

Child and Adolescent Suicide in Western Australia, 2002-2011

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Child and adolescent suicide data were obtained from the National Coronial Information System, for Western Australia, between 2002 and 2011. The age-specific suicide rate for children, aged 10-14 years, was 0.5 per 100,000, which is relatively low by comparison to national and international rates. The age-specific suicide rate for adolescents, aged 15-19 years, was 11.3 per 100,000, which was 51% higher than the national rate of 7.5, and was also high by international standards. The suicide rate for Aboriginal adolescents was 71.7 per 100,000, which was nearly nine times greater than the rate for non-Indigenous adolescents. Calculation of risk ratios, based on Indigenous status, sex, and geographic remoteness, revealed that Aboriginal male adolescents in remote locations were at particularly elevated risk. A key finding of the study was the predominance of hanging as a method, accounting for all cases of child suicide during the report period and 80% of adolescent cases.