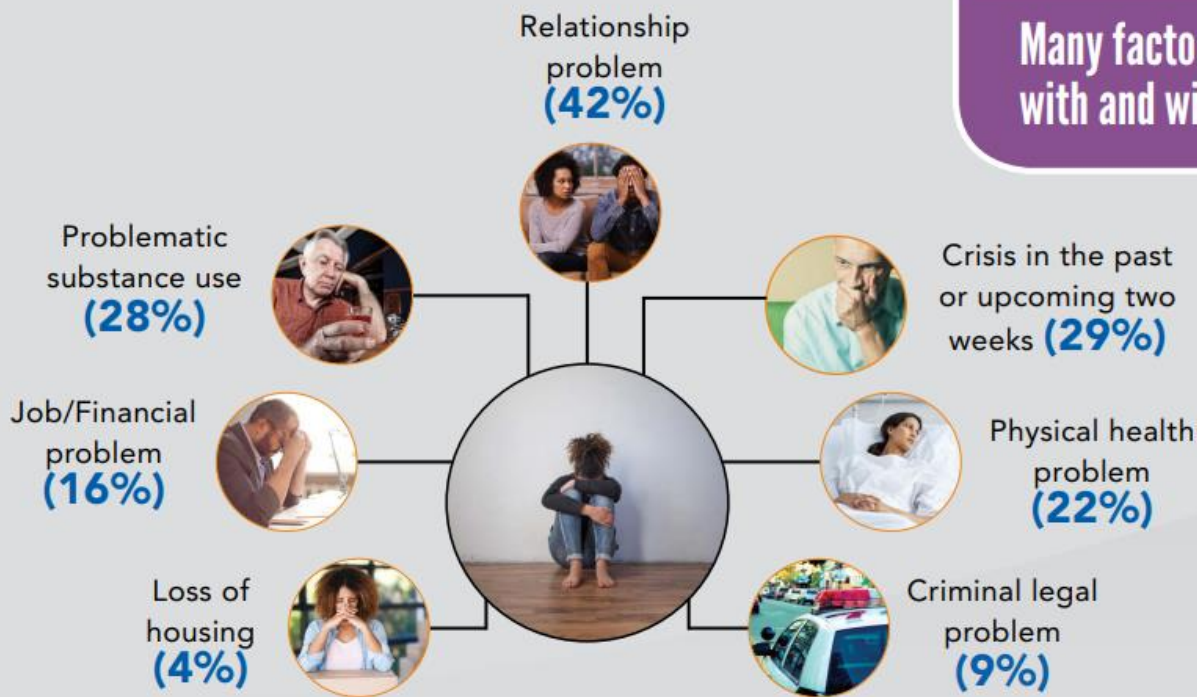


National Circumstance Data

54%

More than half of people who died by suicide did not have a known mental health condition.

Many factors contribute to suicide among those with and without known mental health conditions.

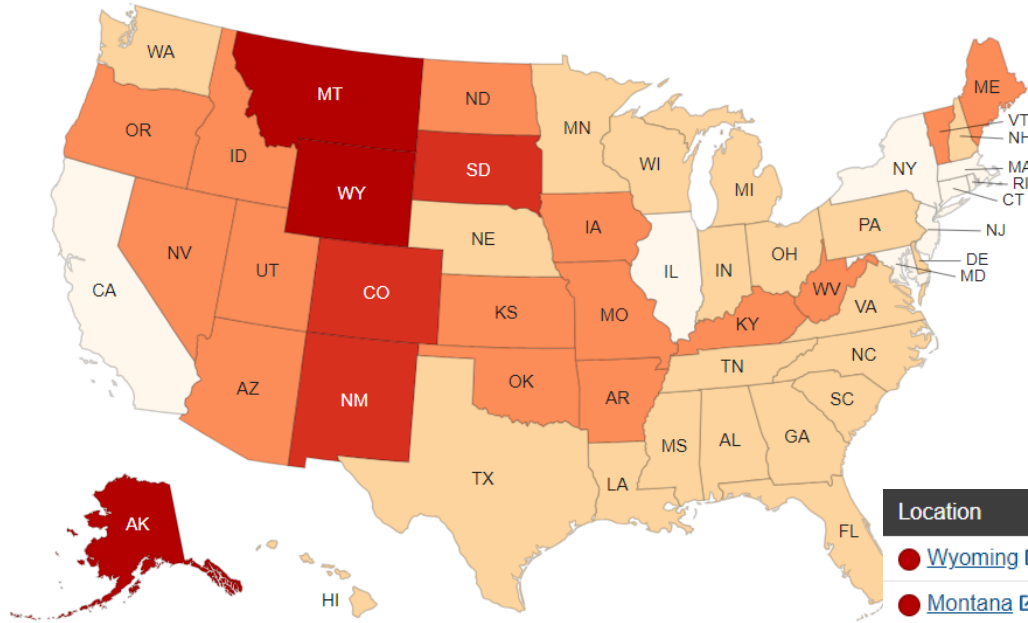


Note: Persons who died by suicide may have had multiple circumstances. Data on mental health conditions and other factors are from coroner/medical examiner and law enforcement reports. It is possible that mental health conditions or other circumstances could have been present and not diagnosed, known, or reported.

SOURCE: CDC's National Violent Death Reporting System, data from 27 states participating in 2015.

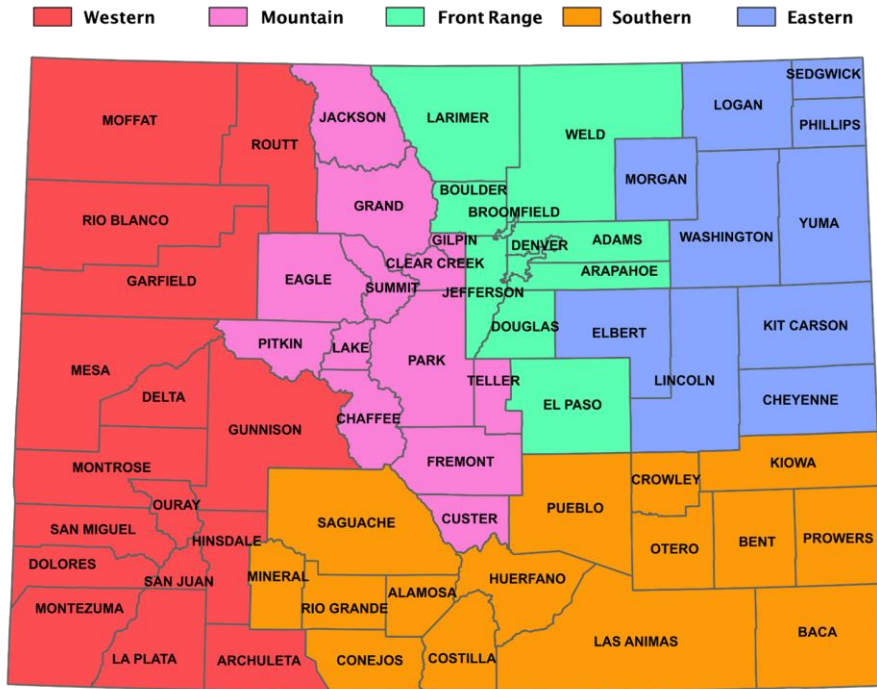


Suicide Death Rates per 100,000, USA, 2021 (CDC)

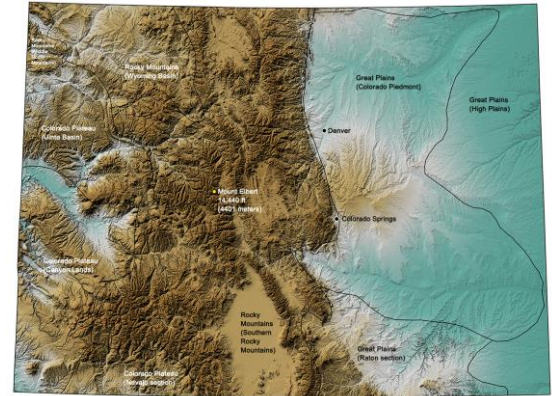


Location	Death Rate (Click For Rankings) ▼	Deaths
● Wyoming	32.3	190
● Montana	32.0	350
● Alaska	30.8	220
● New Mexico	25.0	533
● South Dakota	23.2	203
● Colorado	22.8	1,384
● Oklahoma	22.1	877
● Nevada	21.5	691
● North Dakota	20.8	156
● Arkansas	20.6	618

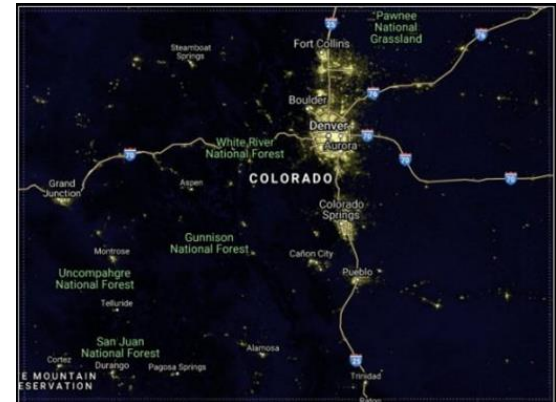
Colorado



Colorado Counties, Inc. map



Topo map



Night light map

Interactive CO Suicide Fatality Dashboard

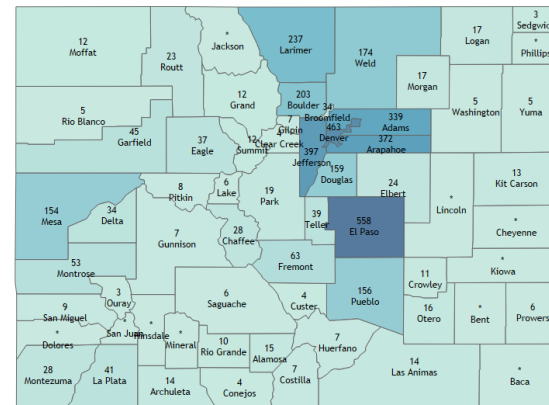


[cdphe.colorado.gov/
colorado-suicide-statistics](https://cdphe.colorado.gov/colorado-suicide-statistics)

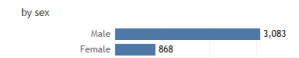
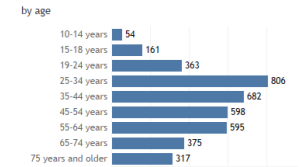
Suicide in Colorado: Counts, 2004-2022, excludes race/ethnicity
Colorado Vital Statistics Program, (death certificate) **Total suicides for selected populations and years: 3,951**

Select years:
2020 to 2022

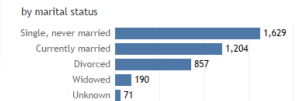
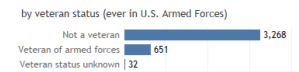
Select method used to inflict the fatal injury:
All methods



Number of suicides by demographics
Click on one or more subgroups below to filter all other charts to that group(s); click again to deselect



Race and ethnicity are not displayed on this visualization. Please refer to the other dashboards for data by race and ethnicity.



Selected population for all charts on this page

Age: All, Sex: All, Ethnicity: 0, Race: 0, Marital status: All, Veteran status: All, Method: All methods, County: All
Number of suicides over time

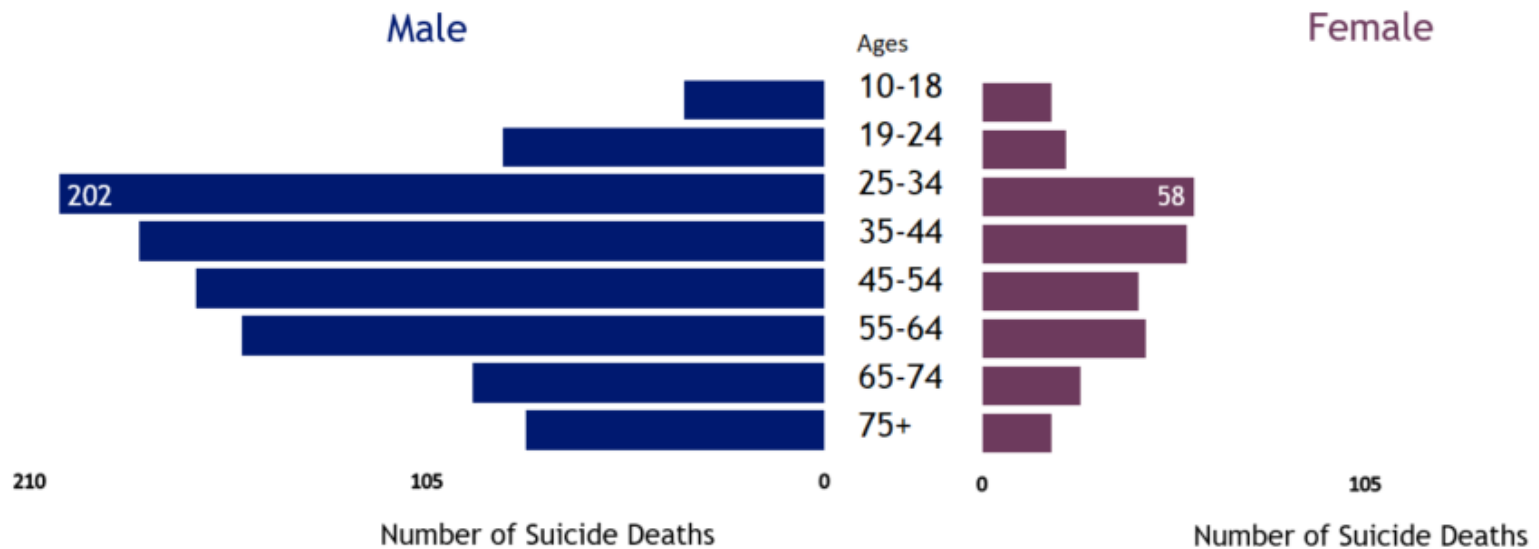


Suicide in Colorado (all ages)

In 2022, there
were **1,287**
deaths by
suicide.

In 2022, men ages 25-44 died by suicide more often than women and other age groups.

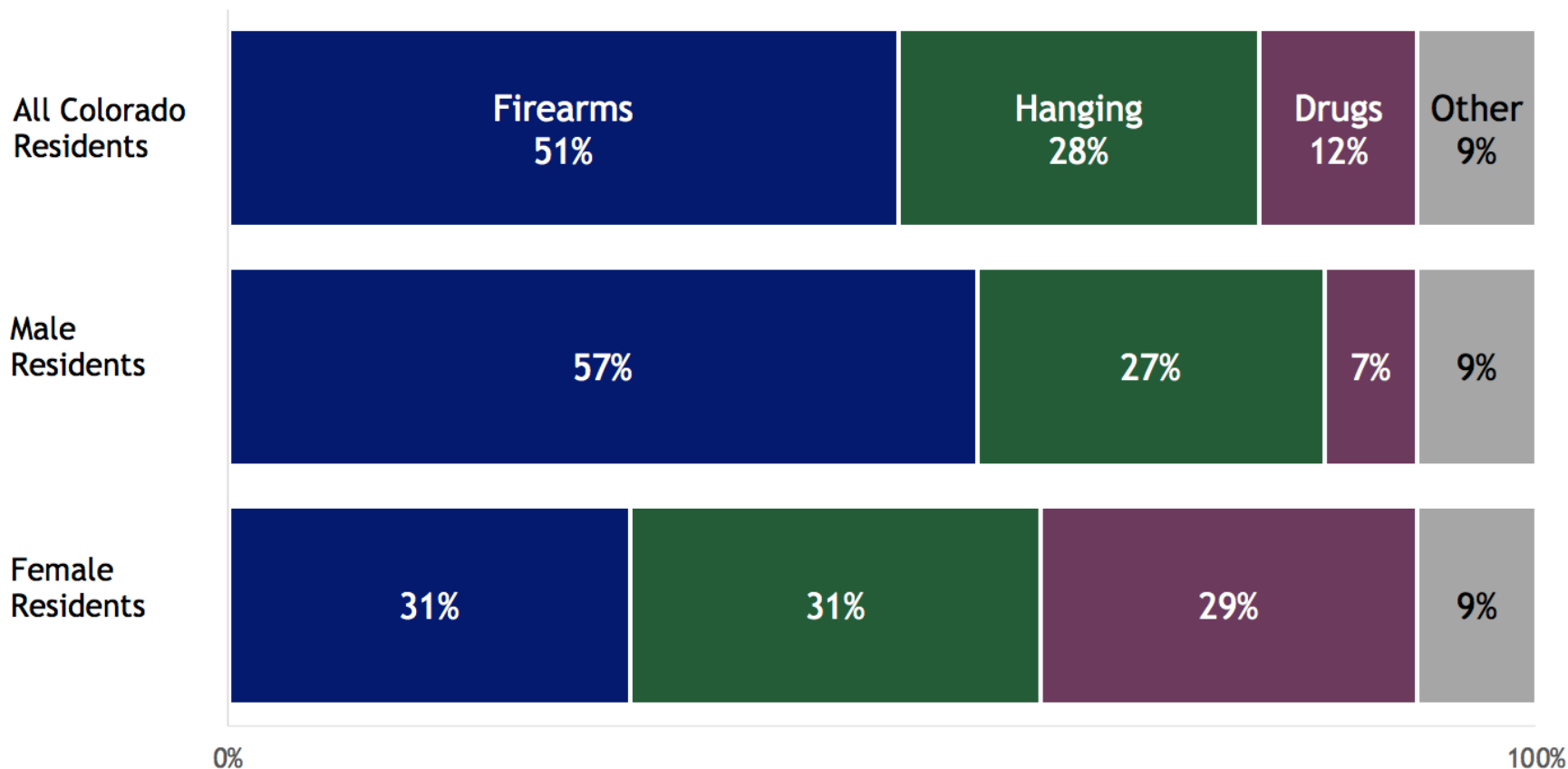
The number of deaths by suicide by sex and age group in 2022.



Source: Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Firearms are the leading method of suicide in Colorado.

Percentage of suicide deaths by method and sex for the years 2018-2022 combined.



Source: Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Firearm Deaths in Colorado 2022

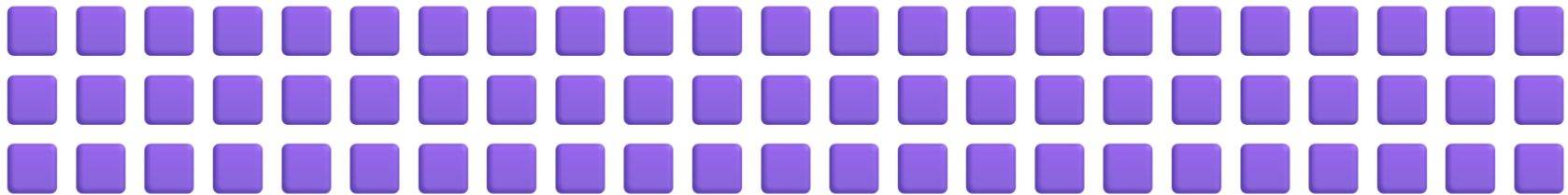
For every 1 Accidental Firearm Death



There were 32 Firearm Homicides

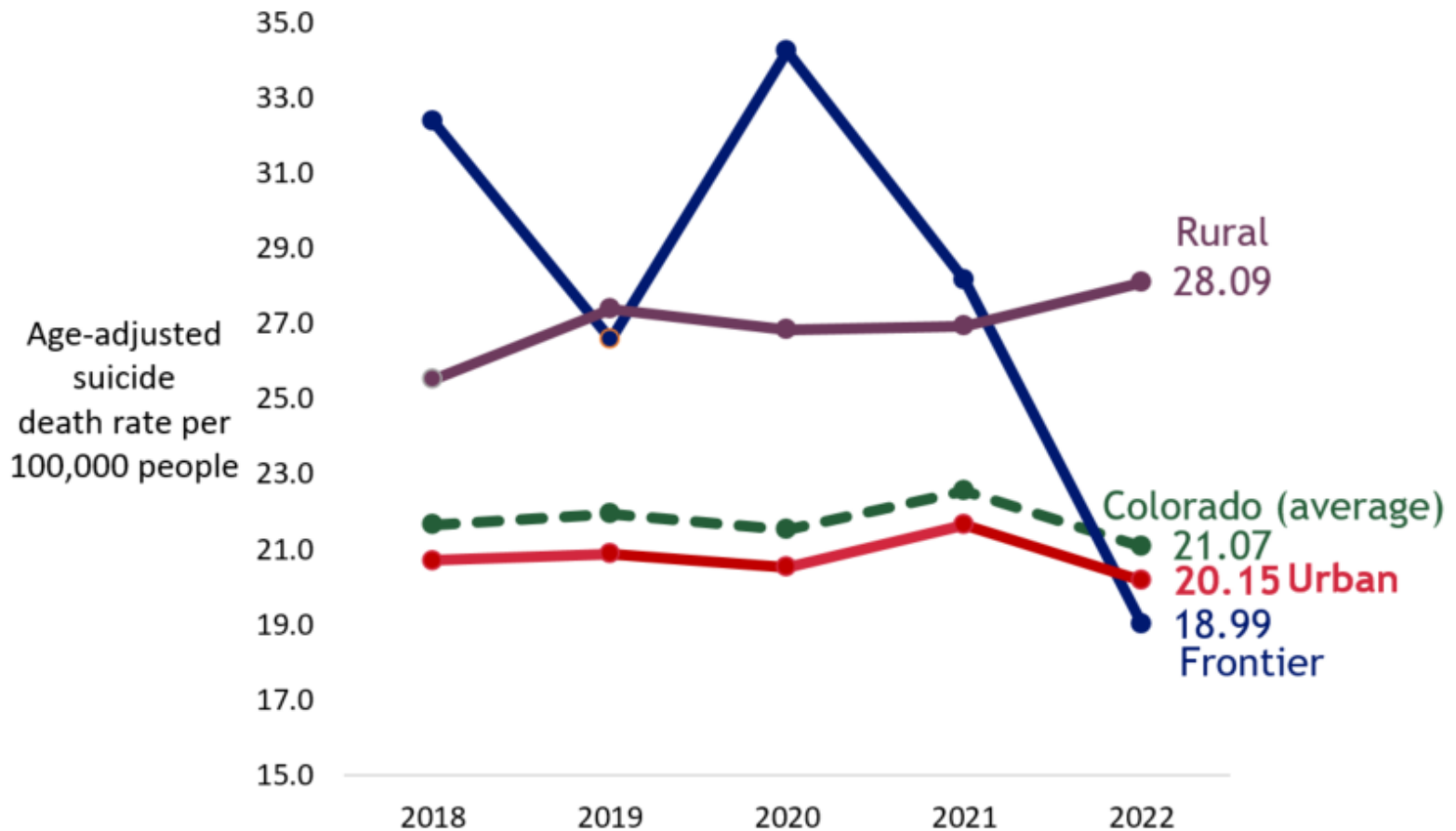


and 69 Firearm Suicides



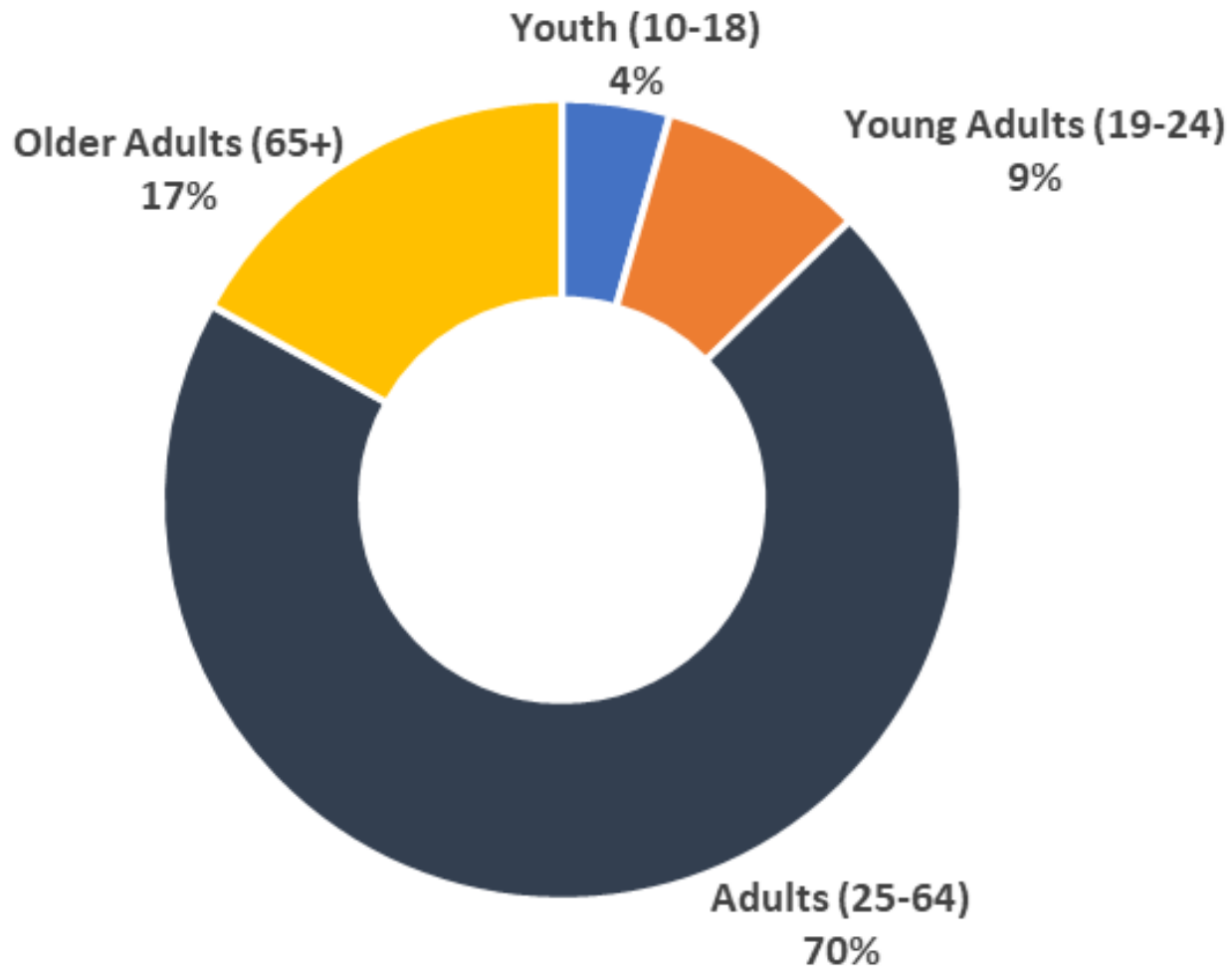
Frontier and rural communities have the highest rates of suicide.

Age-adjusted suicide death rate per 100,000 people by geographic community type between 2018-2022.



Source: Colorado Vital Statistics Program (Death Certificate Data), Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Suicide fatalities in Colorado in 2022





LGBTQIA2S+
Communities

LGBTQ+ adults and youth are more likely to have thoughts of suicide.

Discrimination, isolation, rejection = ↑ risk
Support = ↓ risk



BIPOC
Communities

American Indian and Alaska Native youth are the most likely to report attempting suicide in the past year.



Veterans

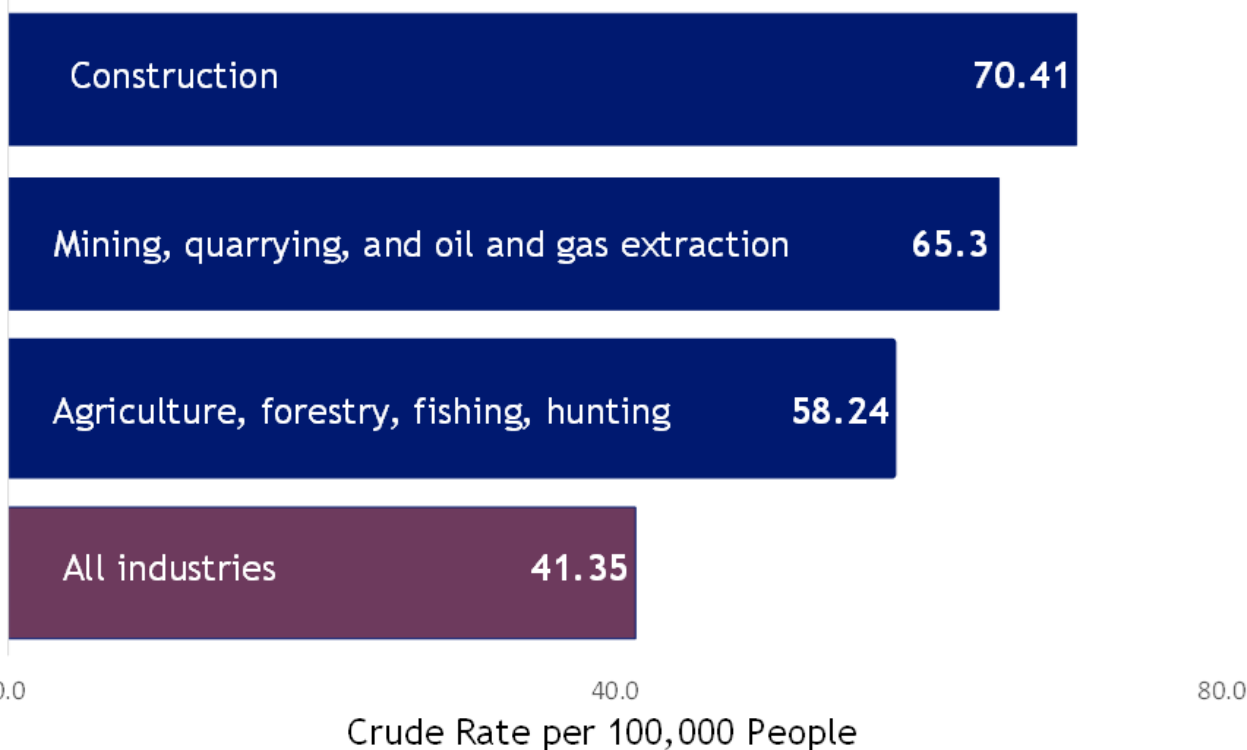
**Veterans make up nearly 10% of the population.
20% of all suicide deaths in Colorado are by veterans.**

Construction, oil and gas, and agriculture have the highest rates of suicide.

Crude rates of suicide among the employed population in Colorado, by industry, combined 2017-2021.



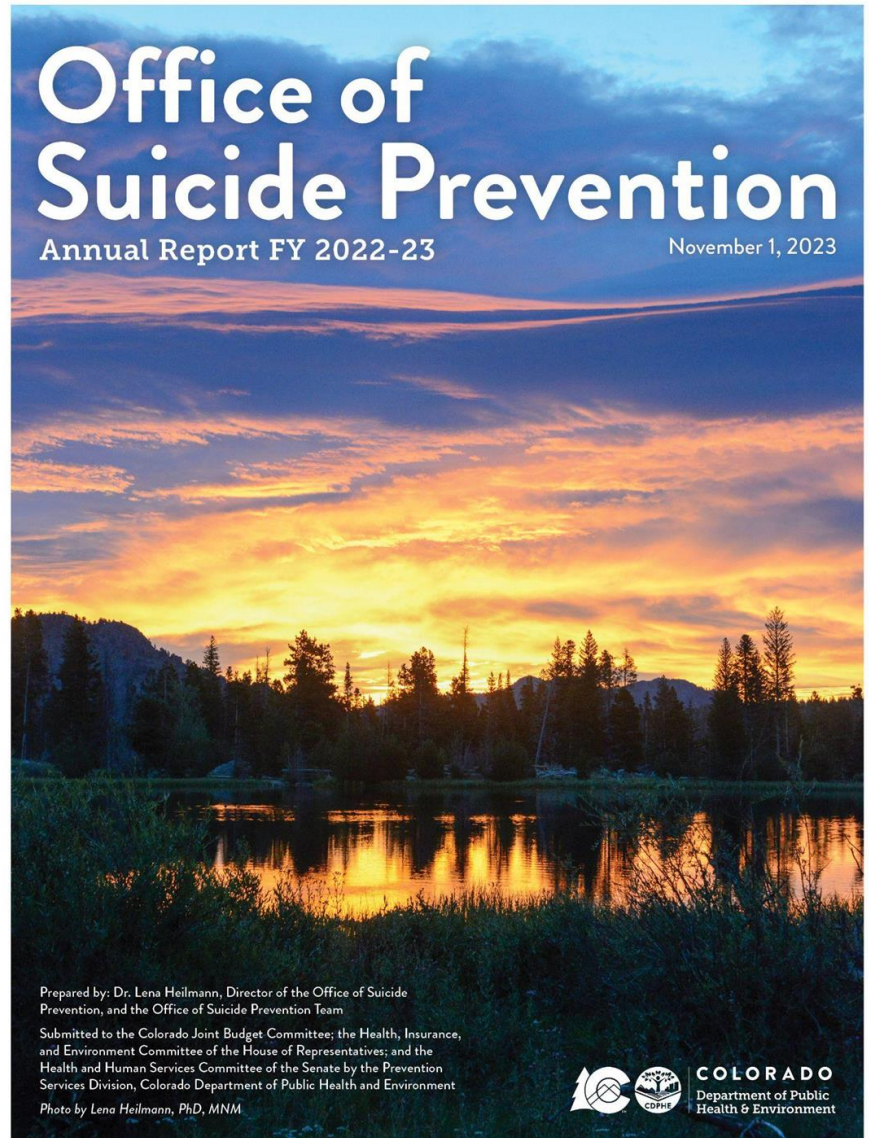
High-risk
Industries



OSP's Programs



FY 22-23 Annual Legislative Report



coosp.org



OSP Identified Populations of Focus



Youth
(0-18)



Young Adults
(19-24)



Working-Age Adults
(25-64)



Older Adults
(65+)



Veterans



LGBTQIA2S+
Communities



BIPOC
Communities



High-risk
Industries



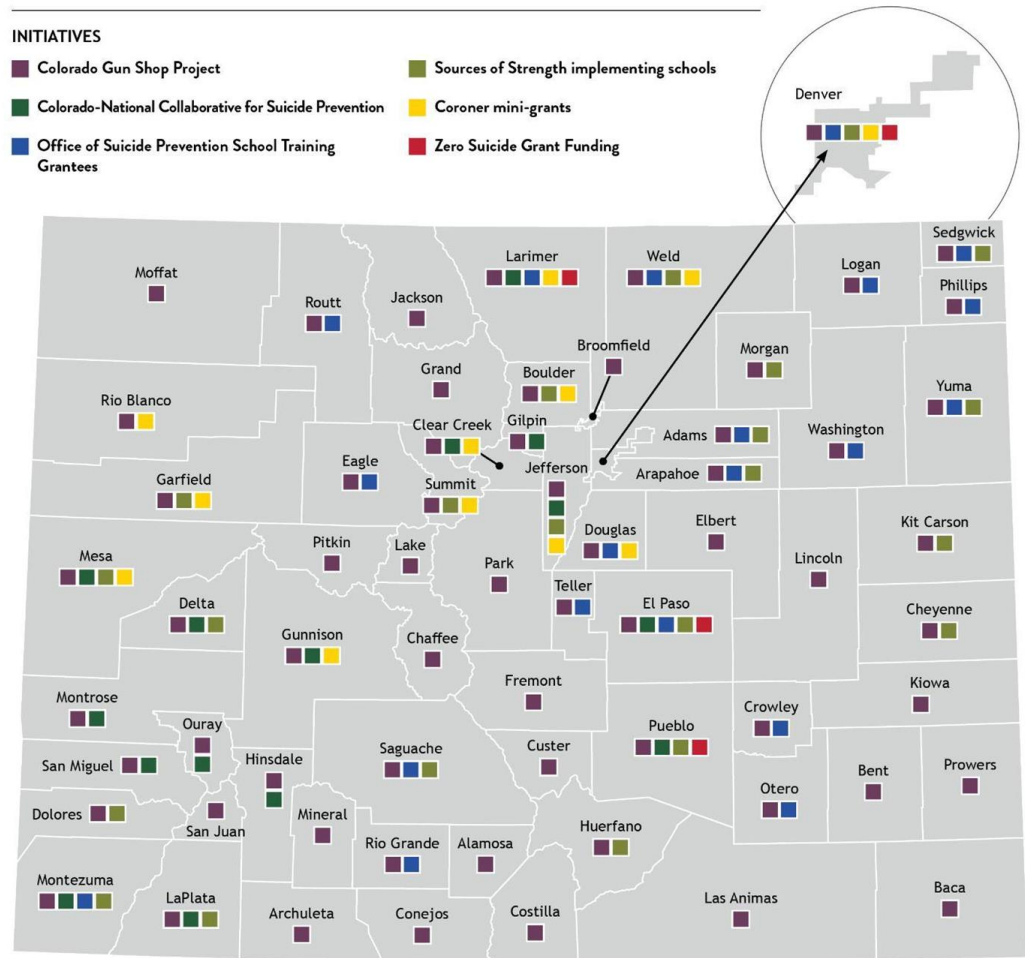
Rural
Communities

Suicide Prevention Initiatives

Fiscal Year 2022-2023

INITIATIVES

- Colorado Gun Shop Project
- Colorado-National Collaborative for Suicide Prevention
- Office of Suicide Prevention School Training Grantees
- Sources of Strength implementing schools
- Coroner mini-grants
- Zero Suicide Grant Funding



State Initiatives

Initiative by County

■ **Colorado Gun Shop Project**
All Colorado counties

■ **Colorado-National Collaborative for Suicide Prevention**
Clear Creek, Delta, El Paso, Gilpin, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Jefferson, La Plata, Larimer, Mesa, Montezuma, Montrose, Ouray, Pueblo, San Miguel

■ **Office of Suicide Prevention School Training Grantees**
Adams, Arapahoe, Crowley, Denver, Douglas, Eagle, El Paso, Larimer, Logan, Montezuma, Otero, Phillips, Rio Grande, Routt, Saguache, Sedgwick, Teller, Washington, Weld, Yuma

■ **Sources of Strength implementing schools (July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023)**
Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Cheyenne, Delta, Denver, Dolores, El Paso, Garfield, Huerfano, Jefferson, Kit Carson, La Plata, Mesa, Montezuma, Morgan, Pueblo, Saguache, Sedgwick, Summit, Weld, Yuma

■ **Coroner mini-grants**
Boulder, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Garfield, Gunnison, Larimer, Jefferson, Mesa, Rio Blanco, Summit, Weld

■ **Zero Suicide Grant Funding**
Denver, El Paso, Larimer, Pueblo



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Suicide Prevention Strategies

- **Connectedness**
- **Economic stability**
- **Positive messaging**
- **Reducing discrimination
(ie: stigma)**
- **Access to appropriate
suicide-specific care**
- **Temporary means safety**
- **Collaborative safety
planning**
- **Follow-up and caring
contacts**
- **Postvention support
after a suicide loss**

Office of Suicide Prevention

Established by Policy:

- School Training Grant (SB18-272)
- **Suicide Prevention Commission (SB14-88)**
- **Zero Suicide (SB16-147)**

Federal Grants:

- CDC
 - Comprehensive Suicide Prevention
 - Preventive Health and Human Services (PHHS) Block Grant
- SAMHSA
 - Garrett Lee Smith (ages 10-24)
 - National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (ages 25+)
 - Zero Suicide (ages 25+)

Other Programs:

- **Colorado-National Collaborative: Comprehensive Suicide Prevention**
- Coroner mini grants
- Equity work and efforts
- **Follow-Up Project**
- **Gun Shop Project**
- Man Therapy www.mantherapy.org
- Public information and education
- Public Commission workgroups:
 - Youth-Specific Initiatives
 - Older Adults
 - Governor's Challenge to Support Service Members, Veterans, and their Families
 - Postvention

...and more!

The Colorado-National Collaborative



1

CONNECTEDNESS



2

ECONOMIC
STABILITY AND
SUPPORTS



3

EDUCATION AND
AWARENESS



4

ACCESS TO SAFER
SUICIDAL CARE



5

LETHAL MEANS
SAFETY



6

POSTVENTION



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Gun Shop Project

- Reaches all counties in the state
- Outreach via firearm advocates to gun shops, ranges, county fairs, rodeos, etc.
- Provide info about firearm safety and suicide prevention

Challenges & Promising Strategies





Small Town Problems
@SmallTwnProbs

If you don't want the whole town to know about it,
then you better not do it [#smalltownproblems](#)



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Challenges and Opportunities

- Programs normed on urban/ suburban communities
- Recommendations to “adapt” programs to meet priority populations’ needs - who has to adapt and take on the additional labor?
- Funding restrictions / lack of flexibility to meet need
- Representation and lived experience as true values

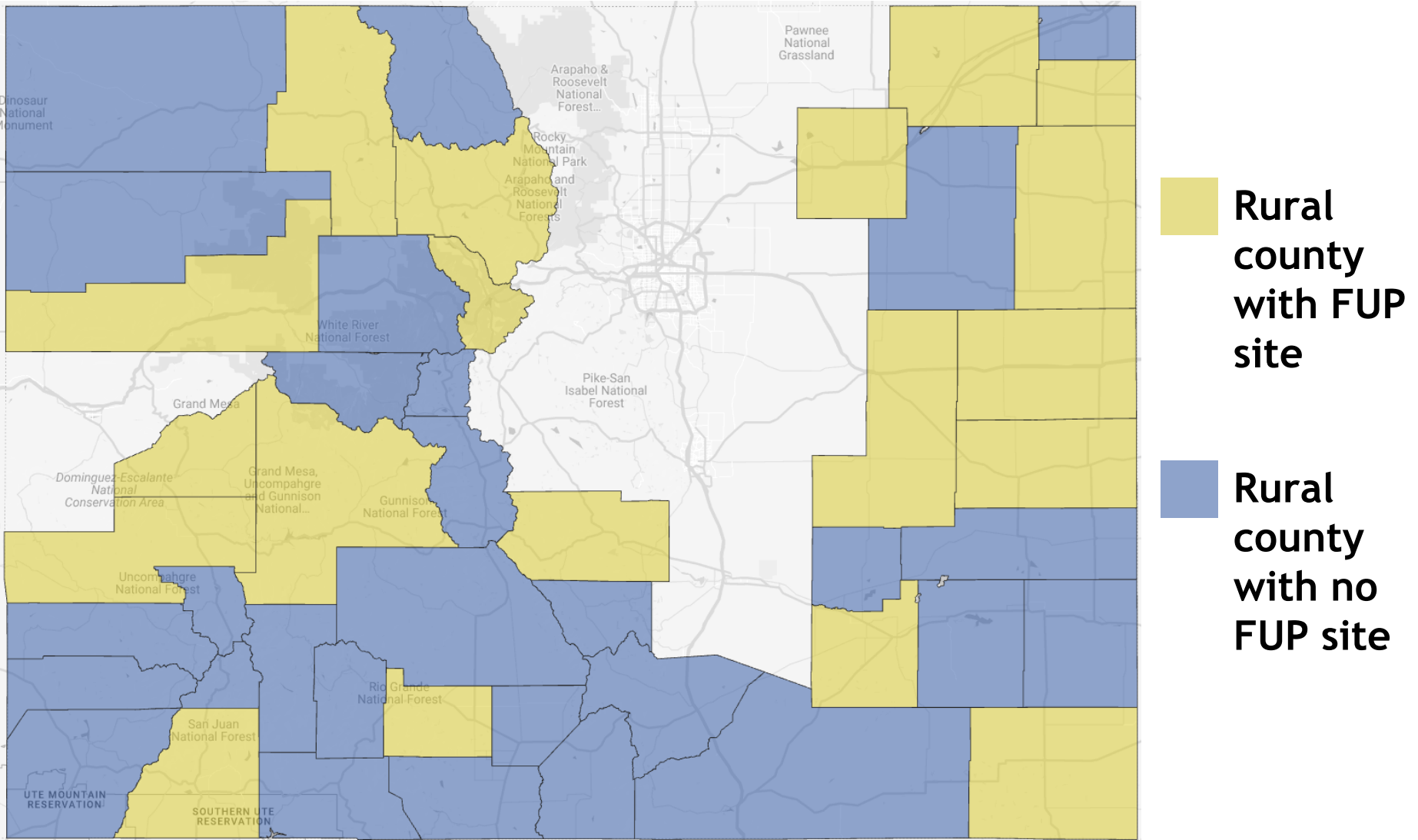
Need for Rural Strategies Specialist



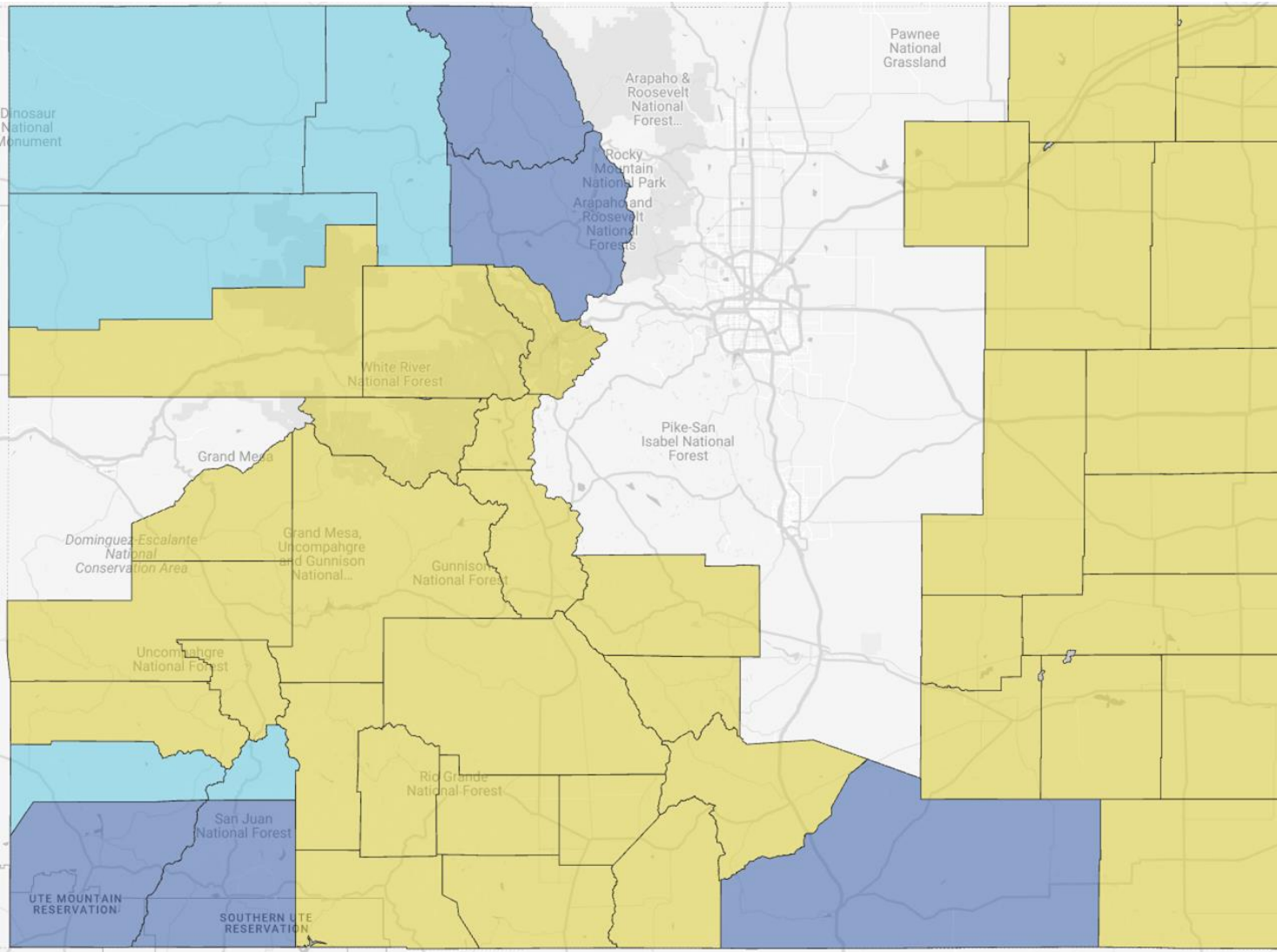
- Rural Meet & Greets (and possible future listening sessions)
- Statewide film screenings
- Rural Communities Workgroup
- State-level rural behavioral health taskforce
- Expanding current programs




Promising Strategies

Follow-Up Project: Rural Sites



Gun Shop Project: Rural Outreach



-  Rural county with OSP GSP grantee
-  Rural county with no current GSP, OSP to outreach
-  Rural county with VA GSP

CNC Rural Strategies & Activities

Overarching Strategy	Implementation in Rural CO
Access to Safer Suicide Care	Partner with local health systems to promote and expand Zero Suicide and Follow-Up Project
Connectedness	Locally organized memorial walk in partnership with tribal and indigenous communities
Economic Stability	Funded community “grow dome” to create healthy & sustainable food & support food security initiatives Round tables on climate change, agriculture & mental health

CNC Rural Strategies & Activities

Overarching Strategy	Implementation in Rural CO
Education & Awareness	GKT (QPR, MHFA, ASIST) COMET™ (Changing Our Mental & Emotional Trajectory)
Lethal Means Safety	Gun Shop Project partnership Overdose prevention awareness campaign Man Therapy Creative Messaging
Postvention	Safe media messaging training Locally created “bereavement boxes” Outdoor-focused peer support groups

THANK YOU!

Find us online at coosp.org

Contact me:

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