



The Latest Drowning Statistics

For many, water is a source of joy and memory – bringing together even the unlikeliest pairs. However, water is an element that deserves our respect and attention.

Drowning is a tragedy that can happen to anyone. Unfortunately, it is fast, silent, and often not what you would expect, so learning the latest drowning statistics is essential to help advance water safety and drowning prevention efforts.

Drowning Statistics By Category

The following data and research has been compiled over the past few years from sources such as the [CDC](#) (Centers for Disease Control), [WHO](#) (World Health Organization), and the [AAP](#) (American Academy of Pediatrics). Learning the latest drowning statistics is crucial to understanding how drowning can affect anyone and its impact on society.

General Drowning Statistics:

- Drowning is the single leading cause of death for children ages 1-4 and the second leading cause of injury-related death for children up to age 14.
- There is an average of 4,012 unintentional drowning deaths per year.
- Drowning remains among the top four causes of death from age 54 and up.
- The U.S. experiences an average of 11 fatal drownings per day and an average of 22 non-fatal drownings per day.

- More than 40% of drownings treated in the Emergency Department require hospitalization, transfer, or further care (compared with 8% of all unintentional injuries). Outcomes of morbidity include brain damage, other serious outcomes, and long-term disability.
- Drowning costs the U.S. Economy \$51.53 billion per year.
- Drowning is fast and silent. It can happen in as little as 20-60 seconds.
- Nearly 80% of drowning deaths are among males due to increased exposure to water, risk-taking behaviors, and alcohol use.
- Based on data from 2020, unintentional drowning deaths between ages 20-24 have increased by 44%, and ages 25-29 have increased by 29%.

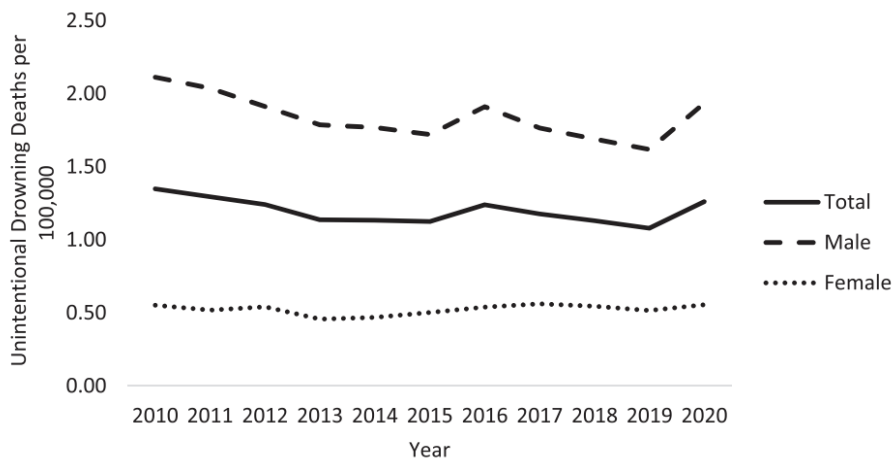


Fig. 1. Rates of unintentional drowning deaths per 100,000 persons ≤ 29 years overall and by sex, National Vital Statistics System, United States 2010–2020.

Drowning Statistics on Children:

- 88% of child drownings occur with at least 1 adult present.
- We lose 10 school buses worth of children to unintentional drownings per year, with the average school bus seating 80 students, resulting in an average of 854 children per year.
- For every child that dies from drowning, another 7 to 8 receive emergency department care for non-fatal drowning. Almost 70% of drownings of young children occur during non-swim.
- Two out of three drowning incidents that take place in the home occur in a bathtub.
- 23% of child drownings happen during a family gathering near a pool.

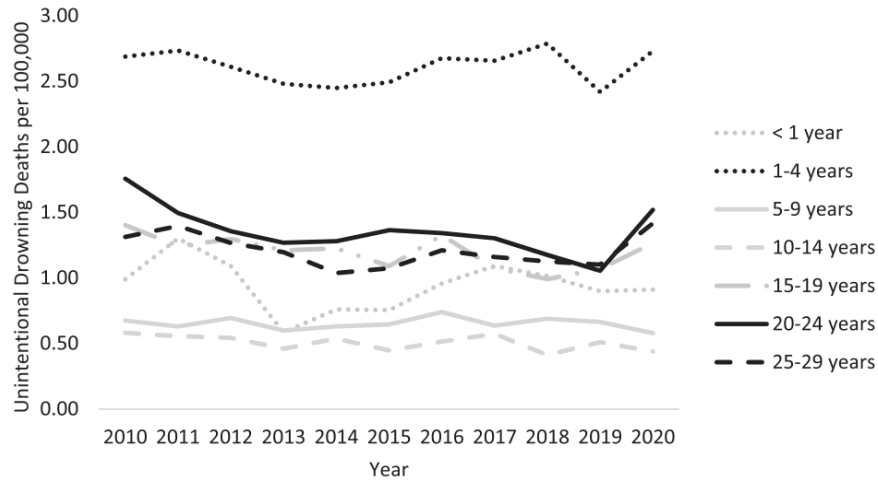
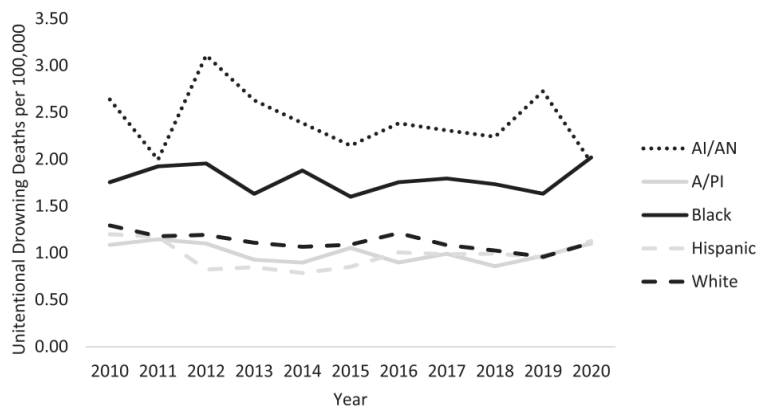


Fig. 2. Rates of unintentional drowning deaths per 100,000 persons <29 years by age group, National Vital Statistics System, United States 2010–2020.

Racial & Ethnic Groups Drowning Statistics

- In swimming pools, Black children aged 10-14 years drown at rates 7.6 times higher than White children.
- Black children and youth are more likely to drown in public pools, and white children and youth are more likely to drown in residential pools.
- Drowning death rates for American Indian or Alaska Native people ages 29 and younger is 2 times higher than those for White people, with the highest disparities among those ages 25-29 (rates 3.5 times higher).



Abbreviations: AI/AN (American Indian/Alaska Native), A/PI (Asian/Pacific Islander)
 Persons identified as Hispanic could be any race, persons identified as AI/AN, A/PI, Black, and White were non-Hispanic

Fig. 3. Rates of unintentional drowning deaths per 100,000 persons <29 years by race/ethnicity, National Vital Statistics System, United States 2010–2020.

- Drowning death rates for Black people are 1.5 times higher than for White people. Disparities are highest among Black children ages 5-9 (rates 2.6 times higher) and ages 10-14 (rates 3.6 times higher).

Drowning Statistics on People With Disabilities/Medical Conditions

- People with seizure disorders like epilepsy are at a higher risk of fatal and non-fatal drowning than the general population. Other conditions, such as autism and heart conditions, are also associated with a higher risk of drowning.

Drowning is Preventable!

The National Drowning Prevention Alliance is dedicated to preventing the tragedies of unintentional childhood drownings and aquatic injuries through research, education, and advocacy initiatives.

Drowning is a complex problem, but it is preventable.

Prevention starts with awareness, education, and implementation of the latest water safety and drowning prevention efforts, statistics, and resources.

Water safety and drowning prevention is a lifelong endeavor, but it can save a life.

[Join the alliance today and help us make a difference in ending drowning and aquatic-related injuries!](#)